

# SOCIAL EUROPE

**2/88**



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR EMPLOYMENT,  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION

*Social Europe*, published by the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education, deals with current social affairs in Europe. The review is divided into several parts: the first gives an overview of developments and current events in the fields of employment, education, vocational training, industrial relations and social measures; the second part covers conferences, studies and other information destined to stimulate the debate on these issues; the third part reports on the latest developments in national employment policies and on the introduction of new technologies. In addition, once a year, *Social Europe* supplies statistics on social trends in the Member States.

The basic review comes out three times a year. In addition, a number of supplements/files (8-10 a year) are published annually, each dealing in depth with a given subject, e. g. technologies of the future, education and vocational training, equal treatment for men and women, employment, industrial medicine, migrants workers, etc.

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1988

ISSN 0255-0776

Catalogue number: CE-AA-88-002-EN-C

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The manuscript was completed on 15 June 1988

*Printed in the FR of Germany*

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# Editorial

## Europe, education and training: the challenge of 1992

*Le Monde*

University of the Sorbonne Paris, 2 March 1988

Organized by *Le Monde* in collaboration with other major European newspapers (*El País, Financial Times, Telegraaf, etc.*) and with the support of the Commission of the European Communities, an important publicity conference on the Comett and Erasmus programmes was held in Paris on 2 March, 1988. The event, which opened with a message from François Mitterrand and ended with an address by the President of the Commission, Jacques Delors, was attended by more than 2 000 people including many university lecturers, heads of firms, students, etc.

Below, we are pleased to print the text of the speech by the Vice-President of the Commission, Manuel Marin.

'If we had to start all over again, I would begin with culture'.

In quoting these historic words left to us by Jean Monnet, I wish to illustrate from the outset the approach which I intend to adopt throughout this meeting, the initiative for which has been taken by the newspaper *Le Monde*.

I belong to that group of people who believe that, despite certain major imperfections in the European edifice, we must forge ahead and continue to build on the foundations which we have today.

At the European summit held on 12 February, the Heads of State or Government endowed the Community, let us hope, with a certain financial stability. At the same time they took the decisions needed to ensure that economic development at European level can progress in a more equitable manner.

I therefore ask myself — like many others moreover — whether the time has not come for Europe to take action to transform Jean Monnet's words into reality.

Culture and education will henceforth require a major effort by the people of Europe and by the Community institutions in particular.

However, in this field the good intentions of all those who share my convictions are not enough.

As the President of the Republic, Mr Mitterrand, recently said in a speech to the College of Europe in Bruges, 'We must not seek one place through which to disseminate culture. All the universities must take part with sufficient resources and modern technology'.

He none the less added that 'a university with a European vocation can only succeed if there are young people already trained in this type of discipline'.

Mr Mitterrand rightly enlightened us on this need to train teachers and lecturers as a crucial means of contributing to the growth of a real European vocation.

He also said that if we do not have the resources to reform this task at present, then they must be provided and that it is the role of the European institutions to do so.

I fully share that point of view because in my capacity as Member of the Commission with responsibility for education, I am well aware of the lack of agreement between the Member States as regards this approach.

The initiative taken by *Le Monde* is therefore greatly to be welcomed in the sense that it can and must make a considerable contribution to extending the European debate to spheres other than those of goods, services or capital.

As an introduction to the meeting, I should like to set out a number of ideas on three key issues of direct relevance to the universities and students in relation to the completion of the single market in 1992.

I shall refrain from commenting on the Comett and Erasmus programmes in detail since they will be examined throughout the meeting. Comett and Erasmus are progressing well even if they do not have the resources they need to meet all the expectations which they have aroused. This responsibility lies with the Member States but I shall not dwell on this point at the moment.

What I propose to do, I reiterate, is to reflect aloud on what I have referred to as key issues for the universities and students, i.e. more precisely:

- (i) the recognition of qualifications;
- (ii) the contribution of the universities to new approaches to teaching;
- (iii) training as an instrument of economic, social and cultural development.

I shall begin with the problem of the recognition of qualifications and a statement which is anything but debatable: the Europe which is being built and which remains to be built cannot be summed up by the free movement of goods, services and capital. It also requires the free movement of ideas (which is self-evident) and of persons.

Sooner or later — and the sooner the better — it therefore implies the mutual recognition of qualifications and consequently the possibility for everyone to complete a part of his studies or working life in another country of the Community without being penalized upon his return. We all know that such recognition is not easy to achieve and that this road is still strewn with many obstacles.

My second comment concerns the role of the universities in relation to 1992, particularly as the ground for new developments in teaching. Universities must no longer function as remote ivory towers of knowledge but must come to play a greater part in the development of society. There is nothing revolutionary about these ideas. Furthermore, at the risk otherwise of becoming even more isolated, the universities must adapt their methods and practices to their en-



vironment and in particular to the well-established fact that training can only be permanent and that, as such, training must take greater account of social needs and requirements.

In this time of new technologies but also of new methods of time and space management, the universities must complete their process of change.

Lastly, we have training as an instrument of economic, social and cultural development. Admitting that it is first and foremost man who makes history, nothing is more important than to assign priority to education, training and, more generally, the development of human resources.

We are not concerned here with the formation of an élite but with the idea — which can be expressed in economic terms if you prefer — that training is an investment because every level of skill and competence is needed in order to master and anticipate changes.

This meeting is devoted to Erasmus and Comett. But these are not the only Community activities in the crucial field of education, training and youth, and a new programme of exchanges between young people will be launched very shortly. Moreover, a large-scale measure has just been decided on concerning the vocational integration of young people. Lastly, I would add — and these are only a few examples — that we shall

soon propose a major programme to promote foreign languages, which is a key component of European integration.

In conclusion I should like to say that Europe cannot be built, dare I say it cautiously, in other words without something other than institutional and administrative rules and regulations. It must be seen primarily as a community of action and it is imperative in the moral sense of the word to attract and involve above all young people in the achievement of this goal.

We are all faced with this challenge and it is together that we must answer it. Erasmus and Comett will open the way.

Thank you



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# **Part one**

## **Actions and guidelines**



# The recession in the shipbuilding industry — European response proposed by the Commission to ensure rapid industrial redevelopment and new employment opportunities

The redeployment strategy proposed by the European Commission to the Twelve has two main objectives: to create a new industrial fabric in the regions of the European Community bearing the brunt of the recession in the shipbuilding industry, and to give a fresh start to the workers in this sector by financing new employment.<sup>1</sup>

In total, over 350 million ECU would be released for this measure from 1987 to 1990. With this urgent and vital measure, the European Commission is therefore anticipating an even more wide-ranging strategy for the period up to 1992, once the proposal aimed at substantially increasing the structural Funds' means of assistance, one of the main objectives laid down in the Single Act, is adopted.

This proposal by the Commission, with the social and regional measures which it entails, supplements the industrial strategy already adopted by the Twelve at the beginning of 1987, which, based on the supervision, substantial reduction and more efficient utilization of public assistance to the shipbuilding industry, is aimed at concentrating shipbuilding in the Twelve on technologically advanced ships, this being, in the Commission's view, the only way in which a reasonable level of employment can be maintained both in the shipbuilding industry and in the associated industries.<sup>2</sup>

## The crisis in European shipbuilding: the strength of Japanese and South Korean competition

The share of the world market held by European shipbuilding has been steadily shrinking. In 1976-77 European shipyards held 18 to 19% of this market. This was followed by a decline, and in 1984 a major collapse reduced the Community's share of world demand to 11% by the middle of the 1980s. Paradoxically, this same period witnessed massive and speculative orders by shipowners in the Far East.

Recent market developments are once again correcting the previous forecasts of future world production: actual world market requirements in 1988 can represent no more than 7 million gross registered tonnes of new orders. This figure represents less than 40% of current world capacity and less than 5 months' production at full capacity for all shipyards.

The following points largely explain the decline in shipbuilding production:

- (i) a sharp decline in world maritime transport since the end of the 1970s with a fall of 25% between 1979 and 1984;
- (ii) the establishment of industrial production sites in newly industrialized countries;
- (iii) the development of heavy industry

- in developing countries close to the sources of raw materials;
- (iv) energy conservation and the growing importance of nuclear energy to the detriment of traffic in oil and minerals;
- (v) some degree of self-sufficiency in agricultural products which reduces cereal exports, particularly to certain regions of the world;
- (vi) something of an economic 'dematerialization': the technological new deal dependent on electronics renders a number of manufactured products superfluous.

Be that as it may, one of the problems which continues to weigh on the European shipbuilding industry is the aggressive attitude of the Japanese and Korean shipyards, epitomized by a quasi-systematic exaggeration of orders and a quite evident refusal to hold multilateral or bilateral discussions on the problems of shipbuilding overcapacity. As an example, the Commission considers that the Japanese restructuring programme (which will take the Japanese share of the world market down from 45 to 35% in the next two years, climbing back however to 40% during the 1990s) overestimates the market possibilities.

The Commission's department is at present investigating what concrete measures could be taken in the field of foreign trade policy. The European Commission intends to finalize a report on the results of this investigation for the middle of 1988.

To ensure their operational effectiveness, the proposed programmes of accompanying social and regional measures should be adopted by the Council and the European Parliament in mid-1988.

### *European role in the redevelopment process*

Given the structural adjustment required of the shipbuilding industry, its

consequences in terms of employment, and the industrial decline in the shipbuilding regions, caused, since the mid-1970s by a recession of unprecedented proportions, the traditional measures

<sup>1</sup> COM(86) 553 final, 15.10.1986; COM(87) 275 final, 20.7.1987; COM(87) 275/2 final, 10.12.1987; OJ C 291, 31.10.1987.

<sup>2</sup> Council Directive 87/167/EEC; OJ L 69, 12.3.1987.

and level of funding are no longer enough.

The length and severity of the recession are, in fact, such that these regions are almost 'dead'. Indeed, the European Commission has stated that stimulating 'dormant' local investment in order to create alternative employment is no longer adequate: a new industrial fabric must be created and assistance provided so that men who lose their jobs in the shipbuilding industry can be reintegrated into economic life or, in the case of the more elderly among them, can retire permanently from working life.

Such an operation is expensive, very expensive, which is why the European Commission is proposing a substantial financial package, totalling more than 350 million ECU, including 270 million ECU in 'fresh money' for the years 1988 to 1990.

These substantial levels of financial assistance by the Community — to which equivalent national assistance must be added — are commensurate with the challenge, in particular the social challenge, posed by the crucial need to reintegrate into economic life workers who are made redundant or threatened with redundancy and the necessary industrial adjustment in the shipbuilding regions. According to the latest estimates, out of 93 000 employed in the shipbuilding industry of the Twelve at the end of 1986, (against 208 000 in 1975) about 30 000 jobs are threatened in the period 1987-89.

The Commission emphasizes that, substantial though they may be, these levels of finance will not be sufficient in the long run. The Renaval programme and the new accompanying social measures are, in effect, an urgent response to a serious crisis, pending the adoption of the European Commission's proposals on the reform of the structural Funds. These two programmes look ahead to the 'new frontier' established by the Single European Act, namely the realization of an ambitious objective, i.e. 'Objective No 2' of the package of measures proposed by the Commission aimed at the redevelopment of industrial regions in decline.<sup>1</sup>

The number of workers likely to benefit from the new accompanying social measures is as follows:

	1987	1988	1989	Total 1987-89
Permanent retirement from working life	4 000	3 000	2 000	9 000
Absorption into economic life and socio-occupational integration	2 000	3 000	2 000	7 000
Geographical mobility (combination with other allowances permitted)	3 000	2 000	1 000	6 000

The cost to the budget of these measures would involve appropriations for commitment amounting to 71.5 million ECU to be used according to the following timetable for the period 1988-90:

	1988	1989	1990	Total 1988-90
Permanent retirement from working life	20	15	10	45
Absorption into economic life and socio-occupational integration	5	7.5	5	17.5
Geographical mobility	4.5	3	1.5	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.5</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>71.5</b>

*Two concrete proposals: the Renaval programme and the new programme of accompanying social measures*

*A specific European programme of accompanying social measures, i.e. a 'social volet', endowed with 71.5 million ECU.*

This 'social volet' would be applied retrospectively to assist shipbuilding workers who have been made redundant or are threatened with redundancy since 1 January 1987. The European Commission is proposing three specific courses of action which could affect some 22 000 workers for the period 1987-89:

(a) *Measures to encourage absorption into economic life and socio-occupa-*

*tional integration: any worker made redundant or threatened with redundancy who takes advantage of one or more eligible measures to encourage absorption into economic life and socio-occupational integration would qualify for the Community programme's assistance for eligible expenditure up to a maximum of 2 500 ECU per worker, on condition that the public authorities of the Member State concerned provided an equivalent financial contribution. Assistance may be granted towards expenditure in respect of the following:*

- (i) recruitment aid;

<sup>1</sup> COM(87) 376 final, 30.7.1987.

- (ii) income maintenance allowances (to compensate for the difference in wages between the old and the new job);
  - (iii) subsidies to promote the setting up of new businesses or setting up in a self-employed capacity;
  - (iv) assistance towards the cost of consultancy services;
  - (v) recruitment aid for schemes to provide work on community service projects;
  - (vi) tide-over allowances (to supplement unemployment benefit).
- (b) *Measures to promote geographical mobility:* any worker made redundant or threatened with redundancy would qualify for a mobility premium, up to a maximum of 1 500 ECU per worker, to cover eligible home-removal costs, on condition that the public authorities of the Member State concerned provide an equivalent financial contribution. This premium could be combined with vocational training operations or measures to encourage absorption into economic life and socio-occupational integration.
- (c) *Measures to ease transition to permanent retirement from working life:* any elderly worker who is made redundant and is no longer regarded as seeking employment under the provisions of the laws of his country, whether retiring early on a pension or receiving a tide-over allowance in the form of a bridging benefit designed to supplement unemployment benefit, would qualify for an allowance for permanent retirement from working life amounting to a maximum of 5 000 ECU per worker, on condition that the public authorities of the Member State concerned provided an equivalent financial contribution.

By way of an experiment and in order to increase the impact of the measures, the Commission proposes that the new resources be used in the form of programmes.

**Specific Community programme for accompanying social measures: integration with the directive on assistance and complementarity with the Social Fund.**

The structural changes upheld by Directive 87/167/EEC are such that a great number, representing a high proportion of shipbuilding workers — some 30 000 between 1987 and 1989 — will be or may be forced to change job, acquire new skills or move to another part of the Community, or, in the case of the more elderly workers, to retire early from working life.

In adopting the said directive, the Council has also acknowledged that additional measures should be adopted in order to alleviate the social and regional consequences of the restructuring of the shipbuilding sector. In accordance with the guidelines set out in its first communication on the industrial, social and regional aspects of the shipbuilding industry, the Commission feels that the employment situation is such as to call for the urgent adoption of a Community programme of new accompanying social measures to assist shipbuilding workers who are made redundant or threatened with redundancy; the new specific measures must encourage the absorption into economic life, the socio-economic integration and geographical mobility of workers made redundant or threatened with redundancy, as well as facilitate the transition to permanent retirement from working life of elderly work-

ers who are no longer considered as being in search of employment; they complement the measures qualifying for assistance under the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

The provisions relating to assistance from the European Social Fund respond only in part to the specific problems of workers made redundant or threatened with redundancy in the shipbuilding industry. The range of measures qualifying for assistance from the European Social Fund which could be used to assist workers affected by restructuring is limited in particular by the terms of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2950/83: for example, it lays down that aid for recruitment or for employment in projects for the creation of additional jobs which fulfil a public need will be granted in respect of young people under 25 who are seeking employment and long-term unemployed persons. Although consistent with the political objective pursued under the ESF reform of 1983, i.e. priority for measures aimed at young people, this does mean that assistance under the Fund for workers over 25 who are affected by restructuring is limited, for the most part, to vocational training operations. However, workers affected by restructuring in the traditional industries find it difficult to adjust to the available jobs and to respond to changes in the demand for labour. The Commission considers that adopting new accompanying social measures of direct and immediate benefit to all shipbuilding workers made redundant or threatened with redundancy in the European Community is the most appropriate way of solving this specific labour market problem.

The Community programme has been drawn up in order to assist shipbuilding workers made redundant or threatened with redundancy with effect from 1 January 1987 (date of entry into force of Directive 87/167/EEC). The duration of the Community programme would be three years starting on 1 January 1988.

*Renaval, a programme for the conversion of shipbuilding areas,* is to be financed by the Regional Fund, endowed with 200 million ECU. The Commission considers this budget is necessary to jointly finance the following measures:

- (i) improvements in facilities;

- (ii) development of small and medium-sized enterprises;
- (iii) encouragement of innovation;
- (iv) access to risk capital;
- (v) sector-based studies;
- (vi) investment assistance.

The principal idea behind the Commission's proposed strategy is to take immediate action to prevent irreversible damage to these regions.

The first supportive measure is for Spain and Portugal. It will come into effect as soon as the Regulation is adopted by the Twelve. The financial package for Spain, for the years 1988 to 1990 allocates 21 million ECU to assist the La Coruna, Pontevedra and Cadiz regions as well as the Vizcaya region which will benefit from a national regional aid scheme. As for Portugal, the Setubal region will benefit from 9 million ECU in assistance during the period 1988-90.

The second supportive measure, applicable to all Community countries, will be implemented later on the basis of applications drawn up by each of the Member States concerned, which must be submitted to the European Commission before 30 April 1990.

*Assistance measures already in effect*

Substantial amounts of financial assistance already being applied must be added to these new financial measures proposed by the European Commission:

- (a) 63 million ECU in measures financed by the European Social Fund for the years 1987-89, which must either be used to improve professional qualifications in the shipbuilding industry or to retrain for a new job outside the sector some 45 000 workers in the sector;

- (b) 71 million ECU for 1987 devoted to special programmes financed by the Regional Fund, the effects of which will carry through into 1989.<sup>1</sup>

During the period before these programmes are adopted in mid-1988, the European Commission will coordinate its activities with the local and regional authorities to ensure the maximum effectiveness of action

taken. With this end in view, and in keeping with the method chosen for the reform of the structural Funds, the European Commission has approved appropriation under the Regional Fund.

<sup>1</sup> See OJ L 271, 15. 10. 1980, OJ L 27, 31. 1. 1984 and OJ L 350, 27. 12. 1985.

**The European Social Fund**

The European Social Fund assists in the retraining of workers in new skills. The main provision under which such aid is granted is point 4.3. of the Guidelines for the management of the Fund (selection criteria). This gives priority to vocational training linked to the restructuring of firms where the scale of restructuring is substantial, both in terms of the number of workers involved and the degree of retraining necessary.

Training is available for workers in need of new skills to equip them for a job elsewhere within the firm or for those who become surplus to requirements and are obliged to seek employment elsewhere. The volume of

aid approved for such activities in the shipbuilding sector in 1986 was some 9.71 million ECU for an estimated 5 700 to 11 000 workers and 15.29 million ECU for an estimated 11 000 to 21 000 workers in 1987.

The Commission estimates that during the period 1987-89 a total of 45 300 workers could benefit from actions co-financed by the European Social Fund. Training will be available for workers in need of new skills to equip them for a job elsewhere in the shipbuilding industry and for those obliged to seek employment outside the industry.

The estimated budgetary cost of the ESF training measures would be as follows:

	1987	1988	1989	Total 1987-89
Number of workers concerned	21 900	14 300	9 100	45 300
Unit cost (ECU)	1 375	1 410	1 445	—
Total cost without linear reduction (million ECU)	30	20	13	63

The guidelines provide for exemptions from the linear reduction in the case of measures particularly dependent on aid from the Fund. In the Com-

mission's view, this ensures that priority measures falling into that category can be implemented.

# Programme of exchange of local development agents

**In 1986 and 1987 the Commission helped 135 development agents from all Member States to visit a total of 48 local development agencies in another country. This article reviews this 'exchange visits' programme, which has been organized by Eglei (European group for local employment initiatives) and coordinated by the Fondation rurale de Wallonie. In view of the importance of the lessons already learnt and the benefits gained by all the participants in the programme, the Commission has decided to carry out a further series of exchanges in 1988.**

The massive rise in unemployment following the second oil price shock has induced governments to intensify their fight against unemployment. Despite this effort, high levels of unemployment persist and certain groups of the population are still facing growing difficulties in finding a job.

In this situation individuals of small groups found a new answer to the economic challenge facing them, in the form of local employment initiatives (LEIs). They were inspired by the certainty that voluntary, creative action was necessary to escape from the recession and by the realization that people have a better grasp of matters which are at their fingertips. There was a move towards an economy where supply and demand, needs and their satisfaction, were to be found on the doorstep. Naturally, these are real companies, often very small and bound by economic constraints, but their specificity does not stop there. They paid particular — and often preferential — attention to social objectives, to strictly human aspects and in certain cases to ideology. The latter group aimed to create a different conception of the production of goods and services.

Local initiatives exist in all the Community countries. Their form, however, varies as does the population they serve and the range of goods and services offered. They have become an integral and non-negligible part of the economic fabric. Initiatives complement public authority work and receive support from them in the majority of Member States. The Commission firmly supports their activities and recognizes that they have a key role to play in creating employment and stimulating social innovation.

Local employment initiatives are often inspired by the wish to create jobs in expanding sectors or to work in a sector which interests the group. It is not yet an easy matter for the economic layman to launch a business. LEIs must, despite their lack of experience, be able to rent premises, take on staff (or employ themselves), apply for a loan, advance or State aid, keep their accounts up to date, fill in their tax declarations, adapt their products and much, much

more. Their heartfelt cry for help has been met by the mushrooming of other initiatives. Providing aid, advice, support and coordination, they form a kind of 'advisory link-up' between creative but untrained businessmen and women and national or European bodies, financial organizations and the public in general. These intermediary structures, which ease exchanges between levels characteristically distinct, are generally termed 'local development agencies'.

There are now hundreds of such agencies in the 12 EEC Member States. Each is different and has its own individual character. This variety is essential if they are to blend into their local environment. They do, however, have some characteristics in common, symbolized by the fact that they all cluster under the same name. First of all, their local nature: development agencies have no national ambitions. They are motivated by the need to be close to the local population and to its requirements. Secondly, they all operate with a dedicated staff of 'development agents' who have very precise abilities and qualities. Finally, they all strive to expand their range of integrated development or economic development activities.

## *The exchange programme of local development agents*

Despite the large number of local development agencies existing today with thousands of development agents, their role is new and the profession recent. The first aim of the 'exchange visits' programme was to define therefore, in a dynamic and useful manner, the various faces of this new profession and to analyse how the agencies work within the social context of their areas. At the same time the programme enabled agents applying very different practices in a wide range of environments to meet one another and learn through comparison. Finally, the exchange programme permitted agents to articulate common needs and to increase the credibility and recognition of the agencies.

In the early summer of both 1986 and 1987 a total of 135 development

agents visited 48 development agencies in a country other than their own, i.e. three agents from three different countries visited a local development agency in yet another country.

In order to obtain a maximum of useful information from the 'exchange visits' programme, the agencies were selected in such a way as to represent as far as possible the full spectrum of existing agencies:

- (i) some were rather young and small while others had already existed for some time and were relatively big in terms of personnel;
- (ii) some were working in an urban, others in a rural environment;
- (iii) some agencies confined their role to employment creation and assistance to local employment initiatives while others took an active role in all aspects — economic and social — of local development, etc.

In a similar manner, the visiting agents were selected — out of a large number of applicants — according to several criteria, command of language and interests expressed in specific types of projects obviously being of prime importance. Each of the visitors had a background allowing the systematic assessment of the agencies' various work themes. The development agents spent a week watching the activities and techniques used by their hosts.

### *Results*

Although the 'exchange visits' programme produced a voluminous and learned report providing a good idea of the structures and work methods of existing local development agencies, the most direct benefits of the programme probably accrued to the agencies and agents which actually participated in the programme.

Thus, the host organizations — the agencies visited by colleagues — were able to:

- (i) reflect and compare ways of operation, methods and strategies. They

were placed in a position where they could 'filch' tactics and good ideas from more-than-willing visitors;

- (ii) participate in the training of their agents through contact, listening sessions and exchanges with visiting agents;
- (iii) increase the credibility of the agency in the eyes of local authorities, potential customers and partners in general: 'they must be serious if people come to visit them from all over Europe';
- (iv) favourably influence the views of people with whom the agency has to deal. Following the visits, files proceeded faster through the administrative pipeline or surmounted a given hurdle;
- (v) establish links with sister agencies in other areas. Agencies decided in an independent manner and without the intervention of the EEC Commission or Elise (The European information network on local employment initiatives) to develop cooperation and fully exploit exchange;
- (vi) prove that they were not just a new social gadget, but a dynamic, employment-creating process.

Visiting agents, for the same reasons, were able to:

- (a) improve their training level through contact with others, compare and reflect upon different methods and concepts;
- (b) assess their strategies and techniques in relation to other practices;
- (c) examine their own practice from a distance and put it in a better perspective;
- (d) obtain a share of new ideas, which could be adapted to their particular agency;
- (e) break out of their isolation and create European momentum among development agencies: invitations for similar visits or working seminars were made by the visitors to their hosts and accepted by the latter.

The 'exchange visits' programme undoubtedly yielded a good insight into the structure and work methods of local development agencies. Although the agencies which participated in the exchange programme cannot in the statistical sense be considered representative, a survey of those which participated in the 1987 programme reveals some interesting features:

- (i) The vast majority of agencies have a status as a private, non-profit-making organization. This does not rule out their being the brainchild of local administrations.
- (ii) Although the budgets of agencies vary greatly — as does the number of staff — and in a number of cases exceed 1 000 000 ECU per year, subsidies are generally the main source of income. Local development agencies still have a long way to go before they become economically viable.
- (iii) The objectives followed by the agencies range from job creation or training, which in some cases may be addressed only to specific groups of the population (e.g. women or young unemployed persons) to integrated all-round development of the local area.

The information collected allows the tentative definition of some conditions which determine the success of a local development agency. A successful agency:

- (i) has a motivated and competent staff of development agents which it trains permanently;
- (ii) has a legal status, means of action, and can intervene rapidly when necessary;
- (iii) has a good understanding of the requests and needs of the target public, and of the environment it is working in;
- (iv) makes the whole of the population and the various sectors (private and public) take part in the development efforts. Partnership is essential;
- (v) makes use of a large network of experts and volunteers;



(vi) has available public relations tools to visualize the existence and the actions of the local development agency and to help development agents in their awareness campaign.

Since there are so many more development agents than agencies and, more importantly, since they vary greatly in many respects (status, vocational qualification, function in the agency, etc.), no general picture of employment agents having participated in the 'exchange visits' programme is drawn here. It is, however, worth noting that development agents apply two distinct strategies. Agents applying an 'over-the counter' strategy or an individual welcoming technique intervene at the request of a project developer, who may lack information, technical means or material. This was the strategy most frequently applied. A minority of agents, on the contrary, applied a market-place-oriented strategy in the sense that the agency itself suggests projects on the basis of market research or feasibility or environmental studies. Finally, several agencies have a mixed strategy, drawing both upon individual ideas and market requirements.

The study also draws the profile of an ideal development agent. According to this profile he is a highly motivated, flexible, active and competent promoter

and entrepreneur whose role is to create awareness for local development among the population, to mobilize human and other resources, and to give advice and training. His status permits him to bring long-term development actions to fruition. He benefits from initial training (upon recruitment) and permanent training in the techniques of know-how, in management projects and in the techniques of adult training.

#### *Future developments*

In its desire to see the development of local development agencies progress and to foster the exchange between the agencies, the Commission has decided to continue the 'exchange visits' programme in 1988. Apart from the fact that this will enable additional agents to benefit from such an exchange of experiences it should also shed some light on the way in which the results of the development actions can be evaluated. Indeed, the previous exchange visits have made clear that evaluation of results is often neglected, as agents tend to have a stronger commitment to action than to reflection.

The Commission will also help local development agencies in defining and setting up distant learning courses

which can be used for the continuous training of development agents. As it is intended to disseminate the courses by means of electronic mail to the individual agencies, the outcome of the project could at the same time create a technical network among the agencies. This would be an important step towards the consolidation of the existing information and exchange network between agencies.

Local development agencies are an important cornerstone in local employment development, which in recent years has gained considerable prominence in Community and Member States' employment policies. The Community action programme on the development of the local labour market (see *Social Europe 3/87*) witnesses the importance the Commission attaches to this problem. Against this background the 'exchange visits' programme proves to be an efficient and cost-effective way to promote employment at the local level.

(A brochure on the 1986 'exchange visits' programme in English/French can be obtained from

DG V/A/1  
Archimède-I  
200, rue de la Loi  
B-1049 Brussels.)

# Work programme of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

**The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, which is located at Loughlinstown House in the County of Dublin (Ireland), is an autonomous Community body established on 26 May 1975 by a regulation of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities.**

**The European Foundation was created as a result of discussions among both sides of industry, the governments of Member States and Community institutions on how to solve the ever-growing problems associated with the improvement of living and working conditions.**

**The task of the Foundation is to help in the design and establishment of better living and working conditions, through action to develop and disseminate knowledge.**

**The Foundation is managed by a quadripartite Administrative Board comprising three representatives of the Commission of the European Communities and, for each Member State, one representative from the government, one from the employers' organizations, and one from the labour organizations. The Administrative Board manages the Foundation, decides its policies, and adopts the work programme on the basis of a draft submitted by the Director.**

**The Foundation is also advised by a 12-person committee of experts, who are drawn from the various disciplines relating to the activities of the Foundation.**

The Foundation's current work programme completes the implementation of the 1985-88 four-year rolling programme whose purpose was to arrive at conclusions through various research projects, under three headings: people at work, time and the environment.

The following table shows how this programme was set under way during these four years. Before the various projects are presented, however, it should be pointed out that the Foundation has recently published (or will very soon publish) synoptic reports and balance-sheets of previous work (the Foundation has been operational since 1977) on:

- (i) work with VDUs, its ergonomic and work-organization aspects;
- (ii) commuting, its effects and possible improvements;
- (iii) shift work, its problems and areas for improvement;
- (iv) new technology and its future potential in the improvement of living and working conditions;
- (v) participation and involvement of the parties concerned in the improvement of living and working conditions.

It will be immediately apparent that the Foundation's programme of activities has now established a balance between questions relating to living conditions and to working conditions.

The first section of the Foundation's current programme concerns people at work. It covers a number of projects which are briefly described below.

Working conditions in the construction industry have featured in the Foundation's programme since 1986. This is a sector in which a large number of work accidents occur. Research has shown that risks on building sites can be reduced if the dimension of 'working conditions' is included in the initial design of buildings and the planning of the site. Such an approach may also result in quality improvements and greater productivity. The Foundation's work focuses on these aspects and should yield practical proposals for decision-

makers in this area (architects, engineers, foremen).

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are receiving special attention within the Community. For its part, the Foundation has carried out research to identify the key factors that shape working conditions and industrial relations in SMEs. In 1988 the results of this research will be submitted to a round table, with the aim of highlighting possible areas for action.

The Foundation's earlier research on the relation between man and machine stressed the problems that might arise for working conditions within automated systems, particularly as a result of the way in which robots are perceived. The current project is considering the human-oriented design and implementation of industrial robot systems. The aim here is to collect 'good' examples and to ensure that they are transferred when new technology is being introduced. Exploratory studies will also consider ergonomic software criteria.

The Foundation's experience, particularly with the introduction of new technology, clearly shows that technical choices have a profound effect on later working conditions. It is thus important to integrate the aspect of working conditions into the first stages of an investment project. For it is more effective and less costly — in both social and economic terms — to take action at the design stage rather than through later correction of problem-ridden situations. This view underlies the chiefly methodological project on the consideration of working conditions in the management of technical projects.

The same concern lies at the heart of the project on working conditions and the quality of care in the health services — a project which follows on from Foundation research into the effects of new technology on health-care personnel and patients in intensive care units. A workshop planned for 1988, which will bring together various experts and organizations in this area, will focus on the problem of architectural and ergonomic design of care centres.

**EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

Rolling programme 1985-88		ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMMES				Living condi- tions	Working condi- tions						
		1985	1986	1987	1988								
PEOPLE AT WORK	Change in the pro- duction of goods and services		Working conditions in the construction industry				x						
			Working conditions and industrial rela- tions in SMEs				x						
	Changes in nature of work			Harmonized design and introduction of industrial robots				x					
					Consideration for working conditions in management of technical projects Working conditions and quality of health- care services			x					
	Developments in the field of machinery and equipment							x					
								Telework New forms of work- ing and activity					x
								Role of parties concerned in the in- troduction of new technologies					x
								Development of tasks of supervisory staff		European employ- ment and industrial relations dictionary			x
	Organization of time							x					
								Time management and improvement of living and working conditions					x
Patterns of time use (Time budget data archives)												x	
Solidarity — Free time — Family							x						
							Impact of solidarity and time available for offspring and elderly					x	
Urban environment							x						
							Information policies and practices regard- ing urban services					x	
							Urban environment — Housing — Active solidarity: Implica- tions for young people					x	
ENVI- RON- MENT							x						
							Burden of economic and social changes to be borne by local authorities					x	
							Living conditions of LTU — local initia- tives					x	
	Biotechnology							x					
								Voluntary work in environment field					x
	Non-nuclear wastes							x					
								Impact of biotech- nology on living and working conditions					x
								Safety aspects of hazardous wastes					x
								Safety aspects of contaminated wastes					x
								Hazardous wastes and the public					x
				Education and train- ing concerning hazardous wastes			x						



In 1988 the Foundation will be in a position to distribute the results of research into telework. This form of work, though marginal and unlikely to spread rapidly, raises a number of important considerations, particularly with regard to the home as a work area.

The new forms of work and activity, sometimes called atypical work forms, are the subject of an important programme that is included the activities for 1985-88.

They form part of the trend towards greater flexibility of the labour market.

Following research within the 12 Member States of the Community and a seminar held in Dublin in 1987, the Foundation will be able in 1988 to distribute two important studies in labour law: one concerns legal and contractual limits relating to worktime; the other discusses the evolution of labour law and social security with reference to atypical forms of work.

At the same time, a survey is being prepared of actual experiences at enterprise level of part-time, temporary, fixed-contract, evening and weekend work.

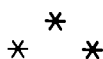
On the basis of a questionnaire, 500 firms in five countries will be asked about their practices and aspirations from both the employer's and the workers' side.

The method of sample surveys has also been used for an important stage in the research programme on the role of the parties involved in the introduction of new technology. This opinion survey, which will cover every country in the Community, follows on from earlier analysis of case studies. Here too, a programme is under way for the dissemina-

tion of knowledge, principally through the organization of 'national round tables' that will draw together experts and social partners in the various countries.

Social dialogue is an important issue at the Community level. But the systems and practices of labour and industrial relations, which are sometimes in the process of major change, still bear an essentially national mark. In order to foster the understanding of national circumstances, the Foundation has begun to prepare a series of European dictionaries of labour and industrial relations which will eventually (1992 is not far off) cover the 12 Member States. Work is currently proceeding on the dictionaries for Spain, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Belgium.

While collective labour relations are rapidly changing, the same is true of relations within the company. This being so, it seemed in order to undertake research into the changing functions of management. Case studies are under way in various countries and branches of the economy.



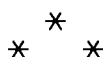
The organization of time within society — which is an important nexus between living and working conditions — forms the second section of the Foundation's current programme.

In the last few years a number of exploratory studies have been conducted into the organization of time and improvement of living and working conditions for 'providers' of services and consumers. Work is now under way to bring together the results of these studies.

In addition, analysis of data collected by the European Foundation archive of time budget data is looking into patterns of time use. These studies will be examined in 1988 at a workshop that should help in defining the various possible uses of time.

The results of research into the impact of social cohesion and time avail-

able for care of the elderly have been published and are now being disseminated.



The environment constitutes the third section, covering various projects of the Foundation. Three major themes serve to focus attention, namely the urban environment, biotechnology, and hazardous wastes.

The urban environment is often the crucible of especially vulnerable groups whose poor living conditions are particularly striking. It is essentially these groups which are at the core of the Foundation's concerns.

A booklet that is now being widely distributed shows how information about urban services can be got through to less-favoured consumers. In general, such consumers are not aware of services that might be of help to them, and more effective information strategies are required to establish a link between the services and interested parties.

Research on the housing and living conditions of young people in urban settings is now nearing completion. It is no longer necessary to stress the importance of youth unemployment within the Community. The research particularly addresses the search-for-housing/search-for-work dilemma.

Local authorities are assuming ever greater importance in European towns inasmuch as these are places for coping with social and economic changes. The Foundation's research in this area seeks to identify those factors which make it easier or more difficult to cope with such changes.

Local initiatives on long-term unemployment have been the focus of various activities within the Foundation (often in close collaboration with Cedefop). A number of reports analysing some 20 case-studies are currently being published, as are the proceedings of a workshop held in Dublin in March 1988 to draw conclusions from the research and to recommend future action.

The urban environment was also at the centre of a study of voluntary initiatives in the environment that is now being published.

'The social dimensions of biotechnology — towards a European policy' was the theme of an international seminar organized by the Foundation in November 1987, which brought together a number of experts, research workers and policy-makers. The proceedings are now being published. This seminar followed on from exploratory research that the Foundation had conducted into the impact of biotechnology on living and working conditions, with particular emphasis on medicine, agriculture, the environment, work and employment.

Hazardous (non-nuclear) wastes, and especially the safety issues involved, have been the focus of an ongoing research programme in response to the conclusions of a round table held in Dublin in November 1985. A booklet summarizing these conclusions is now widely available.

Following closer study of safety issues associated with the handling and monitoring of hazardous wastes, a second study has looked into contaminated waste sites in the Community.

Work is progressing on two research projects: one concerns public information and involvement in problems relating to hazardous wastes; the other is taking up education and training relating to hazardous wastes.

The third four-year rolling programme draws to an end in 1988, and the 1989-92 programme is already on the agenda. The Foundation, whose work looks to the medium and longer term, has to have its eyes turned to the future. And 1992, whose broad internal market is a beacon for the Community, is already just round the corner.

The major changes affecting European society, the social consequences of the internal market for living and working conditions — these are the vital issues that the Foundation is now preparing to take up.

**Eric Verborgh**

# European Social Fund:

## the pilot project for the use of new information and communications technologies in the vocational preparation and training of disadvantaged young people

Since the beginning of 1986, IMBSE (Institut für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung — Moers) has been running a pilot project for the 'Introduction of new information and communications technologies in the vocational preparation and training of disadvantaged young people' (the 'NIK project'). This trial has received financial support from the Federal Republic of Germany's Ministry of Education and Science (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft = BMBW) and the European Social Fund.

### The concept of the NIK project

#### *General situation*

The target group for the project — disadvantaged young people — consists of young people who for various reasons have not found training with an employer, or who have to rely on additional support in order to fulfil the requirements of training at a college or with an employer. In this context, the term 'disadvantaged' is a very fluid one. On the one hand, it includes young people whose particular personal and/or social inadequacies or below-average educational qualifications make them unable to cope with the demands of on-the-job training; and, on the other hand, the young people concerned, especially in the Moers/Wesel region, have fallen victim to the desperate shortage of training jobs,<sup>1</sup> although their educational entrance qualifications offer a typical cross-section of the range of school-leavers (Hauptschulabschluß to Abitur = secondary-school-leavers to university entrance). Seen objectively, these latter are also disadvantaged job-seekers.

The agent for the project is the Institute for Measures to Promote Vocational and Social Integration (Institut für Maßnahmen zur Förderung der beruflichen und sozialen Eingliederung — IMBSE), a registered non-profit-making society which has operated in Moers since 1983.

The activities of IMBSE are centred on the 'Disadvantaged programme'; this includes regular off-the-job training initiatives ending in a recognized examination,<sup>2</sup> and the provision of training support aids (ausbildungsbegleitende Hilfen = ABH), i.e. special instruction for young people who need additional help to pass their examinations. Wherever possible, the aim is to open linear routes from vocational preparation via training to integration into working life.

As far as the target groups allow,<sup>3</sup> many options (polyvalenzen) are integrated into the training programmes,

which in some cases go beyond the prescribed requirements of the relevant area of training — thus offering qualifications intended to enhance the vocational and social mobility of the participant.

#### *Terms of reference for pilot trial*

The aim of the model trial is to develop a concept for the integration of the new technologies into the special social and educational activities required for the training of disadvantaged young people, which will contribute to an improvement in work in the educational, social and vocational training spheres and thus optimize the young people's learning capacity in the areas of both specialist training and general education. The emphasis is thus not laid on the aim of opening up access for some young people benefiting from particular training programmes to professions in the field of production and development of new technologies which are seen as 'having a future'.

The background problem to the trials in using data processing in the training of disadvantaged young people lies in apprehensions with regard to the effects of the new technologies on the future available to the young people trained by IMBSE, if they are not adequately prepared for changes at work and in everyday life.

There are many occupations, e.g. in the area of the metalworking and electrical industries, which are currently undergoing major transformation through the effects of the new technologies. There are a number of occupations which have only come into being as a result of the new technologies. But there are also

<sup>1</sup> See the BMBW vocational training report (*Berufsbildungsbericht*), 1985 and 1986.

<sup>2</sup> IMBSE provides vocational training for carpenters/joiners, wood engineers, power plant electronics engineers, florists, dressmakers and garment makers.

<sup>3</sup> See the definition of 'disadvantaged' given above.

many occupations which, in current practice and in their training regulations, still have little or no contact with the new technologies — although it is probable that in the long term those employed in these fields will eventually become in some way users of or affected by them. The trades for which IMBSE offers training fall predominantly into the latter group.

Although any assured prediction of the detailed features of the social change resulting from the use of the new technologies must still be pure speculation, we can be certain that young people who do not now gain knowledge of and ability to deal with the new technologies, or who have not overcome their emotional inhibitions to approaching them, will not find a place in the key areas of the original employment system (Kernbereiche des originären Beschäftigungssystems).

There are a number of additional reasons to support the approach to disadvantaged young people and provide them with qualifications in the field of new technologies: as a basic acquaintance with new technologies becomes part of general education, any young person hoping to interact competently with his future social environment has a *right* to learn something about the new technologies, to exploit their advantages for himself and arm himself with an awareness of their disadvantages. Besides this we see a need to prevent lack of self-confidence and a false self-assessment on the part of the young person, resulting in a refusal on a personal level to accept the new technologies. Attitudes of this sort would also be an impediment to later attempts at further education.

**Criteria for target-group-oriented application**

The difficulties connected with the aim of making disadvantaged young people acquainted with the new technologies and underlining the experimental nature of the project can be roughly summarized as follows:

Aren't young people over-stretched by the new technologies? How will the introduction to the new technologies tie in with vocational experience, when 'new technologies' and 'information technology' do not exist as subjects in their own right and the teaching timetable does not allow scope for the additional teaching of extra and new subjects — especially in view of the danger of making excessive demands on young people, which would result from a simple stacking up of the different subjects.

Consequently, the aim adopted by the pilot project outlined here is that of finding new methods by which young people can gain a basic understanding of the new technologies and can be enabled to use the new technologies as a tool without becoming overtaxed.

Likewise it was hoped at the start of the trial that the new technologies would have a positive effect on the teaching situation itself, e.g. by releasing new motivations for learning and stimulating new forms of teaching. For this reason the goal of a basic qualification in information technology (IT) was integrated into a concept which took into account the effects of the use of new technologies in teaching and training as regards promoting motivations and attitudes to learning.

The central idea guiding this dimension of the model trial and to be tested for realizability is that learning at the computer keyboard and with computer help should:

- (i) make new learning experiences possible;
- (ii) break through acquired barriers to learning by means of a new relationship to the learning process;
- (iii) promote a positive attitude to later opportunities for further education;
- (iv) facilitate the acquisition of cognitive abilities which are otherwise especially difficult for students with learning difficulties to acquire.

A more detailed analysis of the demand for qualifications brought about by the use of recent technologies indicated — contrary to prevailing conceptions

and earlier plans to integrate information technology into the curriculum as an autonomous subject — that IT itself is being made more and more user-friendly and is increasingly easy to integrate seamlessly into everyday working life as a tool. Thus, measured by current standards, the qualifications demanded of potential users are likely to fall rather than rise. This means that for most trades and occupations it will not be necessary to acquire a specialized knowledge of IT, but rather to have a basic understanding of the field.

On the other hand, a firm foundation of traditional vocational knowledge is still not only necessary, but is being demanded even more strongly than ever. Moreover, one can foresee that heavier demands will be made of the capacity for formal thought and social cooperation. Current changes in training regulations, together with the introduction of technologies for storing and processing information, make evident a trend towards greater demands for the ability to deal with abstractions and think in terms of relationships, whilst demands in the immediate area of materials processing will fall off. The findings of qualifications research lead one to assume that this trend will continue even more strongly in the future.

It was this last point that we saw as the major problem for many of the young people helped by IMBSE. In order to gather fuller information on this, IMBSE carried out a survey of other project agencies, aiming to establish in which areas these had experienced the main difficulties encountered or imagined by the young people in their charge in coming to grips with the new technologies. Many of the answers indicated that the young people have difficulty in following the abstract steps required for work with a CNC (computer numerical control) machine. Others referred to problems with analytical-logical modes of thought, and others to a deficiency of basic mathematical knowledge. This confirmed that the new technologies frequently presuppose traditional content even more rigorously than has hitherto been the case, and that it is

not the knowledge specific to information technology that the young people lack. These cognitive problems are difficult to visualize as simple problems of operating and working with 'the computer'. Nor can they be dealt with from the qualifications angle by merely passing on special IT concepts.

We therefore consider the general aims —

- (a) dealing with, obtaining and selecting information;
- (b) process-oriented, abstract thought;
- (c) integration of limited vocational aspects into the overall context of the work process —

to be important for the basic IT education of disadvantaged young people.

Accordingly, we endeavoured to find forms of teaching in which new technologies would be introduced and put to use in a context linking them to tasks and types of work which support these long-term aims concerning abstract qualifications. At the same time, we looked beyond the use of the computer in itself, in search of changes in teaching methods which would promote strategies for obtaining and processing information and for system-oriented thought. In this respect, a basic IT education was to be provided in other subjects and education contents with the relevant teaching aims and methods; a basic IT training alone cannot meet all the approaches to problems thrown up by society's use of IT in practice.

Not least, we have derived from the aims, problems and aspirations listed above the perspective of introducing computers in teaching and training in such a way that young people will be motivated and given new stimuli and support in extending and consolidating the traditional content. Besides this, they were to be helped in developing their ability to think and reason independently and abstractly, and thus gain an insight into the way the new technologies work appropriate to their status as future users, as well as acquiring skill in the correct operation of personal computers.

### *Learning tools*

Against the background of the above considerations, and with regard to the groups of students outlined, the IT tools that appear most appropriate are the 'high-level' or 'problem-oriented' systems, whilst many conventional programming languages or hardware-oriented IT approaches must be considered unsuitable as regards the support offered, for example, to the broad learning goals and teaching methodologies. 'High-level' IT systems may, for example, include applications systems or some programming languages; an essential aspect of these learning tools is that the effort directed at mastering them for themselves is small and that their use can promote reflexive learning effects directed at traditional, subject-specific or innovative types of problem. At the same time, learning processes can be relieved of time-consuming and inefficient routine tasks, such as

- (i) complex calculation, and the student's attention directed instead to structures and interrelationships (e.g. by using spreadsheet systems);
- (ii) the repeated copying down of texts in order to achieve a faultless and presentable fair copy (by using word-processing systems). Tools tried out on the basis of these considerations included various applications systems and the Logo programming language.

We would also have liked to use special teaching software more often than we were able, in those places where it would have offered targeted support for the students, even if this would have meant that an aspect related to IT qualifications would have played a highly subordinate role and the computer would have been functioning as no more than a teaching medium. However, one result of our researches in this area was the finding that there are very few programs on the German software market adequate for the requirements and institutional framework of support for disadvantaged students. Consequently, we had to be content to try out just a few programs. In the meantime, the results of our pilot trial have enabled us to draw

up requirements and criteria for appropriate teaching software and stimulate a process of international cooperation which we hope will lead to the availability in numerous languages, including German, of the fine examples of software which we found mainly originating with developers in other EEC countries.

### *Educationalists at the centre of the project*

Intensive guidance from the social education side is a central supportive feature with disadvantaged young people, which the introduction of new technologies is not intended to erode. This means that the demands made of our teaching methods do not derive solely from the vocational learning goals. A sound knowledge of the conditions under which teaching is structured, the target groups themselves and close personal contact with the young people are preconditions at least equally important to the success of the teaching effort.

These were aspects we had in mind in deciding that, as far as possible, we would not introduce an isolated 'basic training course' but draw in the educationalists who were already involved with the young people concerned.

To this must of course be added that we had to rely on the specialist ability of the teaching staff as regards achieving the new technology-oriented learning goals against the background of traditional learning contents and in the context of current vocational contents.

In consequence, once the central concepts guiding the project had been elaborated, priority was given early in the implementation schedule to ensuring the qualifications of the educationalists, instructors and social workers. Various internal further education courses and top-up schemes were drawn up and carried out by ourselves. We can record that, via the different initiatives put into effect during the last two years, we have kept constant touch with about 20 of our 40 senior staff and have been able, moreover, to attract other members of staff, if only selectively, by means of special talks dealing with indi-



vidual subjects of interest. A surprising aspect of this was that the opportunity for further training was taken up even by staff who were under no pressure in their own fields of work to concern themselves with new technologies. This may have been due to the fact that the subject matter dealt with in our initiatives started from an orientation directed to the opportunities for turning to account specific problems concerning the structuring of courses.

In the course of the pilot project, specific needs in different educational and advancement contexts gave rise to an ever-widening range of topics. During this time, autonomous working groups were formed to deal with the various different subjects. The working groups at present in existence include 'The mathematical basics of CNC technology', 'The use of spreadsheet systems in technical trades', 'Word-processing systems as an aid to proficiency in written expression', 'Logo as an aid to learning geometry' and a number of working groups evaluating learning software.

## Some results of the NIK project's work

### *Preliminary remarks on method*

In dealing with a concept expressly seeking differentiation in the facilities on offer and thus taking as its initial working premise a context in which the new vocational learning goals — in the present case, technology-oriented learning goals — would be adapted to the specific requirements of the target groups as well as to traditional learning goals, it is not easy to collate the results in a standardized, empirically proven form.

Our priorities being centred on the development of the materials, the purpose of the evaluation was to monitor our training units for their effectiveness. With an eye to the absence of control groups, which only a large-scale project could in any case have accommodated, we regard the results, which were collected by the application of qualitative methods (observing classes, interview-

ing staff), as a basis which will make possible a solidly constructed hypothesis for use in investigations to provide generally applicable results. A central subject of observation concerned changes in the behaviour of participants in interacting with one another.

To facilitate the observation of classes it was found expedient to divide them into working sections on a 'team teaching' basis.

The following results appear to us to be particularly worth recording in the light of the approach to the problems outlined at the start.

### *Problems of acceptance*

An important area of research for the project was that concerning likely problems with the acceptance of or access to the new technologies by disadvantaged young people. Concepts integral to a basic training in information and communication technology required separate treatment as regards content and as regards their educational application if these problems were to be brought to light.

None of the courses named showed evidence of problems of this nature worth mentioning. It would appear that disadvantaged young people have an especial willingness to work with computers. It may well be that this positive attitude is connected with fact that computers and the possibilities they offer currently enjoy a high level of social prestige.

Nevertheless, the willingness to learn about and via this medium is astonishing. This is particularly evident in the impressions of educationalists who have seen classical training topics, which have already been dealt with in past learning situations, eagerly taken up and dealt with when computers are brought in as a learning aid.

### *Vocational learning goals in the context of basic education in information technology*

Examined at the respective levels for which the courses were conceived and

put into practice — the 'differentiation rule' for defining learning goals has already been outlined — it proved that the elementary learning goals (i) for dealing with the hardware (where necessary), (ii) for an understanding of the basic 'sequences of functions in the technology, and (iii) knowledge of and acquaintance with the software used, where of significance for the vocational learning goals, were achieved without problems.

Particular difficulties were only observed where there were specific barriers to learning — for example, poor language ability on the part of young people from abroad. But these deficiencies, too, could largely be compensated for by targeted assistance. One measure adopted was to extend the time allowed for the respective courses, so making room for a repetitive (*redundante*) and thus more readily understood form of teaching.

### *Vocational learning goals from the context of traditional or professional learning aims*

In our view, the combination of traditional learning goals with learning goals intended to open up the new technologies as a subject of teaching offers a major opportunity for both fields of endeavour.

Our investigations showed that it was possible, with variations in the speed at which the subject matter was absorbed, to present topics of vocational relevance and general educational importance in such a way that even material already familiar but poorly understood was more successfully absorbed. The reservation must be added that this only applies to the extent that the subject matter in question offers an inherent suitability for treatment using a computer. Specific results have been obtained in this respect with reference to:

- (i) the use of the 'Logo play-learning language in the context of mathematics teaching;
- (ii) the use of 'Logo' as preparation for CNC technology;

- (iii) the use of 'Logo' as a freely available play-learning facility outside formal teaching, where, however, it carried with it important mathematical topics — especially in geometry — by way of a 'secret timetable', and
- (iv) the use of applications systems, e.g. the 'multiplan' spreadsheet system, in various courses concerned with teaching a basic knowledge of business economics and in particular the acquisition of skills in carrying out calculating tasks from the field of business economics.

We interviewed staff who previously taught courses in the same area and were thus able to make comparisons between courses dealing with the same subject matter. Irrespective of the unquestioned individual variation in speed of receptivity evident between participants, the educationalists we spoke to confirmed the effectiveness of our initiative.

We would point out, however, that of course not all subjects can or should be presented with computer support — and even those subjects for which it is appropriate should not be exclusively presented through this treatment. The specific advantages of the medium must be known before decisions can be made as to whether it is appropriate — and if so, in what form — to apply computer support to a particular teaching goal.

Areas in which the computer can clearly provide a particularly valuable service are those where it can present in a visual and activity-oriented manner contents which can otherwise be presented only in an abstract or schematic form, which applies, for example, to certain contents in the field of business economics.

#### *The computer as a motivational tool*

An important area of research for the pilot project derived from the particular attitudes to learning and behavioural

patterns of the target group of disadvantaged young people, who frequently enter the various training schemes with an educational history predominantly negative in aspect. The learning difficulties experienced by these young people can rarely be explained on the basis of a lack of cognitive 'ability', but just be regarded as the result of an ontogenetic development, and in no small part the consequence of frustrating experiences in learning situations at school. Learning situations can be structured in different ways. The question was whether, in particular teaching situations and for particular subjects, a computer would have a special motivational effect, such as the undermining of inherited barriers and resistance to learning, to offer in their place new learning opportunities and the fostering of willingness to learn.

With only a few exceptions, which would require separate discussion, we found confirmation for our assumption that the introduction of a computer can have a beneficial effect on the willingness to learn — the more so, the more marked were the negative attitudes to learning, and in proportion to the degree to which the earlier negative learning experiences were linked to a hitherto unsatisfactory teacher-pupil relationship or other negative social experiences.

Clearly, the aid of a computer makes it possible to circumvent, as it were, many negatively charged learning situations.

However, what is decisive in our experiences is that the motivational impetus must build on an objective foundation — that is, the participant must be aware of genuine success in learning with respect to contents which he or she had previously not understood, if the fire of motivation is not to fizzle out. We discovered from experience that this can easily happen if work with the computer becomes an end in itself, so that the participant cannot see the likelihood of any immediately useful success springing from it. This phenomenon can be attested particularly for participants under pressure to produce quick evidence of success in their education, which in turn would ensure that they successfully completed their training.

In general, then, we can work on the basis that experience with the computer, if it is to have lasting effects as described above, must be applied in contexts of relevant and obvious usefulness to the individual participant.

We have also, of course, had experience of those known as 'computer freaks', who find fulfilment in working with the computer as an end in itself. For our work in providing these disadvantaged young people with improved learning opportunities, with the related aim of opening up more realistic work perspectives, the promotion of ambitions in this direction would not be a positive contribution, although the emphatic willingness shown by the young people in question to engage in analysis could also be interpreted as an indication of the particular motivational impetus which computers are capable of providing. How far this impetus and the degree of engagement in analysis employed up to now — programming languages — can provide a basis for educational goals aspired to by ourselves is not something which can be elucidated here.

#### *Computers as media aids*

The results analysed above referred to teaching units intended to benefit from the computer as a new learning task, within well-defined limits, in the context of traditional learning goals.

Even here, it was clear that the computer can, especially in a media function, have a positive effect on the learning process. Alongside the above schemes, therefore, in which the computer was both the subject of learning and the medium, within the limits given, we undertook a separate trial in which the computer was used exclusively in a media function as a learning support for disadvantaged young people.

By means of a number of case samples and a short run of tests, we established that, within the limits to subject matter imposed on the use of computers, using specific software and under certain teaching conditions, such as

those which can be drawn up for the so-called training support aids, improved learning results could be achieved. The test results were concerned with training in basic mathematical skills, especially mental arithmetic in the basic arithmetical operations.

The conditions for success, however, are, in our opinion, that the sets of exercises are of limited duration, because training in mathematical skills cannot supplant the most important part of the lesson, which is concerned with explaining and understanding relationships within the subject matter. In this respect, the priorities of traditional forms of teaching are retained, including the importance of the educationalist as the decision-maker regarding what is to be taught, how the learning process is to be structured and what resources are best suited to support the aims of the teaching.

For the future, we have higher hopes for special media applications of computers, such as we have encountered on numerous visits abroad. We feel that

the special features of the technology can be effectively put to use to promote innovative teaching methods. The potential areas of application where a computer could take over important learning-support functions include in particular those sections of courses concerned with providing access to and understanding of abstract and complex relationships within the subject matter, which would otherwise be impossible to present in an activity-oriented or graphic manner and which, moreover, offer little scope for discussion of the subject. Conceptual developments in learning software taking ideas such as these as their aim and based on the individual educational goals are already available from various institutions and publishers in the UK and the USA.

The relevant learning software developed in these countries has been typologically assigned to two categories: simulations/planning games and problem-solving tools.

They are characterized by the greatest possible scope for customizing to

specific needs, permitting the individual teacher to produce applications for his particular teaching or promotion goals.

Our recommendations to educationalists, and also to those concerned with the development of learning software follow this trend in computer applications, in the context of the media function of computers. Cooperation with British counterparts at a more intensive level would be a major help and enhancement in future development work in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Our own development work in this area up to the present, which is concerned with percentage calculations and calculations using the rule of three, (rule of proportion) has already been thought out with a view to these ideas for the future, but is more to be assigned to the category of training programmes, although graphics are intended to promote understanding. Everyday methodologies, which could be classed as 'common-sense understanding', are intended to facilitate a link between the abstract use of mathematical rules and 'everyday knowledge'.

# Cedefop:

## European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

The creation of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training established a Community body which made it possible for exchanges of information and experience in the field of vocational training to take place at European level.

For 10 years now, Cedefop has provided specialist workers, vocational training centres and research institutes with a forum where they can collaborate beyond their national frontiers. Cedefop also assembles and circulates information about educational and training activities within the Member States of the European Communities (EC).

Cedefop does not regard itself as simply a research institute. The title 'European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training' itself indicates the importance attached to practical objectives. The centre is expected to provide Community institutions and the competent authorities of Member States with swift and effective assistance in coping with the training crisis that is affecting all the countries of the Community. The highest level of the centre is its Management Board, which is composed of representatives of the Commission and three representatives from each Member State (employers, employees and government).

The year 1988 marks a turning-point in the activity of Cedefop: on the one hand, it brings to an end the 1986-88 three-year plan; on the other, it will have to lay the bases for the new guidelines of the 1989-92 plan.

Indeed, a whole series of projects will reach their conclusion in 1988, and no effort will be spared to convey the results to the relevant policy-makers, including the centrally involved Commission of the European Communities. 1988 will be a forward-looking year since, as from 1989, Cedefop will begin to make practical contributions towards the completion of the single

internal market in 1992 and the European social area that this presupposes.

The Cedefop work programme refers specifically to the two areas of activity mentioned above and should be read with this fact in mind.

It should be pointed out that the centre's activity will also involve some internal readaptation:

- (i) with regard to organization, attempts will be made to maximize cooperation and complementarity among various projects and services, bearing in mind the need to integrate the large number of personnel who have recently been recruited to Cedefop;
- (ii) with regard to technical-operational matters, particular attention will be paid to the modernization of office equipment and working methods now under way, with the aim of making the centre's activity more efficient.

It goes without saying that these two objectives will require the centre to make sizeable investments in developing its own human resources, through ongoing training activity geared to the complexity of present and future roles.

As the 1986-88 three-year programme is divided into 12 sections, we have decided in this article to group together under one or another of these headings all the research projects, actions, seminars and other activities that have been planned this year.

### *Information, documentation and technical back-up*

In 1988 the centre will have to meet a growing number of requests for information, documentation, publications, suitably qualified contacts, etc., requests from the Commission, Member States, trade unions and employers, as well as from individual experts and research workers.

Such requests to the centre involve real research activity with primary sources of information as well as special processing of documents.

The long-term tendency will be to foster all possible levels of useful cooperation among European partners, not only by supplying documentary and bibliographical information to persons who are directly concerned, but also by giving them 'who does that' directions — for example, about those centres for research, experimentation or cultural thinking in Europe which are most innovative in the field of vocational training.

The achievement of these goals requires:

- (i) the availability of high-tech work equipment, and
- (ii) the perfecting of computerized storage and data-processing systems, including a link-up with specialist data banks within the Community.

In addition to forms of distributing information that fall more under a documentation/library service, the centre will keep up its reception service for visitors. Not only is such activity useful for the centre's good reputation — it also serves its task of keeping in direct contact with varied groups of practical experts, research workers and officials from public authorities, trade unions and employers' organizations. We should remember that in 1988 Berlin is the European cultural capital.

There can be no doubt that the cultural diversity represented by the nine Community languages is a decisive factor in communication. The 'Vocational training terminology project' is coming to grips with this problem, both to pro-

pose solutions and to assist those projects which have most recourse to the nine languages of the Community or which provide interesting ground for experiments in terminology and content.

### *Periodical and non-periodical publications*

Periodical publications continue to serve the aim of reaching a large and varied public. They differ in both readership and purpose:

- (a) the *Vocational Training* bulletin targets specialists with communication and proposals arising out of the centre's research work. In 1988 three issues in nine languages are planned on the following questions:
  - (i) Vocational training and the new audio-visual media;
  - (ii) The role of the two sides of industry in vocational training;
  - (iii) Cost problems and the financing of vocational training.
- (b) *Cedefop news* is intended for a wide public: its print-run (currently 25 000) and periodicity are tending to grow.
- (c) the information letter *Cedefop flash* gives very recent information about the centre's work to decision-making bodies; *Cedefop press* is intended for representatives of the mass-circulation press.

Non-periodical publications which describe the results and conclusions of research and investigatory activity will have their total volume limited and their typographical form simplified. These measures are necessary to improve the cost-benefit ratio, since printing costs are notoriously high.

### *Vocational training systems, financing and the two sides of industry*

- (a) Vocational training constitutes a dynamic reality within the social system. Although they tend to be more stable, the structures of vocational training systems and of training fi-

nance cannot be abstracted from this dynamic. On the other hand, within the framework of the Community, it is vitally important to be acquainted with these systems in order to find common ground for development and cooperation.

For this reason, the complex task of preparing a new edition of the guide to training systems within the Member-States will be embarked upon in 1988. For this reason, too, particular attention and appropriate research activity will be devoted to the systems of financing initial and continuous vocational training. The methodological difficulties involved in this work are not immediately apparent. Nevertheless, the centre is of the view that vocational training is a decisive factor in development, and that knowledge of the different training-finance systems is therefore indispensable in forming a clear vision that will allow real comparisons to be drawn. This work is done in close collaboration with the Commission departments, especially the Statistical Office of the European Communities in Luxembourg.

- (b) Social dialogue between management and labour with its various forms and procedures, is the essential basis for vocational training that is really in touch with its political and economic context. The project on 'the role of both sides of industry in vocational training' has been conceived as an observation post from which to identify and study the various forms of social dialogue in the 12 Member States.
- (c) The irreplaceable role of both sides of industry will surely gain added importance within the economic area of the single internal market of 1992, ensuring the establishment of that 'social area' without which any economic project is doomed to failure. The 12 national monographs edited in 1987, and supplemented by two studies of the Community-wide mechanisms and structures of social dialogue, have already put the project on a firm footing. In 1988 it will

continue with a comparative overview that is scheduled to be written by a Cedefop group of experts. This group will show that such dialogue could be enhanced not only at the level of central decision-making but also at regional and local levels, and within the various occupations.

At the end of the year, a major symposium will bring together senior officials from employers' and trade-union organizations and from the public services, as well as a number of specialists in this field.

### *The equivalence of occupational skills and qualifications*

The Council's Decision of 1985 concluded a period of intensive activity which the Commission organized in order that workers should be able to make better use of their qualifications and enjoy real mobility at a European level. Cedefop is now faced with two problems, namely, the slow procedures of Member States for defining priority sectors and appointing experts, and the high cost of expert gatherings which have to work in the nine languages of the Community.

As this is a priority area in its activity, the centre will make every effort to develop internal services that can speed up the later execution and updating of the work (forms of linguistic, terminological, data-processing and documentary support). Work is now finished in three sectors (Horeca, car repairs, construction). This year, the Commission will collaborate with the centre in starting work on the following three sectors, by order of priority:

- (i) The 'Metal' sector with two sub-sectors: metal-processing and metal-working;
- (ii) the 'Office and administration' sector, together with the 'Trade and sales' sector; and
- (iii) the 'Chemical industry' and 'Rubber and plastics' sectors.

The centre will also try to speed up the rules and procedures for executing

the project, so that by 1992 a sufficient number of priority sectors will have been dealt with and qualification equivalence will already be an accomplished fact in those sectors.

### *Community programme of study visits*

For three years Cedefop has been organizing a study-trip programme for specialists in vocational training. This activity, which counts as a priority, will be developed further in 1988 and the number of grants will be increased. Suitable use of computer programs will further the aim of stimulating information-exchange networks among the large number of hosting bodies in the 12 Member States. The study visits programme, which serves a most useful purpose, also makes it possible to compare ideas with a considerable number of experts, whose views are put together every year in a special compendium.

### *National research institutes forum*

This initiative, which informally coordinates the activities of national research institutes through the exchange of information about their work programmes, forms part of the strategic development of the centre. The various programmes will subsequently be published, and a summary report will be sent out to a large number of people.

The project also makes it possible to examine in greater depth some of the scenarios, both short-term (over four years) and longer-term (till the end of the century), concerning the problems and prospects for vocational training.

A number of activities in support of Commission programmes, as well as a proposal to encourage short 'courses' for research-workers from various institutes, round off this section. It should all have major spin-offs for the implementation of the centre's next four-year programme.

### *Special action vis-à-vis southern Europe*

Recent accessions to the European Community require special attention to be paid to all aspects of vocational training. In this regard, the centre's own contribution in 1988 will take the form of research projects and activities in sectors which, in one way or another, represent important areas where training intervention is an urgent matter, namely, declining sectors and migration flows.

The projects under way are:

- (i) a study of 'Employment and skills in the textile sector' (in Greece, Spain and Portugal); comparative work will continue on training opportunities and the new occupational profiles resulting from technological innovation; informal collaboration among 'expertise centres' (sectoral centres for training and study in technological innovation) in the different countries will be encouraged and intensified.
- (ii) a study of 'Vocational training and voluntary reintegration of migrant-born young people' draws on the logic of bilateral collaboration between countries of immigration and emigration.

### *Initial vocational training*

- (a) Initial vocational training for young people remains the pivot of the centre's activity. Available resources will all be concentrated on activities within the Commission's programme of actions for 'Vocational training and the preparation of young people for adult and working life'.
- (b) For young people who are physically disabled, training has more than a secondary role to play in integration activities. This is the conviction behind work on the 'Training and employment of the disabled' project, whose aim is to develop training action models in a normal working situation. The results of study activities will be circulated and discussed at the seminar to be held in Lisbon in the middle of 1988.

- (c) Training has all the more impact on employment problems when it is preceded and accompanied by vocational guidance and information. This is especially true with regard to the long-term-unemployed. In 1988 Cedefop will continue to make its contribution to solving the difficult problems that guidance has to confront in this area.

### *Continuous training*

Continuous training should evidently be seen not as an extension of initial training but as a permanent process. In this spirit, Cedefop will continue working in 1988 to make an original contribution that targets real areas of possible action. In the admittedly vast sphere of continuous training, the centre will lay greatest stress on three areas or aspects of this complex question: training and equal opportunities for men and women, wage-earners and new technologies, and vocational training.

The major European symposium to be held in Berlin in autumn 1988 should help to increase the awareness of political authorities on this issue. It is these authorities which have to allocate the additional resources to fund and set up systems of continuous training, both in development areas and in declining industrial regions, and for the benefit both of small and medium-sized firms and of the long-term unemployed.

### *New technologies and training media*

While new technologies create new needs and demands for vocational training, they also provide new potential for modernizing the training 'media'.

- (a) Cedefop's interest in 'distance learning' has been expressed in intensive study and research work, which in 1987 resulted in a series of monographs on the supply of distance learning for managers of small firms and non-industrial undertakings. In 1988 such research will provide the



basis for a number of practical applications, with the aim of drawing up models for supranational cooperation in distance learning. The centre is convinced that the first stages of bringing together distance learning and new technology are full of promise for the general qualitative and quantitative development of vocational training in the European Community. The distance learning project will also make it possible to assist the Commission in that aspect of the Comett project which concerns multi-media training.

(b) The centre will also continue collecting information and gaining experience in the field of audio-visual tech-

nology and vocational training. This preparatory work will provide the basic material for a European symposium. In this case, too, the aim is to encourage all forms of cooperation that avoid unnecessary and costly duplication of isolated experiments in the Member States.

#### *Training the trainers*

(a) The training staff are undoubtedly the pivot for the whole question of vocational training: their function is thus the centre of gravity for all cultural reflection and practical application.

This is the backdrop to the 'Training the trainers project' that features in this work programme. It should be stressed that, although everyone constantly refers to the central importance of training the trainers, one is struck by the inadequate resources given to this priority in the Member States, by the difficulty in rising above the national framework, and by the lack of convergence between the strategies of Member States.

The Cedefop projects aim to make known the results of studies conducted in 1987 by groups of itinerant experts who achieved a minimum of cross-fertilization and were able to

analyse problems in a way that was less conditioned by the particular troubles of one country. In 1988 European meetings will continue between the major public and private training institutions that have to face the problems of imparting new skills to teaching staff — the aim being to reduce costs, to introduce new technology and to extend the range of user services, by improving the level of correspondence with the labour market. Lastly, the development of 'European managerial projects', which help to pinpoint resources, will be encouraged by means of Community support or the joint funding of common initiatives.

- (b) In 1988, the project entitled 'European guide to training in small and medium-sized businesses' will take up the far from minor question of training in small and medium-sized businesses.

In fact this is a meeting-ground for quite a number of Cedefop projects, such as those dealing with distance learning or training the trainers.

The central aim of the project is to take measures and initiatives that can assist the survival, growth and creation of small and medium-sized businesses in Europe. Although there is full agreement about the importance of vocational training for such enterprises, in practice they often make little use of it. The Cedefop project starts from this contradiction and tries to solve it by providing a means whereby members of consular, vocational and consultant bodies, as well as training staff, executives and directors of small and medium-sized businesses and cooperatives, can establish a link between real training needs and the actual supply of training.

The project will also put forward some future scenarios in order to make managers of small and medium-sized businesses more aware of those problems posed by the

broad internal market of 1992 which vocational training can help to solve. It is hoped that this project, which rounds off many years of work, will be in harmony with the main activities undertaken by the Commission to assist small and medium-sized businesses, and particularly with those of DG V and the Task Force.

*Regional development*

Community activities and arrangements concerning regional development are closely bound up with reform of the so-called structural Funds. Vocational training activities geared to development of the peripheral and industrially declining regions are mainly characterized by micro-level intervention throughout the area in question. Work conducted within Cedefop, as well as the conclusions drawn from it at the Seville symposium, already make visible the broad structural features of the regional development project. A central task will be to assist Community initiatives and arrangements — whether under way or still to be created — by identifying on the spot those problems which hinder the completion of integrated programmes of action.

This brief account of the centre's planned activities for 1988 will give some idea of the heavy workload in store for Cedefop's small team. Within the binding limits of the budget for 1988, mainly following additional demands from Community institutions, Cedefop continues to seek a balance between:

- (i) the need to take responsibility for implementing new decisions set as priorities by the European Community, above all those concerning qualification equivalence and the Community programme of study visits, and
- (ii) the obligation to complete projects that were approved by the Management Board and begun in 1986 and 1987 — in particular, the projects referring to the two sides of industry, distance learning and 'training the trainers'.

The Cedefop management is conscious of the decisions of the Council of Ministers of the European Community — particularly those of December 1986 which called for the Commission to take additional measures on youth and adult training and training for small and medium-sized businesses, and which called, in particular, for the acceleration of work on qualification equivalence.

The centre will continue to provide technical assistance to the Commission, according to its budgetary resources, for all the points mentioned in the work programme.

Preparation of the four-year work plan for 1989-92 is of central importance because it must heed a twofold constraint:

- (i) like other agencies of the European Communities, Cedefop must seek to complete the internal market and progressively to achieve that 'social area' which is the framework for active and effective vocational training;
- (ii) it must also assess the place of the centre, whose activities are subordinate in the sense that they complement similar work in the Member States, regions and localities without taking its place.

This is a complicated task, for Cedefop's statutes lay down that the centre's primary function is to assist the Commission. In connection with the legal acts of the Council of Ministers, this task is mandatory for the Berlin centre. The same statutes define Cedefop as a body distinct from the Commission departments, which has to develop its own activity and establish appropriate links with other organizations — that is, with both sides of industry, national governments, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

We shall not fail to keep you informed of future work programmes, which are always an event in the life of the centre.

**Ernst Piehl**



# Young worker exchange programme

**This is the Communities' oldest established operation in the field of youth exchanges. Although the programme was launched in 1964, its roots lie in Article 50 of the Treaty of Rome which reads as follows: 'Member States shall, within the framework of a joint programme, encourage the exchange of young workers'. The programme is essentially designed to give young workers (18-28 years) an opportunity to live and work in another Member State of the European Community.**

The first Joint Programme which ran from 1964 to 1979 was confined principally to the agricultural sector. Over 1 500 young workers participated in exchanges over this 15-year period. The second Joint Programme spanned the period 1979-84. Exchange facilities were targeted on those young workers who were unlikely to have such an opportunity in the normal course of their employment. Exchanges were directed primarily at the vocational and personal development of the young people concerned while simultaneously improving their awareness of the European Community and their appreciation of the cultural differences between its members. The second Joint Programme achieved significant growth in both the number of young people participating — 6 675 over the five-year period — and in the sectoral and geographical areas represented. In keeping with the economic realities of the 1980s, 47% of exchanges took place in the tertiary sector, while agriculture dropped to 28% of total operations.

In preparing its proposals for a third Joint Programme, the Commission set out to extend the range of provisions to cover circumstances which had arisen during the second programme but which fell outside the scope of that programme. Firstly, in recognition of the worsening effects of economic recession, particularly in relation to youth unemployment, the programme was extended to include 'young job-seekers'.

Secondly, to facilitate a more flexible response to bodies interested in promoting exchanges and to widen the existing network of promoting organizations, the third programme opened up participation to all 'bodies or groups capable of operating at European level, including youth organizations, which have been approved, after obtaining the opinion of the Member States, by the Commission on the basis of their ability to carry out exchanges effectively'.

The principal objectives of the third Joint Programme (1985-90)<sup>1</sup> are as follows:

- (i) to develop the vocational knowledge and enrich the practical experience of the young people concerned;
- (ii) to promote their awareness of the problems of the working world;
- (iii) to bring them into contact with the working environment of the host country;
- (iv) to improve their knowledge of living conditions and social relations in the host country;
- (v) to promote adequate information on the Community's objectives and how it functions.

The third programme has proved to be an important turning point in the history of exchanges of young workers. The doubling of Community resources allocated to the programme in 1986 has given a degree of financial flexibility which in turn has enabled the Community to boost the number of young people participating, diversify into innovative sectors and encourage new organizations to participate.

The practical results to date of the third programme can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Over the period 1985-87, close to 8 000 young workers/job-seekers have participated in exchanges. The third programme in its first three years has almost outstripped the combined first and second programmes in terms of the number of young people involved.
- (b) In 1987, unemployed young people accounted for 46% of the total number of participants in the programme.
- (c) 50% of participants are young women.
- (d) Exchanges in the tertiary sector now predominate with 51% of total operations. The secondary sector stands at 32% and the primary sector at 17%.
- (e) Innovative programmes, i.e. exchanges taking place in new and neglected areas, account for 47% of all exchanges.

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 331, 19.12.1984.



Particularly notable innovative exchanges were the following:

(i) An exchange organized by the Danish Youth Council in cooperation with the Internationales Jugend-Kulturzentrum, Bayreuth. The project carried out in Bayreuth was aimed at young people working in theatre and consisted of six weeks of group training sessions and rehearsals followed by a performance of the entire production at the end of the exchange. The 25 young people came from Denmark, Italy, France and the United Kingdom and

ranged from costume-makers and musicians to mask-makers and stage technicians.

(ii) As 1987 was International Year of the Environment, ENAIP, Turin, organized a special three-week study visit programme on the theme of environmental protection. Young people working on environmental matters both in public and private bodies had a packed programme of meetings and visits to companies and institutions to study the sort of methods they use to protect the environment. The bulk of the pro-

gramme was carried out in Italy although Denmark and France also hosted groups. The young workers came from all 12 Community countries.

(iii) Exchanges in sectors employing new technologies were encouraged: Inter-Échanges, Paris, organized a programme for 10 young people working in informatics. This three-month programme began with a one-month language training course followed by a two-month work placement in enterprises organized by ANPE, Chambéry.

(f) The majority of exchanges still fall into the traditional category. Two examples of traditional exchanges are the following:

(i) An exchange organized by AnCo — the industrial training authority, Ireland — in cooperation with the Institut de promotion hôtelières, Vannes, Brittany. This project in the hotel & catering sector was primarily aimed at young waiters, waitresses, chefs and cooks from the peripheral maritime regions of the Community. Twenty-nine young workers from Spain and Ireland spent nine weeks in Brittany of which two weeks were spent in formal training followed by six weeks' work placement in hotels and restaurants in the region. One week was reserved for

social, cultural and professional visits.

(ii) An exchange for young craftsmen organized by the European Federation for Intercultural Learning. This long-term programme for young people from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands started with eight weeks' language training in Belgium followed by 27 weeks of fully paid employment in industry.

(g) The network of promoting organizations now extends throughout the Community with at least one body in each Member State.

The third programme is well consolidated in all of the Member States and has produced some very good results

during its first three years of operation. The improved flexibility of the programme has promoted a more effective response to the economic and social realities facing young Europeans today. Indeed, it should be pointed out that the third programme is but one of the range of Community actions directed at the significant young population in the Member States (53 million between the ages of 15-25 years). Programmes such as Comett and Erasmus which cater for the student population, the new action programme for vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life and, complementary to the 'Young worker' programme, the 'YES for Europe' proposal (currently awaiting a Council Decision) which targets the area of youth exchanges for 15-25-year-olds, are some of the actions which will further, in a concrete manner, a Europe for young Europeans.

# The teaching of modern languages in the European Community

An impressive number of languages are spoken in the 12 Member States of the Community. Nine of these have the status of an official Community language, namely, Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Irish Gaelic, the national language of the Republic of Ireland, is not used as a working language of Community institutions. The same is true of Letzeburgesch, the national language of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It should be pointed out, however, that the founding Treaties have been translated into Irish, and that the new passports issued by Member States include information in Irish Gaelic.

To these 11 official or national languages should be added 40 or so regional languages, some of which are official languages of autonomous regions or enjoy a special status. These are Albanian (Italy and Greece), Aromanian (Greece), Basque (France and Spain), Breton (France), Carinthian (Italy), Catalan (Spain, France, Italy), Cimbrian (Italy), Corsican (France), Croat (Italy), Danish (Federal Republic of Germany), Flemish (France), Franco-Provençal (Italy), French (Italy), Frisian (Netherlands, Federal Republic of Germany), Friulian (Italy), Irish Gaelic (Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom), Scottish Gaelic (United Kingdom), German (Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy), Greek (Italy), Ladino (Italy), Letzeburgesch (Belgium, Federal Republic of Germany, France), Mochero (Italy), Occitanian (France, Italy, Spain), Sardinian (Italy), Turkish (Greece), Walser (Italy) and Welsh (United Kingdom).

Like the official languages, these regional languages do not respect the frontiers of Member States and therefore form a particularly important link between citizens of the Community.

Immigration, from ancient or modern times, has brought with it a

good 100 languages that are spoken by at least 15 million people. In fact, the only language common to all 12 Member States is Romany, the language of the gypsies.

Indian languages such as Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi are spoken by sizeable communities in the United Kingdom. The Portuguese of France number more than a million and the Turks of the Federal Republic of Germany more than two million. In addition, a large number of dialects keep up an oral tradition and a thriving literature.

Altogether, more than 50 million inhabitants of the Community speak a language other than an official language of the Member States.

## Language teaching in pre-school education

As a general rule, nursery schools attended by the future citizens of Europe operate in the official language, or one of the official languages, of the particular Member State. Regions enjoying autonomy or a special status are an exception in this respect.

In the autonomous regions of Spain, Catalan, Basque and Galician are used at nursery school. Similarly, German is used in the nursery schools of the Bolzano region, French in the Valle d'Aosta, Welsh in Wales, Letzeburgesch in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, Irish Gaelic in the Gaelic regions of Ireland, German and Danish respectively in the border lands of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein.

In regions where the language does not enjoy an autonomous or protected status, numerous associations work to maintain or revive the use of regional languages in pre-school education. Such is the case for Frisian (Netherlands), Breton (France), Langue d'Oc (France and Italy), Franco-Provençal (Italy), Friulian (Italy), Slovenian (Italy), Albanian (Italy) and Greek (Italy). Most of these private initiatives actually result in bilingual education, so that the child learns at the same time both the language of his or her region and the official language of the State.

In Belgium, the Netherlands and Denmark, a number of rather cautious experiments are under way to establish the language of immigrant workers' children within the nursery school, while also ensuring intensive tuition in the language of the host country.

## Language teaching in primary education

The language medium at primary school is, very generally, the official language or one of the official languages of the State.

As is the case with pre-school education, regions which enjoy autonomy or

a special status are an exception. In Catalonia, the Spanish Basque country, Galicia, the Valle d'Aosta, the Italian Tyrol, the Gaelic regions of Ireland and Wales, regional languages serve as the medium of primary education. The official language of the State — Castilian, Italian or English respectively — is also taught from an early age. Unprotected regional languages are taught either outside the school system, as a responsibility of ethnic associations, or in private schools. In either case, the aim is to achieve active bilingualism from primary school onwards.

In Belgium, Dutch is taught in French-speaking areas and French in Dutch-speaking areas in the fifth and sixth years of primary school. In bilingual regions, the second national language is taught from the third year. In German-speaking areas, French is taught from the third year.

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, German is taught from the first and French from the second year of school.

Several Member States have experimented with or actually introduced early teaching of foreign languages. The most significant trial was begun in Italy in 1987/88. It should be noted that the European schools, attached to institutions of the Community, chose from the outset to introduce early teaching of a foreign language.

The following table presents the current situation with regard to early teaching of foreign languages.

<i>B</i>	Second national language from 3rd or 5th year
<i>DK</i>	English compulsory from 5th year
<i>D</i>	English from 3rd year (Grundschule) experimentally in two <i>Länder</i>
<i>F</i>	Experimental teaching of English, German, Castilian or Italian on responsibility of schools or local authorities
<i>IRL</i>	Teaching of Irish or English according to linguistic region

<i>I</i>	Teaching of English, French or German from 3rd or 4th year, by decision of the schools
<i>L</i>	German from 1st year, French from 2nd year
<i>NL</i>	English (1 hr) optional from 4th year
<i>UK</i>	Sporadic or experimental teaching of French in some schools
<i>European schools</i>	Early teaching of a foreign language from 1st year

Since Directive 77/486/EEC on the education of immigrant workers' children came into force in 1981, Member States have had an obligation to promote the teaching of the mother tongue and original culture of the children of Community nationals who are or have been in employment in their respective countries. The organization of such teaching should be coordinated with ordinary teaching and performed in cooperation with the State of origin. By virtue of a political commitment that the Council of Ministers of the European Community undertook when it adopted Directive 77/486/EEC, the children of immigrant workers coming from non-member countries enjoy the same benefits.

The languages which are taught to immigrant workers' children are either official languages of Member States (such as Castilian, Greek, Italian and Portuguese), official languages of non-member countries (such as Turkish, Albanian, Arabic, Serbian, Macedonian and Slovenian), or languages of former colonies (such as Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bengali and Vietnamese). The following table provides an estimate of the numbers of primary-school pupils who take advantage of teaching of their mother tongue.

Apart from regional languages with an autonomous or protected status, the immigrant languages are thus the most widely taught alongside the official languages of Member States.

### Language teaching in secondary education

In all the Member States, pupils in ordinary sections of secondary schools have the possibility of learning at least one foreign language from their first year on. Except in Ireland and the United Kingdom, this first foreign language is a compulsory part of the school curriculum.

Belgium (Dutch-speaking region)	X	4 030	18%
(French-speaking region)	X	7 734	10%
Denmark	X	3 497	57%
Federal Republic of Germany	X	136 835	45%
France	X	137 532	32.4%
Luxembourg	XXX	4 115	40%
Netherlands	X	52 579	76%
United Kingdom	X	9 178 <sup>1</sup>	6%
	XX	17 156	12%

X Integrated or separate teaching.  
 XX Extra-curricular teaching.  
 XXX Integrated, separate and extra-curricular teaching.

<sup>1</sup> This figure refers to the local education authorities (LEAs) of Bedfordshire, Birmingham, Bradford, Coventry, Inner London, Manchester, Newham, Nottinghamshire and Waltham Forest.

Apart from Belgium and the autonomous regions of Spain, where the first 'foreign' language is one of the national languages or Castilian, the most widely taught language is English, followed by French, German, Castilian, Italian, Portuguese and Russian. In the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, French is in first place among the languages taught at school.

In most of the Member States, a second foreign language is offered as an optional or compulsory subject in the first stage of secondary school, but not always from the first year. A third and even fourth foreign language are offered in several countries, usually as an option, but as a compulsory subject in certain linguistic or economic branches.

The following tables attempt to give a simplified picture of a fairly complex situation. For a more precise account, the reader is referred to the booklet *Language teaching in the European Community* published by the European unit of Eurydice (the education information network in the European Communities).

It should be noted that in the Federal Republic of Germany, foreign pupils can choose to be taught their original language and culture instead of one of the foreign languages on the compulsory curriculum.

The following observations may be made on the basis of these tables:

- (i) The learning of a foreign language during secondary studies is optional in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland;
- (ii) Many pupils do not have the opportunity to learn a second foreign language during the first stage of their secondary studies:
  - (a) Hauptschule pupils in the Federal Republic of Germany (5th to 10th year) — 45% of all school-children,
  - (b) pupils attending Greek gymnasia (7th to 9th year),
  - (c) pupils of the first secondary stage in Spain (6th to 10th year),

**The teaching of living languages in secondary education**

**A — Official norms**

<i>B</i>	3 LLs of which 2 compulsory 1 comp. or optional according to section		F/Dutch E/D/C//Ar/P/R
<i>DK</i>	1st stage, 3 LLs of which 2nd stage, 3 LLs of which	1 compulsory 2 optional 2 compulsory (gen. & tech. ed.) 1 optional (gen. education)	E/D/F C/R/I
<i>D</i>	1st stage HSchule RSchule 2nd stage Gym. voc. schools	1LL compulsory 2 LLs compulsory 3 LLs compulsory 1 or 2 LLs comp. acc. to section	E/F/others E/F/others E/F/others or Latin E/F/C
<i>F</i>	collèges 6th to 9th yr  lycées 10th to 12th yr	2 LLs compulsory  3 LLs, 2 compulsory 1 optional	E/D/C//other R/P/A/Chinese, Hebrew, Polish, Dutch, Japanese Danish, Greek
<i>GR</i>	gymnasium lycées	1 LL compulsory 1 or 2 LLs comp. acc. to section	E/F/D R/IT
<i>IRL</i>	9th to 11th yr 11th to 13th yr	2 LLs optional 2 LLs optional	F/D/C/IT
<i>I</i>	sc. media liceo technical liceo	1 LL comp. 1 LL comp. 3 LLs comp. or opt. acc. to section	E/F/D/C
<i>L</i>	7th to 9th yr 10th to 13th yr	3 LLs comp. 4 LLs, 3 comp. 1 opt. acc. to sect.	F/D/E F/D/E I/C/Dutch
<i>NL</i>	8th year 9th to 11th yr 11th to 12th yr. tech. ed.	1 LL comp. 3 LLs comp. 3 LLs comp. 3 LLs comp.	E E/F/D/C/R
<i>P</i>	5th to 6th year 7th to 9th yr 10th to 11th yr	1 LL comp. 2 LLs comp. 2 LLs comp.	F/E/D
<i>E</i>	6th to 8th yr 9th to 12th yr tech. ed.	1 LL compulsory 2 LLs comp. 1 LL comp.	E/F E/F/D//P E/F

UK 7th to 11th year 2 LLs optional  
12th to 13th yr 3 LLs optional

F/D/C  
I/R/others  
The 2nd or 3rd LLs are only offered by a small number of schools. 90% of schools teach French.

Scotland 8th to 12th year 2 LLs optional  
13th year 3 LLs optional

F/D/C/IT/R

(d) scuola media pupils in Italy (6th to 8th year);

(iii) France and the United Kingdom are the only Member States in which it is theoretically possible to learn all the official languages of the Community.

(iv) English and French are the only foreign languages taught to a large number of pupils throughout the Community. German and Castilian are relatively well represented in France:

(a) 23.4% of pupils for German as first or second language,

(b) 20.6% of pupils for Castilian as first or second language,

German is the second foreign language in the Netherlands (50 to 61% of pupils according to the section) and in Denmark (80% of Folkeskole pupils).

(v) Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, Modern Greek and Danish are rarely taught outside the countries where they are official languages. Although Castilian is a world language, it is little taught except in France, where it is chosen by one pupil out of five as first or second language.

(vi) The countries where a majority of pupils end their compulsory education with a practical knowledge of at least two foreign languages are the Netherlands (English, German), Denmark (English, German) and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg (German, French).

(vii) In spite of the 1977 Community Directive, languages of immigration have not yet acquired a status equivalent to that of the traditional foreign languages in the secondary schools of the Community.

These conclusions show with unusual clarity that language teaching at school is far from being in accord with the realities of the Community.

The economic, technological and scientific cooperation instituted by the Treaties and Council decisions, as well as the political and cultural cooperation

**B – Quantitative aspects**

Country	Teaching of the official languages of the European Community at secondary level									
	FR	EN	D	ES	IT	NL	PT	GR	DA	
Belgium (FR-spkg)	●	3	4	5	>0	2	>0	>0	>0	
Belgium (Dutch-spkg)	1	2	4	5	>0	●	>0	>0	>0	
Denmark	3	1	2	5	>0	>0	>0	>0	●	
France	●	1	4	4	5	>0	>0	>0	>0	
Germany	3	1	●	5	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	
Greece	3	2	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	●	>0	
Ireland	1	1	4	5	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	
Italy	3	2	4	>0	●	>0	>0	>0	>0	
Luxembourg	1	2	1	5	5	5	>0	>0	>0	
Netherlands	3	1	2	>0	>0	●	>0	>0	>0	
Portugal	3	2	5	>0	>0	>0	●	>0	>0	
Spain	3	2	>0	●	>0	>0	>0	>0	>0	
UK (ex. Scotland)	1	●	4?	5?	5?	>0	>0	>0	>0	
Scotland	2	●	4?	5?	5?	>0	>0	>0	>0	

? = estimate

**Key:**

1	2	3	4	5	>0
100-75 %	74-50 %	49-25 %	24-5 %	4-1 %	

Source: Eurydice 1987: European unit of Eurydice.

The October 1987 Eurobarometer gives an overview of the language knowledge of people in the Community and in at least eight cases, this knowledge is clearly in-

sufficient to face up to the demands made on the single market at 1993, or to guarantee the capacity to communicate within the Community.

essential to the life of a community, are only possible if the largest possible number of citizens know the languages of partner States.

Free circulation of goods and provision of services, as instituted by the Treaty, imply an improvement of the linguistic capacities of company personnel. In an open market, large and medium-sized businesses must be capable of responding in time when a bid to produce goods or to provide services is made to them from anywhere in the Community area.

Great efforts will have to be made to strengthen, improve and diversify language teaching at school and in the institutions of higher education, vocational and adult training.

Moreover, the Commission has just submitted a communication to the Council on the medium-term prospects for Community action in the field of education. Like the Commission's work programme for 1988, this communication makes provision for the Community to engage in activities linked to the promotion of foreign-language learning in a number of important fields. The Commission intends to submit proposals to this effect to the Council by the end of 1988.

The Erasmus programme, which was agreed in 1987, already provides an ideal framework for arranging joint university programmes for cooperation between colleges that train language teachers. Of course, a sizeable cash injection would be required if the 15 000 language teachers who leave university each year are to have the opportunity of studying abroad for half a year.

There can be no doubting the importance of the measures that were proposed in 1984. The policy of the European Parliament on this issue carries a great sense of urgency, the demands of economic life cannot be avoided, and the right of citizens to free movement is one of the cornerstones of the whole Community. It is thus to be hoped that definite decisions will soon underwrite the guidelines of 1984.

**Number of languages learned, and number of languages spoken correctly, other than the language of the household.**

	Young people		All people	
	learned	correctly spoken	learned	correctly spoken
L	3.06	2.65	2.70	2.39
NL	2.62	1.58	2.08	1.30
DK	2.46	1.42	1.85	0.96
B	2.00	1.01	1.40	0.88
FR	1.78	0.74	1.14	0.43
IRL	1.49	0.44	0.93	0.25
EUR 12	1.46	0.69	0.97	0.46
D	1.41	0.85	0.94	0.53
P	1.37	0.63	0.72	0.36
I	1.33	0.50	0.84	0.30
UK	1.19	0.38	0.84	0.29
E	1.12	0.59	0.61	0.38
GR	0.99	0.71	0.55	0.44

Eurobarometer October 1987 (Jouth)

**Teaching of original languages and cultures to immigrants' children in secondary education**

Numerical data are available only for the Federal Republic of Germany (1985)

Greek	4 952 (not including Greek private schools)
Italian	14 042
Castilian	5 387
Portuguese	3 913
Turkish	80 954
Serbian	
Slovenian	
Macedonian	14 598
Albanian	
Arabic	387
Total	124 233 (i. e. ± 45 % of the foreign pupils)

Note: In the Federal Republic of Germany, foreign pupils can choose to be taught their original language and culture instead of one of the foreign languages on the compulsory curriculum.



# Erasmus and mutual recognition of diplomas

**Provisions within the Treaties of Rome concentrate on the issue of professional recognition of diplomas, in order to achieve the fundamental goal of free movement of workers and free establishment. Specific directives have therefore been adopted for the mutual recognition of diplomas in certain sectors (doctors, nurses, dentists, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects).**

Given the length of time involved in negotiating the adoption of each specific directive, a new approach was adopted in 1985 and a proposal for a Council Directive on a general system for the recognition of higher education diplomas awarded on completion of vocational courses of a least three years' duration is currently before the Council of Ministers. This new approach implies that the diplomas of another Member State will be recognized (under certain conditions) without prior harmonization of courses of study; while the proposal is aimed at recognition for professional purposes, it will necessarily have an impact, once adopted, on academic recognition.

Unilateral decisions, bi- and multilateral conventions on academic recognition between EC Member States do exist but cover only some of the member countries and in these, mostly small sections of the higher education qualifications. (This also holds true for inter-institutional academic recognition agreements.) The Community institutions, however, promote this 'inter-State approach' and 'interinstitutional approach' for solving academic recognition problems.

With 'Joint study programme' (JSP) and 'Short study visit' (SSV) pilot schemes which have been in operation for 10 years, the Commission has improved the situation of academic recognition through an 'interinstitutional' (JSP) and 'individual' approach (SSV). But these pilot schemes have been too limited in scope — both financial and otherwise — to generate large student flows within the Community. In 1984, the network of national academic recognition information centres (Naric) became operational and it is helping to solve academic recognition problems in an 'administrative approach' mixed with an 'individual approach' for the Naric's SSV scheme.

Community policy-makers, clearly aware of the mere trickle of student mobility within the Community, have called for change as did many higher education institutions, politicians, educationalists and students within the member

countries. And the Commission has answered by the Erasmus proposal of which one main objective is to ease academic recognition through indirect and direct measures. One of the direct measures is the introduction of the European Community course credit transfer system as a pilot project. The latter, as the Erasmus programme as a whole and the joint study programme scheme before it, favours the 'interinstitutional approach'.

The Erasmus scheme, which aims at a significant exchange of students within the Community by 1992, is a great step forward in inter-EC student mobility. Since positive academic recognition arrangements are prerequisites for student mobility within Erasmus, this programme should also force a breakthrough in this difficult area within the European Community.

Shortcomings in academic recognition<sup>1</sup> of higher education entrance, intermediate, and final qualifications have been clearly identified as being one of the main barriers against more intense student flows within the Community. This has been repeatedly and clearly expressed by policy-makers and many educationalists throughout the Community.

In addition to the effort being made in the area of professional recognition, Community policy-makers have expressed their opinion clearly that academic recognition must be improved in order to secure considerably greater mobility of students and scholars. The calls have become more urgent in recent years.

<sup>1</sup> Academic recognition is the recognition of higher education entrance qualifications, study periods, intermediate and final qualifications which takes place inside the higher education institutions. It is directed to taking up or continuing studies.

<sup>2</sup> Professional recognition is the recognition of higher education qualifications for the purpose of taking up professional activities. 'Professional recognition' and 'vocational recognition' are often used for describing the same kind of recognition. In this article, however, 'professional recognition' is generally used in the context of academic professions, whereas 'vocational recognition' is related to non-academic vocations.



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### 1. Joint study programmes

Since 1976 the Community-wide university cooperation scheme 'Joint study programme scheme' (JSP scheme) was set up. Measures promoted were joint curriculum development, teaching of parts of a course by staff members from EC higher education institutions in another Member State and studying in higher education institutions of another EC Member State. As one precondition for receiving financial grants to organize exchange of students within this scheme, it was established that there should be sound interinstitutional international recognition arrangements.

An investigation of recognition arrangements within existing joint study programmes<sup>1</sup> revealed that a high degree of recognition within JSPs exists. As a rule, in 70% of the programmes all

academic work carried out during the period of study abroad is credited. In spite of the modest financial input for the JSP scheme, it can be said that it proved to be highly efficient.

### 2. Short study visits

The 'Short study visit scheme' (SSV scheme) was introduced by the Commission in 1977/78 and has operated on an annual basis since then. The aim was to enable those professionally engaged in higher education to extend their knowledge and experience of higher education in other Member States, to increase in the longer term the opportunities for collaboration between institutions of higher education in the EC.

From 1981/82 on, the 'academic recognition of qualifications/study peri-

ods' has been one of the priority themes. Furthermore, as proof of the Commission's concern on this issue, part of the SSV grants as from 1983/84 have been awarded to the directors and staff of the national academic recognition information centres (Naric, see paragraph 5).

### 3. Network of the national academic recognition information centres (Naric)

Each of the Member States of the European Community has designated a

<sup>1</sup> Dalichow F., Teichler U. 'Recognition of study abroad in the European Community', Document, *Higher Education in the European Community*, Commission of the European Communities, Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1986, pp. 89-92.

national centre, to deal with information regarding procedures for academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study. This was in response to the recommendations made in the Commission's communication to the Council of 29 April 1981, which were endorsed by the Council and the Ministers for Education of the Member States at their meetings of 22 June 1981.

With the assistance of the Commission and the Office for Cooperation in Education (now Erasmus bureau), the centres aim to assist the mobility of students, higher education teachers and researchers in the Community by providing authoritative advice and information concerning the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study undertaken in other Member States. The users of this facility are mainly higher education institutions, students and their advisers, parents, teachers and prospective employers. In most cases, the centres are also responsible for related work in connection with implementation of the Council of Europe and Unesco conventions regarding academic recognition and equivalence matters.

The Naric network became operational in 1984. There are two main thrusts through which the Commission has promoted close cooperation within the network. First, by organizing regular (currently bi-annual) meetings of the heads and representatives of the centres to discuss specific academic recognition problems unsolved so far. And second, by awarding special grants to Naric staff within the Commission's SSV scheme to enable them to look at national recognition problems *sur place*.

#### 4. Erasmus and academic recognition

The different steps mentioned in paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 proved to be successful but not sufficient. Student mobility within Community States did not move beyond 1% of the total number of students enrolled in higher institutions in the EC. Therefore the Commission proposed the Erasmus programme, the

European Community action scheme for the mobility of university students.<sup>1</sup> The main objectives of the original Erasmus proposal were to promote broad and intensive cooperation between higher education institutions in the 12 Member States and to enable an increasing number of students — reaching a minimum of 10% of the total student population by 1992 — to acquire initial training by spending an integrated period of study in another Member State. This should ensure the development of a pool of graduates with direct experience of intra-Community cooperation, and create a basis upon which intensified cooperation in economic and social sectors may develop at Community level.<sup>2</sup>

For this purpose, the Commission proposed that the Erasmus programme should be implemented on a permanent basis, subject to periodic review. The first stage should cover three years (1987 to 1989), and require a budget of 175 million ECU, 25 million ECU being requested for 1987, 50 million ECU for 1988, and 100 million ECU for 1989. After long discussions, the Erasmus programme was adopted in May 1987 with a budget of 85 million ECU, 10 million ECU being provided for 1987, 30 million ECU for 1988 and 45 million ECU for 1989.<sup>3</sup>

The Erasmus programme comprises four different actions, of which the two most important are: Action 1, providing for the establishment and operation of a European university network — in other words, a large-scale continuation of the original JSP scheme, and Action 2, providing for 'mobility' support for individual students participating in Action 1 activities.

Action 3 will concentrate totally on measures to improve academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study and will cover three sub-actions: European Community course credit transfer scheme (ECTS), European Community network of national academic recognition information centres and joint curriculum development. Finally, Action 4 covers complementary measures to promote student mobility in the Community. The European Community course

credit transfer system will be a pilot scheme which aims at automatic recognition *a priori* proceeding from course units to periods of studies, intermediate and final qualifications — a complete new deal in the solution of academic recognition problems within the Community of Twelve. Sub-action 2 aims at the intensification of the Naric network activities and is designed to cover further study visits for representatives of the centres, documentation costs (including translation), development of a system for data exchange between the centres, publications of academic recognition arrangements and overall co-ordination of the network. As the pilot phase of Community support for university cooperation has shown, a further way in which universities can ensure mutual recognition of studies is by working together on joint production of curricula. Joint curriculum production is seen to contribute, by means of an exchange of experience and expertise, to the process of innovation and improvement of courses on an EC-wide basis (sub-action 3).

It should be pointed out that while academic recognition is the focal point only of Action 3, academic recognition is actually central to the entire Erasmus programme. Within Actions 1 and 2, there will be no student leaving to study in another EC Member State and there will not be one single partnership within the European university network if academic recognition is not secured *a priori*. Improvement of academic recognition can thus be seen as the most important justification of the Erasmus programme itself.

<sup>1</sup> Proposal for a Council Decision adopting Erasmus: the European Community action scheme for the mobility of university students (submitted by the Commission to the Council), Brussels, Commission of the European Communities, Commission Document COM(85) 756 final of 20 December 1985. A revised version, which applies to the FR/DE/EN/PT language versions was presented under Commission Document COM(85) final/2 on 27 February 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The Erasmus proposal was accepted by the Council on 14 May 1987 (Council Decision of 15 June 1987 adopting the European Community action scheme for the mobility of university students (Erasmus), OJ L 166, p. 20, 25.6.1987).

# Equality of treatment for men and women in social security matters

In its judgment dated 11 June 1987 (Case 30/85 *Teuling-Worms*), The Court sides with the Commission and adopts the latter's argumentation on the notion of indirect sexual discrimination with respect to supplementary benefits for spouses or dependent children.

In its judgment dated 24 June 1987 (Case 384/85 *Borrie Clarke*), The Court confirms its recent jurisprudence on the possibility of directly invoking Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC.<sup>1</sup> While deeming contrary to the said article, and therefore to the principle of equal treatment for men and women, the upholding by a Member State of provisional measures resulting in the continuation of discrimination beyond the date on which the directive is to be transposed.

The editors of *Social Europe* considered it appropriate to publish the following two judgments:

## Judgment of the Court (Sixth Chamber)

11 June 1987

'Equality of treatment for men and women in social security matters — Directive 79/7/EEC Art. 4, paragraph 1'

In Case 30/85,

concerning a request made to the Court under Article 177 of the EEC Treaty by the Raad van Beroep in Amsterdam, with a view to obtaining in the main dispute brought before the Court between J. W. Teuling, Amsterdam and the Executive Board of the *Bedrijfsvereniging voor de chemische industrie* a preliminary ruling on the interpretation of Council Directive 79/7/EEC dated 19 December 1978, regarding the gradual application of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (OJ L 6, 1979, p. 24),

### *The Court (Sixth Chamber)*

composed of: C. N. Kakouris, President of Chamber, T. F. O'Higgins, T. Koopmans, K. Bahlmann and G. C. Rodriguez Iglesias, Judges,

Advocate General: G. F. Mancini  
Registrar: H. A. Ruhl, principal administrator

after examination of the observations presented on behalf of

Mrs Teuling, main plaintiff, represented by Mrs M. E. J. C. Diepstraten, barrister in Amsterdam,

the Board of Directors of the *Bedrijfsvereniging voor de chemische industrie*, main defendant, represented by Mr Levelt-Overmars, Gemeenschappelijk Administratiekantoor, in the written proceedings and by Mr W. W. Wijnbeek in the oral proceedings,

the Dutch Government, represented in this matter by Mr I. Verkade, Secretary-General in the Department of Foreign Affairs, in the written proceedings,

the Commission of the European Communities, represented by Mr J. Currall, member of its Legal Service, acting as

agent and assisted by Mr F. Herbert, barrister in Brussels,

considering the report for the hearing and following the oral proceedings of 6 May 1986, having heard the conclusions presented by the Advocate General at the hearing of 7 October 1986,

pronounces the following

## Judgment

1. By court order dated 4 February 1985, received by the Court on 6 February 1985, the Raad van Beroep in Amsterdam submitted four pre-judicial questions under Article 177 of the EEC Treaty concerning the interpretation, jointly with Article 5 of the EEC Treaty, of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 19 December 1978 on the gradual application of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (OJ L 6, 1979, p. 24) and Directive 76/207/EEC of the Council dated 9 February 1976 on the application of the said principle to employment, training and promotion opportunities, and working conditions (OJ L 39, p. 40).
2. These questions have arisen in connection with a dispute between Mrs Teuling and the executive board of the *Bedrijfsvereniging voor de chemische industrie* (a professional association of the chemical industry), regarding the decision of this organization to calculate her invalidity pension, from 1 January 1984 and following the changes brought to the national insurance scheme by the 29 December 1982 Act, no longer on the basis of the legal minimum wage, but on the basis of the last payment which was received by her.
3. The *Wet op de Arbeidsongeschiktheidsverzekering* (Dutch law on insurance against industrial disablement — hereinafter called WAO) provides (in its version previous to the 29 December 1982 Act) that all workers rendered unfit to work qualify for a net minimum benefit equal to the net legal minimum wage, irrespective

<sup>1</sup> See *Social Europe* No 1/88.

of sex or civil status, as laid down by the 27 November 1968 Act (stb. 657) on the minimum wage and minimum holiday pay. The 29 December 1982 Act (stb. 737) with effect from 1 January 1984, abolished this right, providing for the gradual transfer of those receiving the benefit from the minimum level of the WAO to the minimum level of the Algemene Arbeidsongeschiktheidswet (a general law on industrial disablement — hereinafter referred to as AAW) which had a lower minimum level of 70% of the legal minimum wage. With the help of supplementary benefits, this figure could be pushed up to 100% for those claimants only who fulfilled the conditions of Article 10, paragraph 4 of the AAW, namely those with dependants.

4. In addition, the report points out that another law dated 30 December 1983 (stb. 698) introduced a new provision, Article 97 of the AAW, which entitles women receiving benefits under the WAO to benefits under the AAW, for industrial disablement already existent on 1 October 1976 (the date the AAW came into force), whereas they had previously not been entitled to these benefits because they were married. Starting from 1 January 1984, they are entitled to these benefits when the amount received under the WAO is inferior to the amount they might have received under the AAW had they been entitled to the AAW benefits.

5. The report also indicates that Mrs Teuling, disabled since 1972, received, from 1972 onwards, a WAO benefit equal to the net legal minimum wage, independent of the fact that she was married and independent of her husband's income. However, on 1 January 1984 the benefit she was receiving was reduced to 70% of the legal minimum wage in accordance with the provisions of the abovementioned 29 December 1982 Act. Moreover, she was not entitled to the supplementary benefits provided in Article 10, paragraph 4 of the AAW as a result of her hus-

band's direct or indirect income. In this respect, it appears that her husband died on 28 April 1984 and that the period in litigation is therefore from January to April 1984.

6. The plaintiff states that in accordance with the provisions of the 29 December 1982 Act, her industrial disablement benefit was reduced from 100% of the legal minimum wage to 70%. Because she was married at the time and her husband's income was higher than the maximum specified by Article 10, paragraph 4, she was not entitled to the supplementary benefits of 15 or 30%. In brief, she points out that such a system of supplementary benefits, based on the spouse's direct or indirect income or on the existence of dependent children, constitutes an indirect discrimination against women and is therefore incompatible with Article 4 (1) of Directive 79/7/EEC.

7. However, the competent jurisdiction in the Netherlands estimated that only married people or people with dependent children qualified for a minimum guaranteed income equal to the full net legal minimum wage.

8. Considering that the implications of the directive were imprecise, the Raad van Beroep in Amsterdam, hearing the dispute, suspended its decision and submitted to the Court the four following questions:

'(1) Does a system of supplementary benefits for industrial disablement which bases the sum of the benefit on the civil status and direct or indirect income of a spouse, or on the existence of dependent children, comply with Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 1978?

(2a) Does the 29 December 1982 Act (stb. 737), whereby the guarantee previously given to all those insured under the WAO that they would qualify for a (net) minimum benefit equal to the (net) minimum legal wage no longer ap-

plies, as a consequence of which the guarantee only applies to those people who fulfil the conditions provided under Article 10, paragraph 4 of the AAW, comply with the provision of the directive mentioned in the first question?

(2b) Considering the period prescribed by Article 8 of the directive and considering the provisions of Article 5 of the said directive and Article 5 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, is it still necessary to attach importance, when answering the previous question, to the fact that the law in question is dated 29 December 1982 and that it partially came into force on 1 January 1983, while its concrete implications will come into force in several stages, on dates which precede as well as follow the expiry of the period prescribed by Article 8 of the directive?

(3) Do the provisions of the Directive of the Council of the European Communities dated 9 February 1976 (76/207/EEC) also have a bearing on the answer to the previous questions?

(4) Does a negative answer to questions 1 and/or 2a imply that the interested parties may directly invoke the Community regulation — which in this case has been violated — as opposed to national legislation?

9. The national legislation in question and the detailed submissions of the parties may be examined in the report for the hearing. These elements of the case shall only hereinafter be mentioned in so far as they are necessary to the Court's deliberation.

#### **Regarding the first question**

10. In the first question, the Raad van Beroep wishes to know whether a system of benefits for industrial dis-

ablement, whereby the sum of the benefit is based equally on the civil status and the direct and indirect income of the spouse, or on the existence of a dependent child, constitutes a discrimination under the terms of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive.

11. As the Court decided in its judgment dated 24 June 1986 (Case 150/85, *Drake*, not yet published), the objective expressed in Article 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC is implemented by Article 4, paragraph 1 of the same directive, which prohibits any discrimination based on sex in matters of social security, either directly or indirectly by reference for instance to marital status, with particular regard to the calculation of benefits, including supplementary benefits due for a spouse or for a dependant and the conditions governing the duration and continuation of entitlement to the benefits.
12. The wording of Article 4, paragraph 1 thus clearly indicates that the award of such benefits is prohibited when the said benefits are directly or indirectly based on the sex of the claimant.
13. For this purpose, it must be pointed out that a system of benefits which, as in the present case, provides for supplementary benefits which are not directly based on the sex of the claimants but which take into account their family or marital status, and where it is clear that a much lower percentage of women than men qualify for these benefits, is contrary to Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive, unless such a system of benefits is justifiable on grounds excluding discrimination based on sex.
14. It appears from the case that, according to the statistical data submitted to the Commission by the Dutch Government, a much greater percentage of married men than married women qualify for a benefit which is linked to the existence of family dependants. According to the plaintiff and the Commission, this is a con-

sequence of the fact that in the Netherlands there are at present far more married men than married women who work, and that therefore there are far fewer women who can justify having a dependent spouse.

15. In those circumstances, an allowance linked to the existence of family dependents would be in breach of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive, when its award is not justifiable on grounds which exclude any discrimination based on sex.
16. For this purpose, the objectives of the allowances in question must be examined. According to the Dutch Government, the AAW does not link benefits to the salary previously received by the claimants but aims to guarantee a minimum subsistence income in the absence of any other professional income. It is worth noting that such a guarantee given by Member States to claimants who would otherwise become poverty-stricken, is an integral element of the social policy of the European Community.
17. It follows that if the objective of a minimum social security benefit is, in the absence of any other income, to avoid the social security benefit falling below the minimum means of subsistence for claimants who, having a dependent spouse or children, have a greater financial burden compared to single persons, such benefits fall within the terms of the directive.
18. If the national jurisdiction, solely competent to judge in the matter and to interpret national legislation, establishes that allowances such as those in this case correspond to the additional financial burden incurred by claimants with a dependent spouse or with dependent children, that they achieve their object which is to guarantee claimants a minimum adequate means of subsistence and are therefore necessary, the fact that a far greater number of married men than married women qualify for the said benefits is insufficient to conclude that the award of such benefits

constitutes an infringement of the directive.

19. The answer to the first question asked by the Raad van Beroep is therefore the following: Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 19 December 1978 must be interpreted in the sense that a system of benefits for industrial disablement which links the amount of the benefit equally to the civil status and to the direct or indirect income of the spouse falls within the terms of the directive when the object of the system is to guarantee, by means of a social security supplementary benefit, a minimum adequate means of subsistence for claimants with a dependent spouse or dependent children, by compensating for their heavier financial burden compared to single persons.

**Regarding the second question (2a)**

20. In paragraph (a) of the second question, the national jurisdiction wishes to know if a law such as the above-mentioned Dutch Act of 29 December 1982 falls within the terms of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive when it prescribes that a guarantee, previously given to all workers suffering from industrial disablement and whose income falls around the legal minimum wage, that they shall receive a (net) minimum allowance equal to the (net) legal minimum wage, only applies to persons with a dependent spouse or with a spouse whose income is very low or who have a dependent child.
21. It appears from the order of referral that after the entry into force of the 29 December 1982 Act, the position of married claimants entitled to the minimum rate of WAO benefits but unable to provide proof that they effectively have a dependent spouse, was greatly affected by the fact that from 1 January 1984, their benefits were reduced to 70% of the legal minimum wage. It also appears that within the group of claimants entitled

to an allowance under the WAO, there are far more married men than married women who fall within the range of application of Article 10, paragraph 4 of the AAW.

22. As the Dutch Government has emphasized, the 29 December 1982 Act is the expression of a policy, the object of which is to ensure, within available resources, a minimum subsistence level for all workers suffering from industrial disablement. In this respect it must be recognized that Community law is in no way opposed to one of its Member States acknowledging, within a controlled social expenditure framework, the relatively greater needs of claimants with a spouse who is dependent or whose income is very low, or with a dependent child, compared to those of single persons.
23. In this light, the answer to question 2a must therefore be that Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC must be interpreted in the sense that a law whereby a guarantee, previously given to all workers suffering from industrial disablement and whose income falls around the legal minimum wage, that they shall receive a (net) minimum allowance equal to the (net) minimum legal wage, only applies to those claimants with a spouse who is dependent or whose income is very low or with a dependent child, falls within the terms of its provisions.

**Regarding questions 2b, 3 and 4**

24. In the light of the answers to questions 1 and 2a, an examination of questions 2b, 3 and 4 is no longer required.

**Costs**

25. The costs incurred by the Dutch Government or by the European Economic Community, who submitted observations to the Court, are not recoverable. As these proceedings are, in so far as the parties to the main proceedings are con-

cerned, in the nature of a step in the proceedings pending before the national court, costs are a matter for that court.

On those grounds,

*The Court (Sixth Chamber),*

in answer to the questions referred to it by the Raad van Beroep in Amsterdam, by order of 4 February 1985, rules that:

- (1) Article 4, paragraph 1, of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 19 December 1978 must be interpreted along the lines that a system of benefits for industrial disablement whereby the amount of the benefit is calculated equally according to the civil status and the direct or indirect income of the spouse complies with its provisions when the system aims to guarantee, by means of a social security supplementary benefit, a minimum adequate means of subsistence for those claimants who have a dependent spouse or dependent children, by compensating for their increased financial burden in relation to single persons.
- (2) Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC must be interpreted along the lines that a law falls within its terms when it prescribes that a guarantee, previously given to all workers suffering from disablement and whose income approximates to the legal minimum wage, that they shall receive a net minimum allowance equal to the net legal minimum wage only applies to those claimants with a spouse who is dependent or whose income is very low, or with a dependent child.

Kakouris      O'Higgins      Koopmans  
Bahlmann                      Rodriguez Iglesias

Delivered in open court in Luxembourg on 11 June 1987.

C. N. Kakouris

President of the Sixth Chamber

P. Heim  
Registrar

**Judgment of the Court (Second Chamber)**

24 June 1987

'Equality of treatment in matters of social security — Directive 79/7/EEC, Art. 4, paragraph 1'

In Case 384/85

concerning a claim placed before the Court, pursuant to Article 177 of the EEC Treaty, by the Social Security Commissioner in London, with a view to obtaining in the main dispute pending before this jurisdiction between Mrs Borrie Clarke and the Chief Adjudication Officer a preliminary ruling on the interpretation of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council, dated 19 December 1978, regarding the gradual implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (OJ L 6, 1979, p. 24),

*The Court (Second Chamber)*

composed of: T. F. O'Higgins, President of Chamber, O. Due and K. Bahlmann, Judges,

Advocate General: J. L. Da Cruz Vilaca  
Registrar: H. A. Ruhl, principal administrator

after considering the observations presented on behalf of

Mrs Borrie Clarke, main plaintiff, represented by C. Stanbrook and L. Hawkes, barristers,

the United Kingdom, represented to this end by F. Jacobs Q.C.,

the Commission of the European Communities, represented by J. Curall, member of its Legal Service, acting as agent,

considering the report for the hearing and following the oral proceedings of 19 March 1987,

having heard the Opinion of the Advocate General delivered at the sitting on 4 June 1987,

hereby delivers the following

## Judgment

1. In a decision dated 25 November 1985, which reached the Court on 29 November following, the Social Security Commissioner of London submitted a question for preliminary ruling, pursuant to Article 177 of the EEC Treaty, regarding the interpretation of Article 4 of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 19 December 1978, on the gradual implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security (OJ L 6, 1979, p. 24) with a view to ascertaining whether the provisions thereof could be considered as having direct implications for the United Kingdom from 22 December 1984, the date on which Member States were supposed to have taken the necessary steps to ensure its execution.
2. This question was raised in connection with an appeal litigation between Mrs Borrie Clarke and the Chief Adjudication Officer on the subject of whether Article 4, paragraph 1, of the said directive is opposed to the possible extension of the effects of a discriminatory regulation repealed before 22 December 1984, the date of expiry of the period awarded to Member States to comply with the directive, beyond that date and in compliance with temporary national measures taken at the time of the institution of a new disablement benefit.
3. It appears from the case that Mrs Borrie Clarke was refused in April 1983 the award of a non-contributory invalidity pension (hereinafter referred to as NCIP), on the grounds of a provision relating to her ability to cope with normal domestic tasks, a provision which did not apply to persons of the opposite sex. The NCIP was abolished as from 29 November 1984 and a new benefit was created for severe disablement (severe disablement allowance) for which claimants from both sexes qualified on the same conditions. The date fixed for the entry into force of the severe disablement allowance was 29 No-

vember 1984. However, Article 20 (1) of the Social Security (severe disablement allowance) Regulations 1984 (hereinafter referred to as temporary provisions) allowed persons who were entitled to the old NCIP to automatically receive the new severe disablement allowance from 29 November 1984. It follows from this that the automatic entitlement to the new allowance under the terms of the temporary provisions was governed by the same criteria as those which had governed entitlement to the previous NCIP.

4. According to Mrs Borrie Clarke, the abovementioned temporary provisions have the effect of prolonging the discriminatory basis of entitlement to the previous NCIP, as a consequence of the automatic entitlement to the new severe disablement allowance. She argues that, from 22 December 1984, she is entitled, under the terms of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive, to the severe disablement allowance without having to provide proof that she fulfils the additional clause relating to her ability to cope with normal domestic tasks, which only applies to married women living with their husbands. The United Kingdom Government argues on the other hand that the aim of the temporary provisions is to enable those people who were entitled to the NCIP to claim the new allowance without having to fulfil the new conditions and thereby fulfil their legitimate hope not to be deprived of an allowance as a result of changes in the legislation.
5. The case indicates that the fact that the provisions in question (including the temporary provisions for the severe disablement allowance) contravene the principle of equal treatment under the terms of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive is not disputed.
6. Deeming the implications of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive to be imprecise in this respect, the Social Security Commissioner, to whom the appeal was referred, deferred judg-

ment and put the following question to the Court:

'Does Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council have a direct application entitling a woman, as from 22 December 1984, to claim a disablement allowance owing to the fact that before that date she fulfilled the conditions entitling a man to the said allowance, notwithstanding the fact that before that date she did not also fulfil a further necessary condition, applicable under national law, only to a category of women to which she belonged?'

7. The report for the hearing may be referred to for greater details on the national legislation in question and the observations placed before the Court. These aspects of the case shall only be reviewed in so far as they are necessary to the deliberation of the Court.
8. The main objective of the question posed by the Social Security Commissioner is to ascertain whether Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive may be invoked by individuals of a Member State against the extension beyond 22 December 1984, the date of expiry laid down by the directive, of the implications of an earlier national legislation which contravenes the said Article 4, paragraph 1, and whether, if the answer is positive, the women concerned are from that date entitled to the allowance on the same basis as men.
9. It must be noted that, according to the Court's decisions dated 4 December 1986 (Case 71/85 *FNV*, not yet published) and of 24 March 1987 (Case 286/85 *McDermott and Cotter*, not yet published) that considered in its own right and considering the finality of the said directive and of its content, Article 4, paragraph 1 is sufficiently precise to be invoked by a subject and applied by a judge. Furthermore, while Article 5 of the directive reserves to Member States the power of assessment as to the means, it lays down the result which those means are to attain, namely



the abolition of all legislation which contravenes the principle of equal treatment.

10. Furthermore, it must be underlined that the directive does not in any way permit derogation from the principle of equal treatment laid down by Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive in order to authorize the extension of the discriminatory effects of previous national legislation. It therefore follows that no Member State may allow unequal treatment to continue beyond 22 December 1984 on the grounds that the conditions required for initial entitlement to an allowance precede that date. The fact that these inequalities are a consequence of provisional measures taken at the time of the creation of a new benefit is not conducive in itself to a different evaluation.

11. It follows that Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive does not in any way enable Member States to apply conditions or limitations to the principle of equal treatment and its specific ambit, and that the above provision is sufficiently precise and unconditional to be invoked as from 22 December 1984 before national courts, in the absence of adequate implementation procedures, by individuals against the application of any national legislation contravening the said article.

12. It also follows from the abovementioned decisions of 4 December 1986 and 24 March 1987, that Article 4, paragraph 1 of the directive prescribes that from 22 December 1984, women are entitled to equal treatment and to the same set of rules as men in the same situation, these remaining, in the absence of an adequate

implementation of the said directive, the only valid reference system. In this specific case, it implies that if a man in a particular situation is automatically entitled to the severe disablement allowance under the abovementioned provisional measures without having to re-establish his rights to the allowance, then a woman in the same situation is also entitled to the said allowance without having to fulfil an additional condition which was, before that date, only applicable to married women.

13. The answer to the question put to the Court must therefore be that Article 4, paragraph 1 of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council, dated 19 December 1978 on the prohibition of any discrimination based on sex in matters of social security, may be invoked from 22 December 1984 against the extension beyond that date of the effects of previous national legislation which does not comply with the abovementioned Article 4, paragraph 1. In the absence of adequate measures of implementation of the said article, women are entitled to equal treatment and to benefit from the same set of rules as men in the same situation, the latter remaining, in the absence of adequate implementation of the said directive, the only valid reference system.

**Costs**

14. The costs incurred by the British Government and by the Commission of the European Communities, who have submitted observations to the Court, are not recoverable. As these proceedings are, in so far as the

parties to the main proceedings are concerned, in the nature of a step in the proceedings pending before the national court, costs are a matter for that court.

On those grounds,

*The Court (Second Chamber),*

in answer to the question submitted to it by the Social Security Commissioner in London, by order dated 25 November 1985, rules that:

Article 4, paragraph 1, of Directive 79/7/EEC of the Council dated 19 December 1978 on the prohibition of all discrimination based on sex in matters of social security may be invoked from 22 December 1984 against the extension beyond that date of the effects of previous national legislation which contravenes the said Article 4, paragraph 1.

In the absence of appropriate measures for the implementation of the said Article, women are entitled to the same treatment as men and to cover under the same system as men in the same situation, this being the only valid system of reference until such time as the said directive is applied.

O'Higgins      Due      Bahlmann

Delivered in open court in Luxembourg on 24 June 1987.

T. F. O'Higgins

President of the Second Chamber

P. Heim  
Registrar

# 'Great leap forward' for health and safety

The Commission is stepping up its actions in the field of health and safety at work by means of a new programme which was adopted in September 1987. This greater momentum to the work of the Health and Safety Directorate (DGV/E) has resulted from the adoption of the Single European Act.

Since 1978 when the first programme of action of the European Communities on safety and health at work was adopted, this Directorate has been actively engaged in health and safety, but the passing of the Single Act has given even greater impetus to the work it is undertaking on the protection of the safety and health of workers in the Community.

The new programme of action covers five major areas:

- (i) protection of workers' health at the workplace;
- (ii) improvement of workers' safety at the workplace, including ergonomics;
- (iii) training and information policy;
- (iv) initiatives directed at small and medium-sized enterprises;
- (v) social dialogue.

The programme is published in summary form in the *Official Journal of the European Communities* together with a Council resolution on this matter.

It is not the intention of this article to review these texts but simply to discuss the major objectives of the new programme in the light of the initiatives previously taken as a result of earlier programmes.

## Previous Community actions

Under the EEC Treaty, the Commission has already implemented two action programmes on safety and health at work since 1978.

These programmes were the subject of two Council resolutions:

The first of these, of 29 June 1978, expressed the political will to enable a series of actions to be taken up to 1982 focusing on those substances which cause disease, prevention of the dangers and harmful effects of machines, monitoring of workers whose health and safety are likely to be at risk and the improvement of human attitudes.

The second resolution, adopted on 27 February 1984, built on and extended the first action programme, in particular as concerned safety at work.

In the context of the action plans, the Commission has proposed 10 directives — seven of which have been adopted by the Council — on the protection of workers exposed to physical and chemical agents at work and the prevention of major accident hazards related to chemicals.

Of these the most important directive which was adopted was the 'Framework' Directive 80/1107/EEC on agents at work. This directive sets out two objectives: the elimination or limitation of exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents and the prevention of risks to workers' health and safety; and the protection of workers who are likely to be exposed to these agents.

## The new programme

The available statistics on accidents and occupational illnesses confirm the great loss of human life and the suffering caused by industrial accidents and disease. To permit the Commission to have a better understanding of the causes of accidents at the workplace, and therefore take rapid corrective action, accurate and similar statistical data must be available from all Member States.

Three sectors with the highest accident rates and the highest levels of serious injury have been identified. These areas concern work at sea, agriculture and the construction industry.

Measures will be taken to make safety an integral part of the design of vessels, the definition of the tasks of the workers will be clarified to include safety, and adequate availability of medical and emergency services will be obtained as soon as possible.

In agriculture more than half of all work accidents occur in farmyards and in farm buildings. Many farmers are not covered or concerned with the health and safety regulations because of their self-employed status. To rectify this situation, the Commission is drawing up measures concerning the design of farm buildings and electrical installations in agriculture.

The construction industry is also characterized by higher than average risk of accidents and occupational disease. The current system of bidding for contracts gives no specific indication of safety and health costs and may lead to tenderers proposing cheaper but less safe working methods or adopting them once the contract has been won. It is a sector characterized by many small firms as only low capital outlay is needed.

The Commission will prepare a directive on safety in the construction industry, which will stress the need to incorporate safety requirements right from the initial design stage, to make health and safety aspects clearer in the tenders, to closely define responsibility on construction sites and to establish safety-related requirements for certain tasks.

In these and other industries it is important, as one way of avoiding risks, that workers use personal protective equipment. The equipment must be made available at the workplace by the employer.

The Commission has already sent to the Council a directive on personal protective equipment provided at the workplace by the employer, with particular



regard to appropriate use, user acceptability, availability, maintenance and testing.

A better way to avoid risks is to prevent them at source by means of safe process-control systems which include ergonomic aspects. The Commission will put forward recommendations on the selection and use of equipment resulting from the development of new technologies and process-control systems, with particular regard to the intrinsic safety of equipment and ergonomic factors in its use.

Not only must the worker be protected by 'external' personal protective equipment but he must learn to use his own body correctly. Many accidents oc-

cur because objects have been incorrectly lifted by the worker. How should an object be lifted? How can I avoid falling? These are some of the questions that are being answered by the Commission's proposals aimed at avoiding back pain and back injury caused by bad workplace design.

### **Occupational health and hygiene**

The aims of an occupational health service are: the protection of workers against health hazards at work; adaptation of the job to suit the workers' health status; and contribution to the establish-

ment and maintenance of the highest degree of physical and mental well-being in the workforce.

In order to guarantee that exposure of workers to chemical substances is as low as reasonably achievable, and to enable the level of exposure to be monitored and measured, the Commission has forwarded to the Council a proposal for a directive establishing the basis for a Community list of exposure limit values for 100 agents.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> OJ C 164, 2.7.1986.

The lists already drawn up by the Member States contain over 1 000 substances whereas the European inventory of existing chemical substances (Einecs) has over 110 000 entries.

The Commission intends to extend this list of limit values, and will carry out studies to collect and evaluate toxicological and health data for individual agents and their absorption pathways. The Commission will also examine ways and means of improving the collection of such data. In the case of special protective measures which may be required for those chemical agents which can be absorbed through the skin, the Commission will propose modifications to existing directives.

Once the proposal for a Council directive on exposure limit values for 100 agents has been adopted by the Council, detailed examination of the measures required — for example, technical analyses — must be carried out to ensure accurate determination of exposure levels. To this end, the Commission will request technical assistance from competent organizations such as CEN. Account will also be taken of the current work of the international organization standards in this area. The Commission will also study ways of improving the measurement methods available.

For very dangerous agents or work activities, the Commission has already submitted a proposal for a directive to the Council, in which the conditions to be applied for the proscription of specific agents are set out. Studies will be carried out to determine the other agents and/or processes to be added to this directive.

In the case of agents likely to cause cancer, the Commission has already sent to the Council a directive laying down general and specific measures relating to occupational carcinogens. Subsequent additions to this directive will be made for other carcinogenic agents in line with ongoing work on the classification and labelling of chemical substances. A proposal for a directive is being drawn up on biological agents which cause ill health, such as pathogenic microorganisms, and genetic

engineering techniques which may present a risk to health.

The Council has already adopted a directive on noise, and the Commission intends to extend its field of application by including workers not currently covered and also by re-evaluating the threshold values.

In 1962 and 1966 the Commission made recommendations to the Member States concerning a European schedule of industrial diseases. This list is being revised to take account of subsequent improvements in the diagnosis of occupational diseases.

Legal provisions relating to occupational health services and their role in the protection of workers' health vary considerably between Member States. The Commission intends to draft a recommendation on the subject.

### Information

Knowledge and the possession of facts is useless without the ability and the means to communicate the information to the people who need it, namely those at the workplace.

It is important that when technological changes which imply major consequences for the workforce are introduced in the firm, workers and/or their representatives should be informed and consulted in accordance with the laws, agreements and practices in force in the Community countries.

In this context, safety and scientific information on chemical substances should be rapidly and easily understood by all at the workplace.

In order to overcome the disparity of available information on chemical substances, the Commission intends to provide information on all the substances for which directives are proposed in the field of health and safety. This information, together with that provided by the labelling system for dangerous substances and preparations, will be examined in order to determine its best use.

Furthermore, the protection of workers requires that research results and technical innovations aimed at improving working conditions are applied with the cooperation of all parties involved. To this end, the Commission will step up its work in the following fields:

- (i) the evaluation of recent research, to select the most promising for application in pilot projects;
- (ii) the establishment of evaluation programmes with the cooperation in each case of two or more Member States;
- (iii) the development of methods of disseminating the results, particularly for high-risk activities such as deep-sea diving or offshore exploration.

Finally, the Commission intends to increase information, training and exchange of experience between senior labour inspectors responsible for national implementation of regulations derived from Community directives. The Commission will formalize the regular meetings of the labour inspectors currently taking place at Community level, seminars will be organized on specific topics, and the programme of exchange of inspectors between Member States will be expanded.

### Training

Training covers all aspects of health and safety at work. Certain aspects may appear more regularly in newspaper headlines than others. Thus, 'Kiss of life saves workman!' or 'Factory saved from burning', are not infrequently seen. However, they could appear even more regularly in newspaper headlines, if the workers were well-trained. Fast reaction from a well-trained first-aiders at the workplace may save a life and a glass of water or a short burst from a fire extinguisher can stop a fire instantly if prompt action is taken once the fire is detected.

Member States have widely different requirements for the training and official recognition of first-aiders, first-aid firemen, safety officers, health specialists,

workers' representatives, company managers, etc. Conscious of these differences, the Commission intends to encourage training initiatives.

Health and safety at work will be included in two new action programmes which will be drawn up in the area of adult training in firms and vocational training for women.

Engineers, industrial chemists and physicists, some of the specialists responsible for the safety of others, must have good training in the appropriate safety precautions. Therefore, the Commission will investigate ways of providing a full course of training at university or in higher level technical education.

Training modules have already been developed in the high-risk areas and a network of medical advice centres (Macnet) has been established to provide medical assistance for ships carrying out sea-fishing.<sup>1</sup>

Participants of special youth training schemes must be protected from accidents. The safety needs in this area will be studied by the Commission. A network of collaboration centres will be established to develop the training resources necessary. These centres will

normally already be involved in teaching the various disciplines and training workers and their representatives.

### **Small and medium-sized enterprises**

There is evidence that the risk of accidents is probably increased because of longer working hours leading to increased fatigue and a lessening of vigilance.

Accidents can have serious economic consequences for SMEs. The situation is aggravated by the fact that many SMEs do not possess the technical know-how in accident prevention, whilst training and monitoring are difficult to carry out.

To help SMEs the Commission will develop a system for providing information rapidly on safety equipment and personal protective equipment, it will prepare training modules on safety specifically for the creators of SMEs and information will be included in new information manuals for SMEs.

A survey of a sample of SMEs will be carried out to see how they interpret and apply the existing regulations.

### **Social dialogue**

A balance between economic and social policy must be obtained as the internal market is developed. This implies close collaboration between employers' and workers' representatives during the stages leading up to Commission decisions.

This collaboration exists in the form of an Advisory Committee on safety, hygiene and health protection at work, which was established in 1974. It is essential that this Committee assists the Commission in defining the ways in which the collaboration between employers and workers may be improved.

### **Conclusion**

It is clear that the Commission is taking every conceivable measure to reduce risks to the well-being of Community workers. The actions can only be successful if the Member State governments, employers and workers cooperate fully.

**Kevin Gardiner**  
**William Hunter**  
**Alex Ball**

<sup>1</sup> See *Social Europe* 1/87.

# The early exchange of information in the event of abnormal levels of radioactivity or a nuclear accident

**The Chernobyl accident revealed very clearly the absence of an effective system for the prompt exchange of information at international and Community level in the event of accidents of this kind.**

**At that time no international arrangements existed, with the exception of a few bilateral and multilateral agreements setting up exchanges of information which, in the main, only covered nuclear accidents at power plants situated in the frontier areas of the countries concerned.**

Of course provision already existed for exchanges of information at Community level under Articles 35 and 36 of the Euratom Treaty and Article 13 of the Directive of 15 July 1980 laying down the basic safety standards for the health protection of the general public and workers against the dangers of ionizing radiation. These provisions relate essentially to information which the Member States are required to supply on assessments of radioactivity levels and exposure of the general public. Article 45 of the directive referred to applies in particular to emergencies. Under this provision, if the circumstances require it, the Member State in question must inform not only the Commission but also the neighbouring Member States of any accident involving exposure of the general public.

In fact the Chernobyl experience demonstrated that these fragmentary provisions could not constitute in themselves the basis of a satisfactory operational system in the event of an emergency. Those data passed on were often late and their diversity proved such that the potential risks from radionuclides in the atmosphere or deposited on the ground could not be evaluated in a correct and consistent manner.

Even more seriously, the situation was characterized by disinformation in the absence of information emanating from the Soviet Union; public opinion was alerted on 28 April 1986 by the media after the detection in Sweden of the abnormally high level of radioactivity in the air.

In order to remedy this unsatisfactory situation, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), each within the framework of its respective powers, took initiatives to set up a viable system for the prompt exchange of information.

Among the 'post-Chernobyl' measures taken on the initiative of the IAEA was the International Convention on early notification of a nuclear accident. The extraordinary ministerial conference in Vienna on 24 to 26 September 1986, in which the Commission took part, was

amongst other things devoted to the adoption of this Convention by the political authorities of the countries concerned, including the Soviet Union. The 12 Community Member States have all signed the Convention, although not all have yet ratified it.

In order to improve the Community provisions, the Council of the European Communities on 14 December 1987 not only decided that the Community *per se* would sign the Convention but also adopted a Decision (87/600/Euratom) on specific Community arrangements for the early exchange of information in the event of a radiological emergency.

The Community system extends to the countries of the Community the principles laid down in the IAEA Convention in the form of a multilateral arrangement, as provided under Article 9 of the Vienna Convention, of a kind which States parties to the Convention may devise for the purpose of providing early notification of a nuclear accident.

But it goes further; it supplements and broadens the terms of the Convention, in particular with regard to the following points:

- (i) the system is binding on the Member States, since it forms part of Community law;
- (ii) its scope is wider because the system provides not only for the notification of accidents at installations or in connection with activities but also for information on abnormal levels of radioactivity likely to affect public health, even where such levels are detected outside the territory of any accident State;
- (iii) the triggering mechanism is more clearly defined;
- (iv) all the Member States are informed, not just those likely to be affected by the release of radioactivity;
- (v) each Member State affected or likely to be affected by measures taken by another Member State is immediately informed of such measures.

The Community system for the exchange of information in particular re-

quires that, when a Member State decides to take measures of a general nature to protect the public in the event of a radiological emergency, that Member State:

- (a) immediately reports such measures to the Commission and to the Member States affected or likely to be affected, indicating the reasons for which they were taken;
- (b) promptly provides the Commission and the Member States affected or likely to be affected with the information which is available and which may make it possible for any radiological effects expected in these States to be minimized.

The information referred to will, depending on the event in question and the possibilities and provided national security is not jeopardized, include the following elements:

- (i) the nature of the event, the exact time and place at which it took place and the installation or activity in question;
- (ii) the presumed or ascertained cause and the foreseeable development of the accident with regard to the emission of radioactive materials;
- (iii) the general characteristics of the radioactive emissions, including their nature, probable physical and chemical form, quantity and composition and the effective release height(s);

(iv) information on the meteorological and hydrological conditions and forecasts necessary to predict the dispersion of the radioactive materials emitted;

- (v) the results from the monitoring of environmental conditions;
- (vi) values measured in foodstuffs, animal feeds and drinking water;
- (vii) protective measures taken or planned;
- (viii) measures taken or planned to inform the public;
- (ix) the foreseeable future behaviour of the radioactive emissions.

On receipt of the information required under this Decision, each Member State must:

- (a) promptly inform the Commission of the measures taken and the recommendations made following receipt of the information;
- (b) inform the Commission at appropriate intervals of the radioactivity levels recorded by its monitoring stations in foodstuffs, animal feeds, drinking water and the environment.

The main task of the Commission for its part is immediately to relay the information received to all other Member States and to pass on to them any information it receives on significant increases in radioactivity levels or nuclear

accidents occurring in third countries, (particularly in countries in close proximity to the Community) including information received by virtue of the Community's adherence to the Vienna Convention.

The operational nature of the system is guaranteed by:

- (i) the existence of an appointed department in the Commission and national contact points on hand 24 hours a day every day to respond to notifications in respect of nuclear accidents and other radioactive hazards;
- (ii) the drawing up, by joint agreement between the Commission and the competent authorities of the Member States, of detailed procedures for the passing on of information which are tested at regular intervals.

This system enables the Commission to perform the tasks assigned to it by the Euratom Treaty which require it to monitor the surveillance of radioactivity levels in the environment in the Member States.

The system, already partly operational, should ensure that the competent intervention agencies are in possession of full information and should enable Member States which do not have the required infrastructure to benefit from precise information for the implementation of emergency plans.





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## **Part two**

### **Analyses, debates, studies**



# The social situation in maritime transport — priority issues and Community actions

The evolution of the European Community fleet since 1980 shows that it has fallen by two-fifths while its share of world tonnage has fallen from 29% to 19%. This recalls a story not dissimilar to that of a number of traditional manufacturing industries recording structural problems even before the first energy-price induced slump of the early 1970s.

If certain indigenous industries suffered from severe competition from low-wage non-Community countries (such as clothing, textiles, footwear), the maritime sector presented a mirror-image of this phenomenon by having to face the reality of growing competition — not from overseas factories but from vessels manned by seafarers enjoying much less favourable earnings and working conditions. Add to that the probability that the vessel could well be sailing under a flag of one country with a lax, or favourable, tax and/or social security system and the complex picture is complete.

The sector has been in rapid evolution over many years, and the conditions under which its many component parts operate have fluctuated with bewildering ease. A sector whose income is earned in dollars is subject to the vagaries of that currency's fortunes (currently in prolonged decline) in a manner unrelated to the economic, technical or management expertise deployed by various shipowners. The same shipowners are of course faced with another imponderable feature — the purchase of their raw fuel in the same dollar currency.

If the past has been uncertain for shipowners and the future looks like being somewhat bleak, the same can be said for the mariners engaged in almost every facet of sea transport, short and long haul, industrial or passenger transport, including short sea routes of which the Channel is perhaps the most notorious because it is the busiest in the world.

The European Community's position on social matters in sea transport was clarified from 1985 onwards in a number of ways. The Commission communication of March 1985<sup>1</sup> set out a number of objectives which are being implemented; the commissioning of a study on the social situation in the Community has coincided with the setting-up of the Joint Committee on maritime transport.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore natural that the report is being considered in a full and measured way by the Committee which is itself embarking on its mandate as a social dialogue body with a role to play along with other sectoral Joint Committees established over many years.<sup>3</sup>

The report itself sets out in a constructive manner the priority social issues facing the maritime sector today. It poses the challenging question of where putative social measures may be reasonably expected to be adopted (and to have a desired effect) in the absence of or without the minimum of concomitant economic measures. Such, for example, is the subject of debate regarding the introduction of fiscal advantages to either shipowner or seafarer or both. Those who likewise debate the issue in actuarial terms and in regard to upstream and downstream activities invite us to concentrate on such matters as the level of State aids to shipbuilding, the interest rates on long-term loans, or the rates of capital depreciation allowed in different countries. It is quite possible to imagine that the future and livelihood of an entire 18-man European crew of a bulk carrier could be debated in terms of a marginal percentage point on a fiscal or interest-rate table.

The Community is not yet in a position to influence or determine issues on this sort of macro-sectoral level; it does of course implement its rules on State aids and is conscientious in pursuit of the rules on free competition.

A range of socio-economic, regional and sometimes sectoral measures are on occasion adopted by the Member States; the recent British measures designed to improve the position of seafarers are to some degree more humanitarian than economic (contribution to repatriation costs of seafarers) and those relating to training are an inspiration in relation to maintaining the high grade of certification of Community seafarers.

The Commission has chosen to pursue two particular areas of development which are of particular interest to seafarers, and literally at their place of work.

<sup>1</sup> 'Towards a Community maritime transport policy' COM(85) 90, 14.3.1985.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 253, 4.9.1987.

<sup>3</sup> See *Social Europe* 2/85 on the 'Social dialogue in sectors'.



The first concerns the progressive development of the maritime cooperation programme ensuring an increasingly rapid and efficient radio-doctor service. This programme, called 'Mac-net' (Medical advice centres network) has been reported on in an earlier issue.<sup>1</sup>

The essential contribution this programme is making is to ensure that the mariner may ultimately look forward to receiving at sea something approaching the kind of medical advice, diagnosis, treatment (or, if necessary, evacuation) that a worker on land tends to take for granted.

Much in the same way that doctors treating land-based workers expect medical supplies and the high training levels of their medical or paramedical staff to be consistent and available, so too in the Community we are developing the 'tools of the trade' of the maritime, radio-medical adviser. The Community has brought doctors and pharmacists together and produced an agreed, simplified, easily-used, updateable and common on-board pharmacy chest. The very 'practical nature of this item helps us think its adoption will be forthcoming without recourse to Community directives or rules, although a directive would ensure a more coherent adoption.

The training of those on board holding a medico-technical qualification is currently the subject of research into what minimal — and efficient — training courses can be offered to each and every member of staff. The results of this work will be made available shortly.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Social Europe* 1/87 — 'Priority social developments in sea fishing'.

<sup>2</sup> The 'Formac' programme is the subject of an EC study programme 1987/88. (Formation, medical advice contacts).

Vocational training for seafarers has always been a subject for pride in the sector in relation to certification as a prerequisite for going to sea. The very nature of the seafarers' work gives rise to a concern about their availability for subsequent training in relation to refresher courses, upgrading and adaptation to new tasks and new obligations.

Without implying that this question is not being addressed by the bodies concerned, the Community decided to pursue the question of offering self-managed training systems to seafarers on board their own ships' work stations.

A pilot training experiment in CAI (Computer-assisted instruction) has been under way since the summer of 1987 and is being conducted by the re-

search foundation Marin (Maritime Research Institute, Netherlands). The aim is to provide seafarers with self-learning tools on board so as to compensate for their disadvantage in not being available for traditional school-based courses, given the nature of their work at sea.

We can already report that the early trials are very encouraging; the enthusiasm of trainees for the individualistic, pressure-free system is providing enough feedback to encourage full-scale development.

The Community has actively encouraged Marin to develop pilot projects in a number of Member States and the response has also been most encouraging. The system has been successfully demonstrated at a number of inter-

national venues (notably Educatec, Paris and Didacta, Basel) and it is hoped that a series of Community-based modules will be developed.

To the extent that the Community intends putting an appropriate and equal emphasis on questions of safety and health and vocational training in maritime occupations then it is important also that the Commission is kept fully aware of activities and developments taking place elsewhere; a data base of EC vocational training material is needed and will hopefully be installed.

Community initiatives in the years ahead will reflect the consensus which has already begun to be established at EC social partner level and at interinstitutional level, notably at the pre-eminent IMO, ILO and EC levels.

# The employment of migrant women

By organizing a European seminar on migrant women and employment in September 1988, the Commission wished to mark a new step in its action for migrant women. This meeting was, as it were, a follow-up to different studies carried out in its first action programme on equal opportunities (1982-85). It was thus possible to take stock of the legal and administrative forms of discrimination in respect of access to employment for immigrant women, the measures put forward by the States of the Community as regards training,<sup>1</sup> and the position of immigrant women in the labour market.

In keeping with the new action programme (1986-90) which gives priority to the most disadvantaged categories — and these include immigrant women — the aim of the seminar was to establish priorities for cooperation between management and labour and the authorities of the Member States.

## *The heterogeneity of migrant women*

Although they have equal rights in principle, actual equality for migrant women is far from being a reality. Whilst they constitute a disadvantaged category, they are also the category which is most often forgotten by the political decision-makers or by unions and management: they live in a twilight zone of immigration. The consequence is the formation of stereotyped images: trapped in the role of women accompanying immigrant workers, with their place only within the family unit, they do not appear as people who are active in social and economic fields.

This is one of the key points which emerged most strongly from the seminar: the rejection of the prevalent stereotypes of immigrants as objects of almost exclusively humanitarian measures, even though participants admitted that many of them experienced particular difficulties.

In fact, migrations are heterogeneous and we can no longer ignore their different components: traditionally female immigration (particularly of Irish and West Indian women into the United Kingdom, or of Spanish women into France), or new immigration, especially into the countries of the South (again an immigration with a largely female component, notably from the Philippines), but also the actual participation of immigrants in the labour market.

The work of the network on the involvement of women in the economy<sup>2</sup> has revealed high activity rates for immigrant women. These have increased greatly over the last few years, and vary both by nationality and by host country. It is estimated that 40 to 60% of adult women are economically active; 60 to 90% of these fall within the categories of manual labour.

## *Statistical shortcomings*

It is usually difficult, however, to quantify the data on employment and vocational training of migrant women in the Community for two main reasons.

On the one hand, the informal labour market is very pronounced in those sectors where many migrants are employed. Illegal immigration, in particular in the countries of the South which are experiencing a new wave of immigration, is a further reason. On the other hand, there is a general lack of statistical tools in all Member States, and the participants of the seminar insisted on the need to harmonize the statistical framework and to develop a data bank.

## *The persistence of derived rights*

The sharing of knowledge and different experiences has, however, amply demonstrated the inequalities which migrant women suffer, and their particular vulnerability in fields such as employment, vocational training, and welfare payments. It must be repeated that, in the majority of countries and in the majority of cases, their rights are derived from those of their husbands. The participants insisted on the need to bring the rights of migrants, men and women, into line, in the sense of establishing their legal and administrative status on an individual and personal basis.

Admission of immigrants into host countries as non-workers (official entry for the purpose of family reunion), the regularization of their situation via that of the husband, regulations which encourage immigrants to work mainly in domestic service (which has sometimes been a compulsory route), the precariousness of working conditions, the various work permits with their periodic controls, the difficulty of obtaining direct access to welfare payments, etc. are all factors which determine the general work situation of immigrant women and which, according to the participants, call for changes in legislation.

<sup>1</sup> See in this regard the article which appeared in *Social Europe* 2/87 on 'The specific training needs for migrant women'.

<sup>2</sup> European expert group on women in the labour force.



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### *Too many barriers to training*

Training opportunities for migrant women are too rare, and even though there have been extremely positive schemes, these are not an answer to the general demand and often only constitute isolated cases. However, they can serve as examples, and can be used as a basis for discussion; they demonstrate the need for conditions which facilitate training, such as support for trainers with the necessary skills, and the establishment of language courses and appropriate adapted infrastructures (notably child-care facilities). In this respect, there was a desire for the European Social Fund to include the training of migrant women within its priority criteria, which could play an important role.

### *Positive action*

Until now, positive action for immigrant women has only been developed to a limited extent, both in the areas of employment and vocational training.<sup>1</sup> Such positive action would, nevertheless, appear to be indispensable in order to combat discrimination and to heighten the awareness, both of the populations concerned and of public opinion in general. In this respect, the Commission ought to encourage such measures in all Member States and support the efforts which need to be made by labour and management, in particular by potential employers, unions and the authorities involved.

The lines of action proposed during this seminar are varied and numerous, thereby reflecting the weight of discrimination which still affects immigrant women. And it is consequently understood that, as part of the equal opportunities programme, the time has come to take the necessary action.

<sup>1</sup> The programme set up in the Netherlands in 1982 and carried out both in the fields of training and integration into employment (in areas such as the services, including public services such as the police or social and community services, in information, and in the caring services) is one of the most significant examples in this respect.

# Business creation by women

## Action taken by the Commission of the European Communities

For a number of years, the European Community has been promoting the creation of small businesses (or local employment initiatives) as an effective weapon against unemployment in general.<sup>1</sup> Where such businesses are created by women, the Commission's action has additionally taken the shape of concrete and practical support. Women suffer disproportionately from unemployment, in terms of both numbers and duration, such that, in 1984, the Council adopted a resolution on action to combat unemployment amongst women.<sup>2</sup> This states, *inter alia*, that 'local initiatives to create employment, including those taken on a cooperative basis, ... offer women worth-while employment prospects and working conditions'.

Even before that, in its first action programme on equal opportunities for women (1982-85),<sup>3</sup> the Commission undertook to 'support initiatives taken in the Member States to set up cooperatives within the framework of Community priorities for job creation'. This commitment was renewed in the more recent medium-term Community programme on equal opportunities for women (1986-90).<sup>4</sup>

### *Means of Community support*

The creation of women's cooperatives has been eligible for Commission grants since 1983. During the initial phase, projects were required, firstly, to be registered as cooperatives and secondly, to enable women to run a potentially profitable business in a sector where women were underrepresented. These criteria were relaxed when it became apparent that the registration of small businesses in the form of cooperatives was impossible in one Member State, and posed serious practical problems (minimum number of members, financial requirements) in a number of others. The Commission further understood that setting up and managing a business, whatever the sector of activity, enables women to enter into a part of the labour market not normally open to them, and which is therefore non-traditional.

By the end of 1987, the Commission had supported some 121 projects in this area<sup>5</sup> and registered a rapidly escalating increase in demand for such aid. Following an initial concentration of projects in certain regions,<sup>6</sup> applications have been spreading further afield, as more potential applicants learned about the European Community as a possible source of support. The lively interest in the creation of local initiatives, expressed by women everywhere, showed the Commission that it was right to back such enterprises at this time.

The budget available to the Commission for these projects has also been rising,<sup>7</sup> though not sufficiently to keep up with increasing demand for Community funding. This has led the Commission to set a ceiling on the level of grant made available, which has been fixed at 5000 ECU per project since 1986. Only those local employment initiatives which themselves help to create other local employment initiatives,<sup>8</sup> have benefited from slightly higher grants of up to 6 000 ECU.

The Commission now works to three deadlines each year for the remission of applications,<sup>9</sup> it uses a special form to be completed by applicants, and has is-

sued a guide explaining the administrative procedures involved.

The Commission's priorities aim to ensure that grants are paid to those projects most in line with the objectives of the action programme on equal opportunities for women. Thus, it allocates support in the first instance to the categories of disadvantaged women which the action programme designates as meriting special attention (i. e. unemployed women, women returning to the labour market following a career break, spouses of self-employed persons working in a family business, home workers, immigrants/members of ethnic minorities, disabled persons, and heads of one-parent families), completed by a number of additional categories specific to this type of project (i. e. persons with occasional or irregular work, persons threatened with emigration, and homeless persons). Account is also taken of the number of dependents who rely on the business creators for their economic support. The second criterion for measuring priority is the nature of the business, encouragement being given to innovative ventures and to those enabling women to gain a foothold in sectors and occupations where they have so far been underrepresented.

The Commission has, so far, concentrated on subsidizing new businesses creating two or more jobs. Indeed, its current criteria exclude projects creating less than two full-time jobs (or equivalent) from a grant. Although mixed projects are not excluded

<sup>1</sup> Council Resolution 84/C 161/01 on the contribution of local employment initiatives to combating unemployment, OJ C 161, 21. 6. 1984, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Resolution 84/C 161/02, OJ C 161, 21. 6. 1984, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> In the new Community action programme on the promotion of equal opportunities for women (1982-85), COM(81) 758 final, Action 12 refers specifically to local employment initiatives created by women.

<sup>4</sup> COM(85) 801 final, Action C 2 (e).

<sup>5</sup> Of which, 61 in 1987 alone.

<sup>6</sup> Such as South Wales.

<sup>7</sup> It amounted to some 260 000 ECU in 1987.

<sup>8</sup> Such as advisory centres for intending businesswomen.

<sup>9</sup> 1 February, 1 May and 1 July.



from applying for the grant, women must hold the majority of the jobs created, as well as holding the main decision-making positions of the new business.

*Practice of Community support*

Although the Commission grants have been low in terms of the finance allocated (currently 2 000 to 5 000 ECU, depending on the number of jobs created by the project), they are disproportionately useful to the beneficiaries. Over and above the subsidy itself, the public recognition bestowed by a Commission grant has opened further doors (such as those of banks and other sources of finance) to many applicants.

Many of the projects aided were put forward by or on behalf of women falling within the disadvantaged categories to which the action programme gives a priority position. The women involved in these, and other projects, often suffer further from poor education and training, broken families and other disadvantages. A significant number of grants enabled women to set up their businesses in sectors and occupations where women have not traditionally been represented in large numbers.

Projects aided by the Commission have been in a broad range of sectors (farmhouse holidays to printing, textiles to carpentry, catering to micro-electronics), and in all but one<sup>1</sup> Member State of the European Community, including Spain and Portugal, which participated in this action from the outset of their Community membership. The Commission has, moreover, helped to launch four support agencies for women's local employment initiatives, which will themselves initiate further projects of this kind.

A 1985 study<sup>2</sup> carried out for the Commission examines a number of women's cooperatives created in recent years, including those supported by the Commission, and comes to the conclusion that, in the face of multiple obstacles, these businesses have, on the whole, remained viable — of the Commission-aided projects, none had disappeared.

*Network on women in local employment initiatives*

In order to help it stimulate new initiatives, advise and support new businesses, and maximize cooperation with national funding and support agencies, the Commission set up an expert network on women in local employment initiatives early in 1987. The members of this network are all independent experts who are able to help applicants with the planning and implementation of their projects, as well as letting them know about other initiatives of potential interest to them which have already got off the ground. Applicants are advised to contact the network members responsible for their countries, who also regard it as their duty to inform the relevant target groups, agencies and financial institutions of the benefits involved in setting up women's businesses, and the funding possibilities that exist at European Community level.

By the end of 1988, the network will have finalized its first series of studies, comprising national reports for each Member State, and a synthesis for the European Community as a whole. Each expert will have collected and analysed information on the development of women's local employment initiatives in his or her Member State, the funding and support available from public and private sources, and the measures which could usefully be undertaken to further stimulate the creation of such initiatives. They will also put forward recommendations to the Commission for its future grant allocation practice.

*Business creation by women*

The Commission also believes that the broader idea of women's business ownership in general merits attention, since this has become an important phenomenon throughout the Western world. In order to collect information and lay the groundwork for further action, the Commission requested an expert to carry out a study on the situation, motivations and perspectives of business creation by women.<sup>3</sup>

The study contains a description of the situation in which women create businesses in the different Member States of the Community. The author finds that, although the number of women-owned businesses is demonstrably on the increase throughout the Community, the relevant statistics are scarce and insufficient; nevertheless, they allow her to draw a first set of conclusions from a comparison between Member States.

In an in-depth survey of 50 women's businesses, dispersed throughout the Community, the expert found that (a) the women interviewed all had some special qualification or skill used in their businesses, (b) the sectors and structures chosen for many businesses were determined in some way, by the owners' own child-minding requirements, (c) many businesses spring from the experience of unemployment, (d) the majority of women business owners had previous experience of dependent employment, (e) the more successful business women benefited from an entrepreneurial background, and (f) the existence of formal or informal support networks was helpful.

The businesses were then classified by turnover and profitability, and certain common traits drawn up for each subgroup (sector, legal structure, start-up capital, relationship with the banks, grants received, etc.).

The study goes on to analyse the position of women in the general and specific aids given to business start-ups. It examines, country by country, the various general support measures (financial and otherwise) and the proportion of women benefiting from them, as well as the reasons for their relative share. It scrutinizes critically the few specific aid schemes for women and examines their success rate.

<sup>1</sup> Luxembourg.

<sup>2</sup> CREW, 'The viability of employment initiatives involving women', Brussels 1985.

<sup>3</sup> Halpern, Monique. 'Business creation by women', 1988.

The study closes with a set of 20 recommendations, many of which are addressed to the Commission, and include the following areas: information, training, advice, start-up support, follow-up support, exchange of information and experience, inclusion of women business creators into various general measures at Community and national levels, etc.

Continuing its efforts to consolidate the information basis on which it constructs its policy measures, the Commission recently launched a further study, analysing more closely the specific nature of business creation by migrants, and the viability of their enterprise (focusing on the role which women play in this context).

### *Seminar on business creation by women*

The whole phenomenon of business creation by women, including local employment initiatives, was discussed in depth at a seminar organized jointly by the Commission and the French Government, with the support of Cedefop,<sup>1</sup> and held in October 1987. The three main topics — training, support and finance — were treated in presentations by experts and in panels of people with the relevant experiences. About 150 participants attended from all Member States, and represented the various actors involved in business creation: the relevant government departments, equal opportunities bodies, businesswomen's organizations, training organizations, financial institutions, support agencies, the social partners, and some researchers.

The Commission had promoted this seminar to help it develop its already well-established policy of supporting women's enterprise and local employment initiatives. Its aim was to draw on the practical experiences of the people concerned with business creation and management on a day-to-day basis, in order to improve its system of awarding grants to businesswomen starting up, and to elaborate complementary measures to keep them viable.

As a result of the seminar, the Commission decided to study the possibility of further exchanges and networking, including exchange visits between related businesses in different Member States, and the organization of seminars for specific target groups, such as financial institutions. The Commission would be interested in publishing a directory of women business owners in the European Community, along the lines of recent Irish and Italian publications of this kind.

It emphasized the importance of applying existing Community legislation, such as the 1986 Directive on equal treatment for self-employed women,<sup>2</sup> and that relating to equal treatment in matters of social security.<sup>3</sup>

The Commission undertook to study the possibility of prolonging the initial Community support beyond the immediate start-up phase and into the crucial first few years, when businesses needed to be helped in order to establish themselves. The idea of setting up a guarantee fund for women's projects also deserved further consideration. The creation of support agencies could be helped, particularly in regions where guidance and advice was thin on the

ground. Potential applicants should be encouraged to benefit more from the Community's other financial instruments, such as the European Social Fund, the European Investment Bank, the Regional Fund, the integrated Mediterranean programmes, etc.

As regards training, the notion of enterprise should be included in various existing and planned Commission instruments, such as the European Social Fund and the two networks on equal opportunities in training.

The Commission would continue to grant its financial support to women's business projects. Other support structures should be encouraged to pay more heed to women's specific needs — bodies such as Elise, which already had a close working relationship with the Commission, had a role to play here.

Finally, attention was drawn to the challenge of 1992, when the single European market would be open to all. It is vital that, by then, women's businesses should have become strong, flexible and also sufficiently mobile to make optimum use of the new opportunities offered.

<sup>1</sup> European centre for the development of vocational training.

<sup>2</sup> Council Directive 86/613/EEC on the application of the principle of equal treatment as between men and women engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity, and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood, OJ L 359, 19. 12. 1986, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Council Directive 79/7/EEC on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security, OJ L 6, 10. 1. 1979, p. 24.

# Seminar: The industrial challenge

## The new role of women, positive actions

**The medium-term Community programme 1986-90 'Equal opportunities for women' includes a number of actions concerning the employment of women, to be undertaken by the Member States and by the Commission.**

In brief, the employment of women can be characterized by the fact that the rate of unemployment amongst women in the Member States of the Community is noticeably higher than male unemployment. Furthermore there is still a segregation between 'male' and 'female' jobs. This segregation means that most employed women can be found in a few traditionally 'typical' female jobs (often in the service sector) while men are employed in a far wider range of jobs. On the higher levels one sees almost only men; female managers are still rare in any sector.

These facts are not only a matter of education, vocational training and experience. The number of girls and women with appropriate vocational training has increased heavily in the last decades, as well as the participation of women on the labour market.

Despite these developments, women are underrepresented in various occupations of working life, even though employment policy is based on equal treatment for men and women.

The Commission concluded, in the framework of the action programme mentioned above and the Council Recommendation of 13 December 1984 on the promotion of positive action for women, that existing legal provisions on equal treatment which are designed to afford rights to individuals are inadequate for the elimination of existing inequalities unless parallel (positive) action is taken by governments, both sides of industry and other bodies concerned to counteract the prejudicial effects on women in employment which arise from social attitudes, behaviour and structures.

The Council recommends a number of actions to the Member States. On the basis of information supplied by the Member States, the Commission will submit a report to the Council in 1988 on progress achieved in the implementation of this recommendation.

In the framework of the action programme the Commission supports and encourages positive actions in various sectors with a view to the desegregation

of employment and better use of human resources. A pilot scheme for the banking sector was initiated in 1980. For the public sector, in the context of its own personnel policy, a round table was organized in March 1987, which will be followed up by regular meetings of the responsible persons.

In the industrial sector, the Commission promoted positive action over the last few years in an increasing number of Member States. In 1987, Portugal, Spain, France, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, Ireland and the Netherlands were involved.

The Commission promotes positive action in industry with the help of management consultants, contacting industries and trying to interest them in positive actions. With this purpose in mind, several national seminars have also been organized.

In general one can conclude that the interest in the development of positive action programmes has increased over the last few years. This conclusion was reached at the seminar organized by the Commission on 1 October 1987, under the title 'The industrial challenge: the new role of women, positive actions'.

Senior personnel directors and managers of large undertakings from all the Member States involved attended the seminar, approximately 90 persons in total. The Vice-President of the European Commission, Mr Manuel Marin, declared at the opening of the seminar that the Commission considers these activities as part of a better utilization of human resources because women's potential in companies was often underused and women were often destined to carry out tasks below their qualifications. That this was not only a waste to the women themselves but to industry and society in general was also stressed by the speakers.

For example, Mr Jaehrling of the Audi car industry (FRG) explained that his company had been considering the fact that the number of young persons in the Federal Republic of Germany — like in most European countries — was di-



minishing. The number of young persons who might obtain a technical vocational training might, in the year 2000, be half of the number in 1986. The company concluded that this development might cause a lack of qualified workers, and therefore in 1987 the company started to train an increasing number of young women. The main obstacle has been prejudice against the young women, but up till now the project has developed successfully.

The chairman of the morning session, Mr M. J. M. Descarpentries, president director-general of Carnaud, France, declared that equal opportunities for men and women has to and will

come about via undertakings ('l'égalité des chances des hommes et des femmes va passer par les entreprises'). It must be noted that the implementation of positive actions varies from one enterprise to another, depending on the circumstances. This also appeared in other speeches at the seminar.

In 1983, the Dutch PTT, which employs approximately 100 000 persons, started to study the position of working women. This was partly because of the lack of qualified personnel which may appear in the 1990s. The results of this study justified a positive action programme, considering that the enterprise has to adapt to labour market changes

and has to utilize female potential to the maximum. Therefore the recruitment of women should increase, the use of internal and external potential should be improved, etc. Mr Litjens, managing director of the Dutch PTT, stated that a positive action plan has positive effects on working conditions, making difficult jobs fulfilling, and on relations with the public (clients and others).

In the case of the French company Moulinex, a very rapid technical evolution has made it necessary for personnel (mainly low-qualified women) to adapt their qualifications: the vocational training of women was a true investment in the future of the company.

The British company ESSO, which reduced its labour force in a few years from 14 000 to 5 000 persons, emphasized that equal opportunities are not brought about in practice until the whole organization deals with them. The company therefore set up an intensive programme of consciousness training in which every worker was involved.

Mr Degimbe, the Director-General of DG V (Employment, Social Affairs and Education) concluded that the seminar had been very interesting, for both the participants and the Commission.

It is clear that the interest of industry in positive actions is increasing and the Commission will go on supporting and encouraging these actions. This support can either be financial (though the budget is limited) and/or practical — that is by support of the management consultants working for the Commission in this context.

The Commission is also publishing and preparing information on this subject. A guide on 'Positive actions — equal opportunities for women in employment', with general information, ad-

ressed to all bodies interested in positive action will be published in 1988. The Commission is also drawing up an inventory of the different positive actions in the Member States which might be useful for both the public and private sector and policy-makers.

**Ingrid Christochowitz**

# The European Commission's initiatives on the subject of women and television

It is undeniably a fact that the media in Europe — being highly visible and major providers of news, information and entertainment — are a significant element in the network of influences which form public opinion. The changing social climate of the late 1970s and early 1980s witnessed the introduction into national legislation of the Community's three directives on equal pay, equality in employment and vocational training, and equal treatment in matters of social security, all of which were given a high profile in the national media of the Member States. Inevitably, therefore, television organizations in particular came to be seen — indeed, in a number of cases, came to see themselves — as critical components in an array of forces bearing on the development of equal opportunities.

It was in this context that the *new Community action programme on the promotion of equal opportunities for women 1982-85* included, as Action 16, a specific provision aimed at the changing of attitudes in favour of the concept of equality of opportunity in the Community. The programme stated that 'the changing values to which the 10 Member States subscribe in principle and the positive changes they entail must therefore be put across to the public, especially through the mass media'. It further provided that the Commission would launch measures at Community level to hasten changes in attitudes by involving national information networks and stimulating cooperation between them.

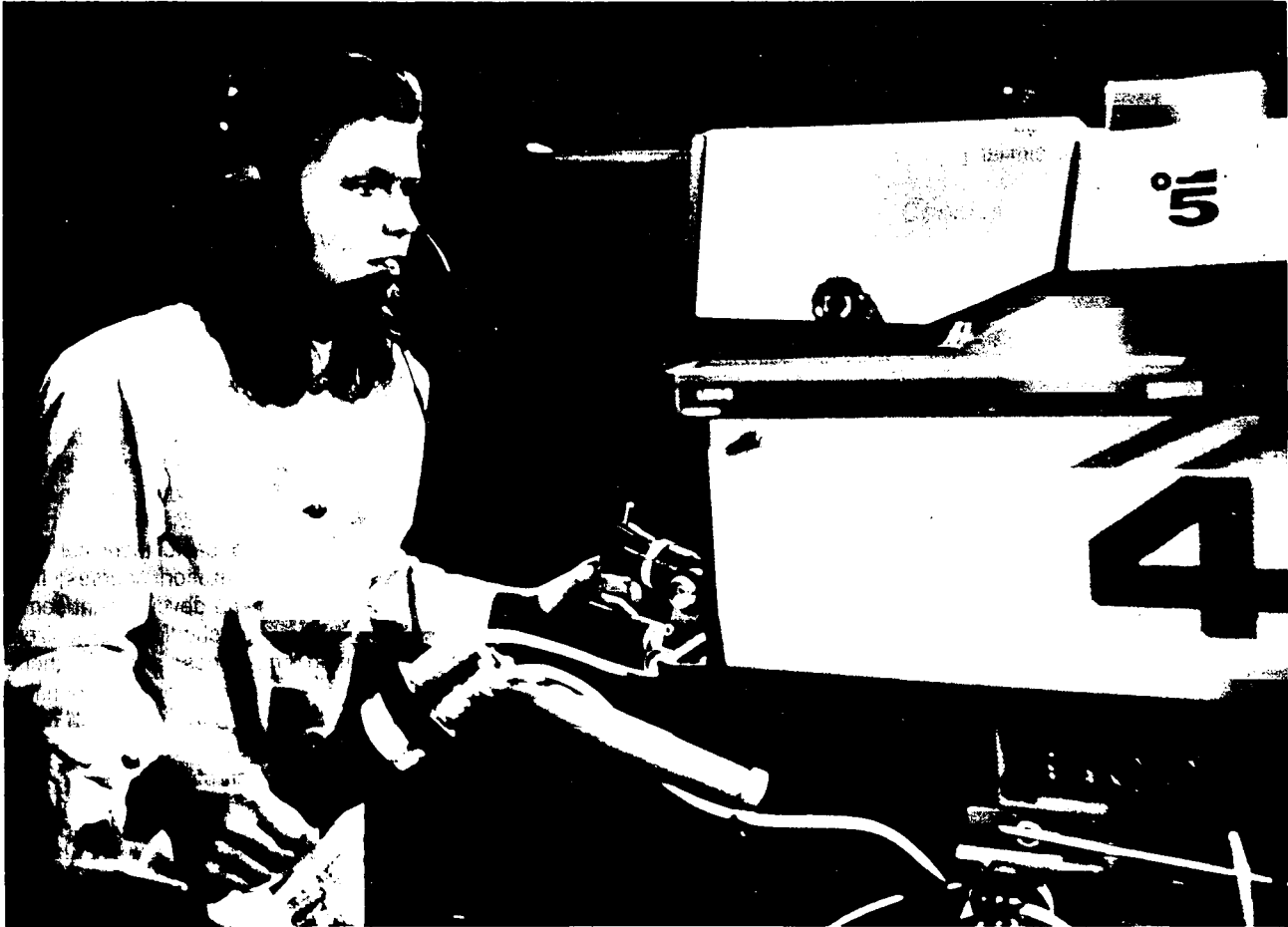
In response to the commitment made in the 1982-85 equality programme, the Commission in 1983 commissioned three separate studies dealing with: employment and positive action for women in the television organizations; the image of women in television; the place and role of women in television programmes of the Member States. When these studies became avail-

able, the Commission's Office for action concerning employment and equal treatment for women decided to hold a high-level European-wide seminar on 'The image and employment of women in television' to discuss all the research findings and to make recommendations. Very detailed planning was involved in the organization of this seminar with the assistance of an organizing committee drawn from the television stations of the Member States. The seminar took place on 3 to 5 June 1985, and some 200 delegates participated in the proceedings.

## *Broad outcome of the seminar*

Three reports were prepared for this seminar. One of them was that prepared by a consultant, Ms Margaret Gallagher, dealing with positive action and employment for women in television. This research brought together data from 30 television organizations across all EEC Member States, except for Luxembourg. (The research was subsequently extended to Spain and Portugal). The research found that women accounted for about 30% of the television workforce in most countries, but these women tended to be concentrated in a comparatively narrow range of jobs, most of which were relatively poorly paid. To take the administrative sector as an example, 60% of all women working in television were found here, but just 2% of these women were in the top two tiers of the administrative hierarchy. By contrast, although only 15% of all men working in television were in administration, 20% of these men were in the top two tiers. In the technical areas, only 4% of posts were filled by women. In the crafts sector, jobs which were dominated by women (for example, make-up and wardrobe) tended to be less well paid than jobs which were dominated by men (for instance, scene-painters and scene-hands). About a fifth of television producers and directors were women, but they were concentrated in two main programme areas: education and children's programming. In the top three grades of senior management, only 6% of posts were held by women, and almost all of these were at the lowest of the three levels. Furthermore, there was no evidence to indicate that a younger generation of women was making its way into top management.

The 1984 research also found that there had been little change, over the previous 10 years, in either the range or level of television jobs to which the majority of women are recruited. Moreover, the difference between the average woman and the average man at the time of recruitment — in terms of job level and remuneration — tended to increase with the passage of time despite the fact that, contrary to the commonly held belief, staff wastage and absenteeism are



not actually significantly greater among women than among men. The research also indicated that training fell short of its potential to increase women's mobility, since it tended to be aimed at improving existing skills, rather than at opening up new possibilities. Working conditions were generally poorly adapted to the double burden of most women, whose work within the organization was and still tends to be paralleled by a heavy commitment of time and energy in the home.

The main conclusion of the seminar was that the Commission should ensure a European-level follow-up to the meeting and to the recommendations generated by the research findings. Specifically, it was stated by many participants that changes in the image of women in television programmes will be dependent, first and foremost, on broadening the potential of women to influence policy and programming decisions within the television organizations. The point was also made that, at a time when all

countries in the European Community subscribe to the notion of equal opportunities in employment, the television organizations have a particularly important role to play. Like all employers, they have an obvious responsibility to ensure, if necessary by the adoption of special measures, genuine equality of opportunity to all employees. Beyond this, however, the high visibility and status which television enjoys means that it can set standards and norms which may subsequently be adopted by

others. The overt commitment of a television organization to an equal opportunities or positive action policy is therefore likely to have a substantial spin-off effect by influencing organizations in other sectors to adopt similar policies and practices.

### *Steering Committee on Women and Television*

It was against the background of the seminar's conclusions that the Commission of the European Communities accepted the suggestion that it should establish a Steering Committee on Women and Television, which met for the first time in February 1986. At least initially, the Committee decided to devote its attention to the question of employment of women in television, the term 'employment' being understood in its broad sense to include recruitment, training, remuneration, promotion, working conditions and all other aspects of the situation of employees or potential employees. With this focus in view, members of the Committee are, for the most part, senior management representatives of the television organizations of Member States of the Community. They are individuals directly involved in the development and implementation of policy — particularly personnel policy — within their organizations. Some members are specifically charged by their organizations with the development of an equal opportunities or positive action policy; others are in a position — by reason of their status within the organization — to further such a policy. In addition to representatives from national television organizations, the Steering Committee includes observers from the European Broadcasting Union and the European Advertising Tripartite. The consultant to the Committee is Ms Margaret Gallagher, the author of the original 1984 research into the employment position of women in television.

### *The work of the Steering Committee*

In all, the Committee has met three times to date — in February 1986, and

January and December 1987 — and the intention is that henceforth it will meet on an annual basis. From the outset, three main functions were identified for the Committee:

- (i) it was to be a forum for the exchange of information, experience, documentation and personnel;
- (ii) Committee members were to be encouraged to stimulate the development of initiatives and projects to improve the situation of women, both in their own organizations and elsewhere; and
- (iii) Committee members were to provide regular data, both quantitative and qualitative, which would make it possible to monitor changes in employment patterns and practices within the television organizations.

The first meeting of the Steering Committee devoted its attention to a discussion on basic mechanisms for the promotion of equal opportunities for women in television. There was very general support for the need for clearly articulated policy in this area, and several members of the Committee outlined policies and measures which were already in operation in their own organizations. A detailed discussion took place on what the working document for the meeting had suggested were the four fundamental mechanisms to ensure equality of opportunity for women and television: the elaboration of a permanent equal opportunities policy and of a temporary positive action programme; the effective communication and implementation of policies and programmes; the establishment of in-house equality committees; and the appointment of equality officers. In addition, Committee members agreed that they would respond to a schedule for the provision of monitoring data, initially as a means of updating the 1984 research but also as a means of building such data requirements into their personnel department's data bases for the future.

The second meeting of the Steering Committee was dedicated to a discussion on the updated statistical data which had been provided since the first

meeting as well as to a discussion on training and career development opportunities for women in television. Here again, some members were in a position to give details of initiatives being taken in their own organizations in this context, as well as on progress made in the establishment of basic mechanisms for the promotion of equal opportunities. Specific recommendations on training and career development were considered by the Committee, including suggestions that training policies should be reviewed in order to ensure that women are not disadvantaged; that there should be specific training courses to enable women to move from the secretarial side to middle and higher-level management; that women should have regular access to basic technical and production familiarization courses; that career planning and development seminars or workshops should be organized for women employees; and that there should be special support and counselling for women who move into job categories where their sex has previously been under- or unrepresented.

The third meeting of the Steering Committee discussed the working conditions of women in television. It will be noted from the three themes of the meetings to date, therefore, that the Steering Committee has addressed its mandate in a highly efficient and systematic way, encompassing all the key concerns which are essential prerequisites if women are to achieve real equality of opportunities in the television organizations of the Member States. The recommendations considered by the Committee at its third meeting included ones dealing with part-time work; flexible working arrangements and job-sharing; maternity leave; paternity leave; leave for adoptive purposes; extended unpaid leave for care of children; child-care facilities; ongoing contacts with employees on extended leave; and sexual harassment.

### *Positive action initiatives*

At the meetings of the Committee to date, members have been in a position to give details on initiatives which have



been taken independently by some television organizations, in the context of equal opportunities. In order to further stimulate this trend, members have been encouraged to bring forward further initiatives of a positive action nature which directly touch upon the deliberations of their work within the Committee and which would attract some funding from the Commission. To date, four television organizations have availed of this opportunity, and a number of other organizations (e. g. RTBF in Belgium) are actively considering proposals for submission to the Commission. The four proposals which have been approved to date are:

- (i) NOS (Netherlands), who have organized a management course for women who are currently employed in functions in which they are over-represented;
- (ii) RTE (Ireland), who are also promoting a Women into Management training programme directed at women employees who are working just below management level; the course's objective is that these women would take on greater managerial responsibilities and operate effectively, exercising interpersonal skills as well as more technical or knowledge-based skills;
- (iii) BBC (United Kingdom), who have organized an Operational Awareness Course for women employed in broad secretarial/clerical duties with the objective of giving them a greater insight into technical operations activities; the specific element of this activity which secured support from the Commission was the funding of

two participants from Spanish television to attend the course as observers, in anticipation of possible similar initiatives in Spain;

- (iv) ITCA (United Kingdom), which has organized a training course to develop managerial skills for women in the independent television companies of the UK.

*Future orientation of the work of the Steering Committee*

Just as the Community's first equal opportunities programme 1982-85 contained a specific provision regarding the changing of attitudes, the medium-term Community programme 1986-90 on equal opportunities for women also addressed this issue. Apart from containing a specific commitment to establish the Steering Committee on Women and Television, the programme stated that the Commission would carry out an analysis of the situation in the media other than television, with a view to developing action in regard to all the media. This commitment is now being met, with the consultant to the Steering Committee at present carrying out a study of the position of women in the radio organizations of the Community on broadly similar lines to her earlier television study. The results of this new study will be discussed at the next meeting of the Steering Committee in October 1988, and any lacunae in the data will be followed up by the consultant with the radio organizations concerned. When this exercise has been completed, the intention is to extend the Committee's work into the written press — an area which, given

the sheer number of publications involved in each Member State, is extremely complex and will require detailed consideration before embarking thereon.

*Conclusions*

As stated previously, the Steering Committee on Women and Television has, since its establishment in 1986, approached its mandate in a very systematic way and is now poised to extend its actions into other media areas. The Brussels Seminar in 1985 which suggested the establishment of such a committee opted for the subject of the employment position of women in the media — rather than the image of women in the media — to be addressed as a priority. The rationale behind this approach was that changes in the image of women in the media will be dependent, first and foremost, on broadening the potential for women to obtain positions of responsibility at the highest levels in the media. It is too early yet to assess whether the Steering Committee, which has only been in operation for some two years, has had any lasting impact in achieving this outcome. What can be said, however, is that effective structures have been established by the Commission in order to monitor trends over time. Equally importantly, the Committee has served to sensitize high-level management in the television organizations of the Community to the need to pursue permanent equal opportunities policies within their own organizations if they are to be in a position to objectively comment, through their own programmes, upon equal opportunity trends in society as a whole.

# Youth and employment

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The organization in September 1987 of a seminar devoted to the theme of youth allowed links for cooperation and dialogue between the various European research teams to be reinforced, or even established. This was in response to a political wish which had been clearly expressed by the Member States, notably in a resolution of the Council of January 1984.

This conference led to a first report being drawn up on the work undertaken in Member States, and made it possible to compare methods and draw initial conclusions.

## Youth in the employment market

The problem of unemployment is usually placed at the centre of the youth issue. The essential characteristic of unemployment is its selectivity to the detriment of young people in practically all countries. (The coefficient of selectivity is 1.3 for the Federal Republic of Germany and 2.6 for France and Italy).

After having experienced an increase at the beginning of the 1980s, when it reached 42%, youth unemployment as a proportion of the total number of unemployed fell to 35% in 1987 as a Community average. This encouraging result must, however, be put in perspective. Statistical analysis often added to the economic and social analysis allows a certain number of young persons to be removed from the unemployment statistics.

In addition to the quantitative aspects, it is advisable to take into account qualitative criteria, such as the nature of employment held or the repetitiveness of unemployment.

Youth is the area of experimentation in new working relations, which are likely to spread later into other age groups. Youth is one of the privileged targets of policies of flexibility, which are often put forward as marking a new concept of work, of employment and even of life.

A Dutch survey on the reactions of young people to employment contracts<sup>2</sup> reveals that 81% of the persons interviewed wanted a steady job.

In France, according to the figures from the employment survey carried out by Insee in 1986, it appears that young people earning less than FF 4 000 a month place more emphasis on job security than on salary levels. The same survey shows that between 1982 and 1986, the number of full-time jobs decreased in favour of part-time jobs. Part-time work was more common amongst wage earners under the age of 25 than amongst those aged between 25 and 30, for the first time in 1986. Is this a question of a life choice or market forces?

## Youth mobility

At the same time, young people more and more frequently pass through a long transitional period characterized by the precarious nature and low level of their income. During this period there is high mobility amongst young people and a high turnover rate. The high degree of youth mobility in work can be subjected to two contrasting interpretations:

- (i) Referring to the theories of segmentation, it can be shown that there are patterns of mobility which are particular to each economic sector. In this case, one is led to question the connection between a sub-employment market and types of youth labour. Is there a specific youth employment market and do young people occupy different positions from older people having the same qualifications?
- (ii) If one interprets the high turnover of young people as an effect of their lifestyles and as an aspect of their adaptation to work, then there is no reason to think that there is any discrimination against young people in the employment market. The argument here is that young people are not put at an unfair disadvantage when companies make redundancies and that they are in fact favoured when companies take workers on. If the turnover of young people is as high for those entering employment as it is for those leaving employment, then young people are not put at an unfair disadvantage by employers as compared with older people. Quite simply, they are more susceptible to the cyclical phenomena of redundancy and dismissal on account, more often than not, of their own mobility. There is therefore no point in strengthening competition between generations since to

<sup>1</sup> Report on a seminar organized in September 1987 by Cercom-Germ on the initiative of the Commission of the European Communities.

<sup>2</sup> G. Jehoel-Gysbergs, M. Matthijssen, M. Matthys: 'Youth and the employment market'.

do so would risk causing an imbalance which would unfairly disadvantage other age groups.

In response to this latter theory, it can be said that mobility on leaving the education system does not have the same effects, or the same meaning, for all young people. For certain young people, mobility during the first year is a discriminating and weakening factor. For example, unqualified young women are greatly affected by rapid job turnover which only very rarely leads to employment which would count as stable. In contrast, for qualified young people, mobility may be a game of more or less controlled trials and errors.

We thus find again a contrast between actual unemployment suffered, which offers little cumulative benefit in terms of obtaining professional experience, and the unemployment of waiting of the qualified persons who take time to realize their economic, educational and symbolic potential, and who look for the best possible first position, knowing in advance the major role which the first job plays.

### Company recruitment policies

The criteria established by companies taking on staff vary according to the various sectors and categories of employment. However, more and more frequently taken into consideration are the characteristics of the individual development paths.

- (i) It is not so much the qualification which is taken into consideration as the manner in which it was achieved.
- (ii) Similarly, the same importance is attached to the diploma qualification and to professional and development personal paths, while defining the competition between the top applicants by the same criteria, young unemployed and experienced workers in search of a job change.
- (iii) The same consideration is given to the qualification and to the position in the life cycle (competition between

young girls and women returning to work after having children).

- (iv) Employers in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) do not give the same recognition to candidates coming from training programmes initiated by public authorities (training courses, projects, community work ...), considering them to be a cheap source of labour.
- (v) The criteria can be the opposite for men and women. Living as a married couple with children facilitates professional stability for men, and being unmarried facilitates that of women.

Apart from the question of recruitment standards associated with the life cycle, there is also the question of behavioural standards associated with jobs which has to be compared with expectations of young people.

### The transition of young people into adulthood

To speak of a process of occupying employment implies that the concepts and, moreover, the nature of the problems to be dealt with have been agreed upon.

If we limit ourselves to a narrow definition of the concept of integration, we deduce only explanations which favour educational qualifications. We compare one type of diploma with one type of employment, but the process and the development paths constitute a black box of information.

By reasoning in terms of transitions into adult life, we broaden the perspective by including the various dimensions of life styles (employment, fecundity, marriage, leaving home ...) without in any way resolving the issue of defining origin and destination.

One empirical finding appears to stand out in each of the countries of the Community. The process of transition and/or passage into adult life has grown longer. Furthermore, it is characterized by new links between professional life and family life, in other terms, between the professional and family development paths. Clearly, variations are all na-

tional, even if developments are made in the same direction. Thus, in Italy or Spain, young people traditionally remain with their parents for longer than in the countries of the north.

Beyond this empirical finding, one fundamental problem is encountered here. Are these developments associated with the economic crisis, or do they correspond to longer-term anthropological developments? Or again, what is the nature of the 'adjustments', if any, between employment situations and the family and matrimonial situations?

Do the transformations of the family precede the economic crisis or are they independent of this crisis? Are they the direct consequence of the economic crisis? It is clear that the issues of professional integration of young people demand historical investigations on a wide scale.

Certain processes, such as those of young people living with their families and their leaving home, are particularly revealing of the tests to which family solidarity is subjected. In a crisis situation, the family sometimes appears as a powerful controlling factor.

### The paths to success or failure

The question here is to identify the factors and the moments of stability or instability. What are the most decisive factors: sex, age, locality or qualifications?

If we wish to understand how certain young people enter long-term unemployment, it is necessary to analyse the processes by which young people are distributed into the various pathways of education, employment and unemployment and the key moments at which they enter the path of unemployment.

Three processes underlie the beginning of professional pathways:

- (i) the family environment and the 'values' which this holds;
- (ii) educational background;
- (iii) the state of the local employment market.

Similarly, professional success depends on three factors:

- (a) educational success;
- (b) the age at which the decision to leave school is taken (16 years — key age);
- (c) professional background.

All analyses converge to show that the time at which the young person leaves the initial education system, and the first job or jobs, plays an important role in the further professional career. In the same way, it seems that social origin has a direct and long-lasting influence on professional careers.

The significance of the differences between men and women in respect of professional integration is often emphasized. The degree of discrimination according to sex varies according to country: girls are at a disadvantage everywhere, but less so in Great Britain and the Netherlands than elsewhere. In the Federal Republic of Germany boys and girls have equal opportunities. However, as a general rule, young women are more often excluded from the employment market, and if long-term unemployment is partly due to a lack of education, this factor is even more discriminating against women.

### **Social relationships between generations**

The distribution of individuals in different social positions brings into play the social relationships between the generations. The forms, locations and stakes in the competition between generations differ according to the field of employment, economic sector, qualifications and sex.

The various steps taken in order to facilitate the employment of young people by means of fixed-term contracts (in particular the removal or lowering of salary contributions for employers who take on young people) have had the effect of accelerating the unemployment of the working population aged between 30 and 45, without guaranteeing steady and adequately paid jobs for the 18 to 25-year-olds.

Within companies, the relationship towards knowledge and the relationship of apprenticeship are taking on different meanings. Giving up their know-how to young people can become a handicap for older people in the competition for access to good jobs. What can one say about the situation of former technicians trained on the job and sometimes overtaken by new knowledge when new generations of technicians join the companies?

### **'Youth' culture**

The majority of discussions on youth culture emphasize the eruption of a European culture or a world culture of youth based on non-material values such as self-realization, communication or solidarity.

Opinion surveys on young people show that, for their part, interest in the job always comes before the salary level.

The long-term unemployed, even if they tend to stray from reality (fantasies of wealth) wish for the same things as the others (a good job, a house, a family).

In fact, discussions about young people seem to follow a sort of dualism. On the one hand, the development of values of conformity and professional aggressiveness are put forward; on the other hand there is the fact that work is no longer at the centre of their preoccupations.

On the one hand, we refer to the socialization of those who must be consolidated within companies; on the other hand we refer to a socialization by mobility and emancipation from all ties.

In the first case, we are leaning on the models of sociological analysis based on the decisions of protagonists and the analyses of strategies; in the second case we draw on the model of disillusionment and resignation.

The lifestyles of young people are characterized by a series of upsets and passages through states which vary greatly. How, under these circum-

stances, can we talk of a youth culture? The problem is one of understanding the various types of discontinuity and disturbances which mark this transition.

### **Some conclusions**

- (i) The importance of studies carried out at the level of local employment catchment areas must be emphasized. In fact, each type of employment catchment area experiences specific methods of social control in respect of employment. It is at this level that qualifications and job situations become meaningful. It is also at this level that the networks become fully significant. It is in fact observed that, where there are community relocation programmes, placements are effected efficiently and rapidly following a company closure.
- (ii) The category of 'youth' must be redefined in accordance with criteria other than that of age. The extension of the transition period corresponds to young people being held back for a longer period from economic life and from adult status. The transmission of professional knowledge, and consequently of a certain type of power, takes place at an increasingly later time.
- (iii) It is necessary to take into account conflicts between the generations and to seek new forms of cooperation. The system of partnership in the form of pastoral care or companionship, bringing together older workers and new young employees in a dual relationship and the transmission of professional knowledge and activity, seem to be interesting solutions.
- (iv) Policies in favour of youth employment should take into account the specificity of the target group and should develop appropriate actions. For example, by creating mediation centres allowing young people to make new contacts, or by the promotion of activities having a high social content (education, health, social work, etc.) responding to new needs better suited to the youth work ethic.

# European conferences to disseminate the results of the transition programme

**The second European Community action programme on the transition of young people from education to working and adult life took place between 1982 and 1987. Since 1983 pilot projects were supported in more than 30 areas, spreading over 10 Member States. The purpose of these pilot projects was to develop, test and extend new approaches in the field of education and training with a view to helping young people to prepare better for work and adult life. Particular attention was paid to the problems of disadvantaged young people and those living in disadvantaged areas of the European Community who bear the greatest brunt of unemployment.**

The transition programme formed an essential part of the wider range of Community initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education and training and the development of equality of opportunity for all young people. It also tried to foster better cooperation and more partnership between those acting within the education system, and with those in the world outside it, including industry, the local community, the social partners and manpower services.

The programme was based on a resolution of July 1982 agreed by the Council and the Ministers for Education meeting within the Council. The pilot projects were co-sponsored by the Commission of the European Communities and national authorities, and many of them also formed part of national policy initiatives in education and training for 14 to 18-year-olds. Through extensive and continuous exchange of experience between the different Member States, the projects have contributed to a better understanding of the European dimension of the transition problem. They have in this way also stimulated policy debate and development at the Community level and in the Member States.

On 23 December 1987 the Commission adopted the final report of the transition programme. The report is divided into four sections. The first section introduces the general profile of the transition programme while the second details the changes in the transition process. The third section shows how the pilot projects responded to these changes and the fourth section comprises policy messages and priority areas for further development in the transition field. There are seven specific growth areas for action set out in the report's conclusions. These are as follows:

- (i) links between school and the world of work;
- (ii) provision of coherent and continuous guidance;
- (iii) reducing school failure and early drop-out;
- (iv) in-service training for teachers and school development;

- (v) positive action to promote gender equality for girls and young women in transition;
- (vi) initiatives to enhance participation and active support by parents; .
- (vii) cooperation strategies at Community level.

In parallel with the preparation of the final report, the Commission has cooperated with the national authorities of several Member States in order to hold European conferences to disseminate the results of the programme.

These conferences have been addressed to senior officials and other decision-makers from the 12 Member States, with relevant responsibilities or interests. The purpose was to provide opportunities at high level to review the results and discuss policy implications; to enhance understanding of the European dimension of transition issues; and to contribute to a wider dissemination of successful approaches and strategies.

The conferences were held between May and December 1987 on the following themes:

- (a) Cooperation and partnership in education and training, Belgium (Mons), 21 to 23 May;
- (b) Equal opportunities for girls and young women, Denmark (Gilleleje), 14 to 16 September;
- (c) Disadvantaged groups, and young people in disadvantaged areas, Germany (Berlin), 14 to 16 October;
- (d) Links between schools and the economy, Italy (Sorrento), 17 to 19 November;
- (e) Guidance, and the vocational and social integration of young people, France (Paris), 14 to 16 December.

Each conference saw theme-specific presentations and discussion in plenary as well as opportunities for more intensive exchange in small groups. At each conference a small exhibition was also organized, with project materials and audio-visual support, to illustrate the main outcomes of the pilot projects' work in the thematic area concerned.

Personal invitations were sent by the host government to individual participants on the advice of the national authorities responsible for the transition programme in each Member State.

In addition to national groups, participation also included representatives from pilot projects and parallel initiatives providing input from the Commission, the European Parliament and other relevant international organizations.

The groups invited from Member States included participants with different types of responsibility within the specific policy areas or thematic fields of the respective conference.

Participation therefore involved those with appropriate high-level responsibilities in:

- (i) education/training authorities at the national or regional/local level;
- (ii) education/training institutions (including teacher-training);
- (iii) other government services (such as manpower, guidance, youth, equal opportunities);
- (iv) the world of the economy (e.g. industry, the social partners, small firms' organizations);
- (v) relevant private or voluntary organizations.

Each of the different conferences brought together over 100 participants.

The conference at Mons looked at the way in which the concept of partner-

ship, 'the district approach', had been applied and developed in the programme between different types and levels of schools and training institutions, between schools and industry, between schools and the local community and in teacher training and curriculum development. The working groups discussed a range of cooperation strategies and methods such as the use of formal networks, the use of informal networks by individual institutions and the role of coordinating agencies. The Minister for National Education, Mr Damseaux, gave the closing address at the conference.

The conference at Gilleleje reviewed the positive action undertaken by projects in the area of gender equality. Mr Holger Knudsen, Director-General at the Ministry of Education gave the opening address and the working groups discussed the themes of curriculum provision, vocational training opportunities, parental and community support and teacher training and staff development.

At Berlin the conference participants focused on strategies to overcome disadvantage. A visit was arranged to the project centre in the Kreuzberg area of Berlin which contains large numbers of immigrants. The conference was opened by Dr H. R. Laurien, Senatorin for Education, Training and Sport, Berlin and there were contributions from Dr E. Böning, Secretary of State at the Federal Ministry of Education and Science, Bonn and Mr H. C. Jones, Director for Education, Vocational Training and Youth Policy at the Commission. Profes-

sor Bertrand Schwarz of the University of Paris gave an address and the conference was closed by Mrs C. Smalz-Jacobsen, Senatorin for Youth and Family, Berlin.

The Sorrento conference was designed to provide a platform for leading figures from the worlds of industry and education to come together to discuss the links at a policy level between schools and industry. A number of participants made presentations with a view to expanding the dialogue between the two worlds.

At Paris, the conference was opened by Mme Catala, State Secretary for Vocational Training and Mr Tony Watts of the National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling in Cambridge gave a speech on the theme of guidance throughout the European Community. The conference was closed by Mr Lucius, Director of Secondary Education at the French Education Ministry.

At all of the conferences there was participation and contributions from representatives of the Commission and of Ifaplan, the research organization which has assisted the Commission in the running of the transition programme.

Two further conferences are planned for 1988. One on 16 to 18 March 1988 in the Netherlands devoted to school-industry links with the anticipated participation also of representatives of the Nordic Council and another in Ireland in May 1988 concerning the experience of work of young people.

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## **Part three**

### **Recent developments**





# Employment policy in the Member States

In response to the wish expressed by Member States' delegations in the Council to receive information on developments in national employment policies, the Commission set up a mutual information system called Misep. The system operates on the basis of contributions from correspondents in public administrations or organizations and a Commission representative. It provides the relevant authorities in each Member State with regular quarterly information on measures and trends in the employment policies conducted in the other Member States.

*Social Europe* presents a selection of the information exchanged through Misep in each issue. The Commission accepts no responsibility for the use of this information, which comes from official national sources. It is presented as a summary, on a regular basis, to enlighten the reader on the evolution of various aspects linked to national employment policies.

## Developments at a glance

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### Aid to the unemployed

- Italy Public administration recruitment
- Luxembourg New benefit system
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### Training

- France Apprenticeship reform
- United Kingdom Skills Unit

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- Portugal Business start-up measure

### Special categories of workers

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### Working time

- Belgium Temporary work; Casual work
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### Placement

- Germany Soldiers' placement

## Overall developments

### Greece: Restructuring the Ministry of Labour

The main aim of the new Minister for Labour, as indicated in his inaugural speech, is the better organization of 'the right to employment' and 'the right to better living'. To this end, he has created two special Secretaries of State: the one is responsible for vocational training and employment as well as for relations of the Ministry with all international organizations, and the other is responsible for health and safety at the workplace.

### Greece: Impact of employment measures

A general review of data on the labour market was made by the working group drafting the new five-year economic development programme (1988-92). The review shows that:

- (i) the urban areas of the country have a higher rate of unemployment (10%) than semi-urban (7%) and rural (2.7%) areas. Greater Athens has the highest rate of unemployment (more than 12%), the rate for men and women being similar;
- (ii) those who have only secondary level education (i. e. having had nine years of compulsory education followed by three years of technical training) are the hardest hit by unemployment, with rates of 8% for men and 22.3% for women. University graduates have a lower rate of unemployment (6.3%: men around 4.1% and women 10%). The unemployment rate of the unskilled is 5%;
- (iii) there has been an increase in long-term unemployment, especially of young people and women;
- (iv) emigration has been cancelled out by immigration in the last five years;
- (v) employment in agriculture continues to decline every year, with the workers in question being absorbed mainly by the tertiary sector;

(vi) the relationship between wages and employment is loose, though more marked for women than for men in that increases in women's wages tend to lead to decreases in their employment;

(vii) wage indexation significantly reduced the differences between high and low wages, giving disproportionate advantages to low wage workers;

(viii) according to the provisions of L 1262/82 giving incentives for new enterprise creation, 1072 new units have been established since 1983, 80% of which were in industry. They are estimated to have created 21 000 new jobs;

(ix) the implementation of the various schemes for the creation of new jobs has given the following results:

(a) programme of geographical mobility: 43 000 new permanent or seasonal jobs were created during the period 1982-86;

(b) self-employment: since the start of the programme in September 1986, some 4 000 people have been subsidized;

(c) programmes for subsidizing enterprises to hire new employees without dismissing existing employees:

1983:	5 422
1984:	7 772
1985:	15 112
1986:	22 200

(d) programmes for financing communities and municipalities to hire long-term unemployed persons and building workers in public works:

1983:	3 765
1984:	2 575
1985:	4 590
1986:	4 600

### Spain: Coordinating employment policy

Over the past few years, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has developed close collaboration with the gov-

ernment of the autonomous communities in the field of employment policy. The aim has been to coordinate the actions of the central and autonomous administrations. To this end, two-year collaboration agreements were signed in May and June 1987 between the central government and 16 of the 17 autonomous communities. These lay down suitable approaches for jointly formulating and implementing specific employment promotion and vocational training activities to achieve their greatest effectiveness. They include the following aspects:

(i) Implementing community works and services through the recruitment of unemployed workers by the autonomous government and financed by INEM, the national employment institute, and/or the autonomous community;

(ii) Collaboration between the two parties for presenting employment projects and training actions to the European Social Fund and for carrying out and following up programmes of the different autonomous governments;

(iii) Collaboration between the two parties in the following areas:

(a) implementing the Plan FIP, the national training and vocational integration programme;

(b) promoting employment and spreading various hiring measures as well as promoting local employment initiatives;

(c) vocational qualifications of job-seekers;

(d) vocational information and guidance;

(e) carrying out studies and research on the labour market and employment structures and the compiling of statistical information on the different aspects covered by the agreement.

Six-member coordination committees of the two administrations are being set up consisting of three members from both parties chaired by the gov-

egate of the central government attached to the autonomous region. Their tasks include determining whether the new employment promotion actions of the autonomous community are coherent with national employment policy and the overall evaluation of the agreement and the study of new approaches to collaboration between the two parties, in particular as regards promoting employment and vocational training. A joint follow-up committee has been established consisting of a representative of each one of the members of the coordination committees. Its tasks are to see to the implementation and follow-up of the agreements and to settle any disputes which might arise from the interpretation of the same.

### Spain: Corporate hiring and training policy

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security has carried out a survey of a sample of 2 000 enterprises. The purpose was to find out, on the one hand, the policy of Spanish enterprises for hiring workers by contract and, on the other, some aspects of their vocational training. For 1986 was a very significant year in the labour market since not only was there a 3% increase in employment but also the first drop in unemployment (1.5%) since the beginning of the economic crisis in the 1970s. The following results in particular could be drawn from the survey:

#### (i) Employment contracts

(a) First, the great knowledge which employers have of the various types of existing employment contracts which have been brought in following changes in the regulations in August 1984. Some types of contracts are claimed to be used by, or known to, 85% of employers. Of employers, 71% agree that changes brought in to make contracts clearer and more flexible lead enterprises to make greater use of established forms of contracts. Since August 1984 there has been a considerable increase in the number of contracts which has raised the number of placements re-

gistered in 1986 to 3 million from 1.8 million in 1984.

- (b) The open-ended contract for young people which provides for a 50% exemption from employers' social security contributions is seen as a good method by 82% of enterprises. Of such contracts, 104 430 were concluded in 1986, thereby considerably improving the situation of young people on the labour market.
- (c) Employers considered that the greatest advantages of the temporary employment contract are in reducing social security contributions and satisfying temporary manpower needs, in that order. 73% of enterprises consider that current legislation on temporary employment contracts raises no problems at all. The importance played by temporary employment contracts is shown by the fact that 43% of enterprises which employed workers in 1986 under an employment-creating fixed-term contract (a contractual arrangement which implies neither subsidy nor social security exemptions) subsequently took on permanently 46.5% of these workers. The survey brings out furthermore that 63% of enterprises which currently use such contracts have decided to employ these workers permanently.

#### (ii) Vocational training

(a) 52% of enterprises habitually carry out training. Of these, 61% claim to implement it through courses with their companies' own resources. Only 19% of enterprises have regularly experienced trouble in finding workers suitable for the jobs available. Of companies which claim to have carried out training in 1986, 69% have done so for the professional improvement of their staff, 68% for retraining their staff for meeting technical change within the enterprise, and 61% for improving staff's technical skills to make up for inadequate or insufficient basic training. In any case it is revealing that 73% of enterprises stated that they had currently no training needs to be satisfied.

(b) Between 40 and 50% of enterprises use, according to their specific needs, schemes set out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security's Plan FIP (training and vocational integration plan), which establishes a series of schemes financed by INEM, the national employment institute. 80% of enterprises which had used the possibilities opened by the Plan FIP positively appraised the various action possibilities.

### Ireland: New Manpower Services Authority

Legislation has been passed which provides for the establishment of a new body to replace AnCO — the Industrial Training Authority, the National Manpower Service and the Youth Employment Agency. The new body, to be known as An Foras Áiseanna Saothair (FÁS) — the Manpower Services Authority, will come into operation on 1 January 1988 and will take over the functions of the three existing bodies. These functions include:

- (i) the provision of training and re-training for employment;
- (ii) the provision of employment schemes for the unemployed;
- (iii) the provision of a placement service;
- (iv) assisting local community groups and cooperatives in providing employment;
- (v) the collection and publication from time to time of information in relation to these functions and carrying out relevant research;
- (vi) the development of its activities overseas on a commercial basis.

The main purpose behind the establishment of the new body is to provide a more coordinated and integrated approach in the delivery of the various manpower services at present administered by the three separate agencies.

The Board of FÁS will be tripartite, made up of representatives of employers', trade unions and youth organizations and government with an independ-

ent Chairman appointed by the Minister for Labour.

The legislation also removes the under-25 age limitation on the use of the youth employment levy. The levy, to be known as the employment and training levy, can now be applied to employment and training schemes generally.

### **Italy: Programme presented to Parliament by the recently appointed Italian Government**

Labour market and employment issues have been central topics both in the declarations of the President of the Council of Ministers to Parliament and in the substantial programme document of the government which was attached to the declarations. Both texts underline the necessity for a well-balanced development of the country to launch an economic programme aimed at the creation of new jobs, particularly for young people.

The major thrusts of labour policies must focus on: labour costs and the reduction of corporate social security contributions; labour market flexibility; developing instruments to facilitate entry to the labour market and worker mobility (employment agencies, vocational guidance, etc.); and efficient management of excess manpower (reform of CIG, early retirement, solidarity contracts, etc.). Furthermore, the new government intends to intensify its commitment for an economic policy for the south of Italy aimed at stimulating the development of the regions in question. Particular attention will be given to the agro-industrial sectors, to tourism and to the tertiary sector. The Mezzogiorno is considered a priority in the government's programme. As regards industry, the programme underlines the need for a new regulation aimed at modernizing small companies.

Similar measures must also be taken in the services sector and particularly in tourism and commercial services. Furthermore, the government intends to support the activity and the de-

velopment of cooperatives. Finally, legislative initiatives should be directed at the development and modernization of the agricultural sector.

### **The Netherlands: Employment policy and budget 1988**

With the expected drop in unemployment in 1988 being less than the government and social partners targeted for, the cabinet is intensifying its existing labour market policy. To this end an additional HFL 186 m is being made available in 1988. HFL 100 m of this will be used to tackle long-term unemployment — parliament will be informed later what the remaining money will be used for.

The total sum will enable an extra 35 000 persons to benefit from employment measures. Measures will thus be able to accommodate a total of 150 000 persons in 1988 compared with 90 000 in 1986 and 120 000 in 1987. More than two-thirds of the funds will be used for training measures and the remaining third for employment promotion measures and the provision of work experience.

The latest estimates indicate that, in 1987, unemployment will average 680 000 and that in 1988 there are possibilities for a further drop to 655 000. The main goal of governmental policy is to bring unemployment down to 500 000 in 1990 which implies a fall of at least 200 000 over a four-year period.

The government emphasizes that the most important means of bringing down unemployment is a well-targeted general economic policy. Labour market policy directly aimed at enhancing employment, training and the provision of openings for work experience is a complement to this. This labour market policy is in particular an element of governmental policy to which government and social partners are condemned together and in which progress can only be achieved jointly.

In 1986 the growth in employment in the market sector was relatively high —

120 000 persons in all. Such a rate of growth is unlikely to continue in 1987 because of the impact of changes in international developments on the Dutch economy. The National Planning Office expects slowed-down economic growth. Moreover, there is likely to be a considerable increase in the supply of labour in the near future; some 70 000 to 80 000 persons a year. This means a big problem for reducing unemployment.

Significant technological change is taking place in all walks of society. This renewal is, on the one hand, a consequence of market developments and, on the other, a condition which can be brought into play to positively influence employment. The government considers that it is useful to bring about a discussion between employers and trade unions, if possible at the national level, on societal aspects of technological innovation. This would create a framework which could be further pursued decentrally. Technological innovations are not compatible with compulsory central agreements.

### **Long-term unemployed (LTUs)**

Consultations with the social partners have led to developing plans for LTUs; guidance discussions, more training and more places for gaining work experience. Now that the extra funds are available, these plans can be implemented.

The government sees the provision of work experience as an important intermediate step especially for LTUs to return to working habits. Schemes are being brought in to this effect. Wages subsidies and measures to accompany the unemployed by private enterprise and public administration enable LTUs to obtain a temporary job. In this connection, agreement on the main thrusts of JWG's implementation (Youth employment guarantee scheme) has been reached with the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG). Discussions are taking place within the Labour Foundation on how to bring about the transition of the under-21s from this scheme into regular jobs. The government intends to have legal provisions for the JWG take effect in mid-1988.

The government has taken up the suggestion of the Labour Foundation to make some of the extra resources available to carry out guidance interviews with the very long-term unemployed. A joint initiative of the regional employment offices (GABs) and municipalities' social services will enable LTUs to be approached personally. Newly recruited employment officers will examine the openings for each individual to return to working life. These openings can be regular work, work experience, taking up vocational training or general training. The openings proposed draw on existing schemes and facilities.

All these extra efforts need to be continued if effectiveness is actually to be guaranteed. Hence additional funds are being earmarked from 1988 onwards: HFL 200 m from 1989. This includes the permanent continuation of the youth employment guarantee scheme (JWG). A further increase in the amount depends on circumstances.

### Training

Training plays a key role in employment policy. Given the importance of technological innovation and the operation of the labour market in the light of this, investment in training is just as necessary as investment in buildings and machines. Improving the vocational skills of those who have only lower or incomplete schooling deserves considerable attention in the 1988 policy. Consultations with the social partners to strengthen training at branch of industry level and the involvement of the unemployed in this are very important.

Additional efforts are required for the training of girls and women who want to get (or return to) employment and for the improvement of the relatively poor employment conditions of minorities.

Considerable importance is attached to schooling measures in trade and industry. Increasingly, collective agreements cover training and employment schemes, by taking on young people in companies and branches of industry through youth employment schemes and increasing the intake of apprentices. But there are also agree-

ments which use part of the reduction in working time for training. The government from its side intends to encourage the involvement of unemployed persons in training measures of trade and industry to the greatest possible extent.

### Public employment service

Bottlenecks must be tackled and new ways developed in 1988 to improve the market position of the employment offices. Currently, offices register one-third of all vacancies and subsequently they contribute to one-third of these being filled. Attempts will be made to have a 10% increase in both registration and the number of vacancies filled. An important obstacle now being tackled is the inaccuracy of data in employment offices.

Experiments are already being made in many employment offices with new approaches to present better candidates for vacancies more quickly. Examples of the new approaches are the JOB centres which offer an overview of the current situation of all vacancies, and the job-seekers data banks. Stimulation of self-help and the introduction of new methods of matching should lead to more job-seekers making use of employment offices.

Attention will continue to be focused in the first place on the registered unemployed. What is important here is that everyone who is eligible does in fact register at an employment office, which is not the case with many women returning to the labour market.

Over the last few years there has been a significant increase in the number of flexible, temporary employment contracts. Employment offices have adapted to this development. Placement in such jobs provides the jobless with work experience.

There is an increase in the number of vacancies which are difficult to fill. This hampers economic recovery. Bottlenecks are growing rapidly in the engineering industry, building and health care as well as in business services. This requires employment offices to adapt still better to the demand for

manpower. A combination of training and work experience is the most effective means in this respect. Through local and regional cooperation, the PBVE (Primary vocationally-oriented adult education) offers the opportunity for developing just such an integrated training provision. Contributors to this cooperation are not just training establishments but also C(A)VVs (Adult (adm.) vocational training centres) and CBBs (Centres for vocational orientation and preparation).

Since target groups and type of work of CBBs and PBVEs are virtually identical, the CBBs' training provision will be a part of the PBVE. The 28 CBBs accommodate 2 160 participants. PBVE caters for training 15 000 job-seekers. In time, women's vocational training should become a part of the existing training structure.

By means of the KRS (framework regulation for training) the employment offices can, together with employers, provide a training approach for people in work as well as the jobless. By adapting the KRS and an active demand-oriented application of the CAVVs, at least 40 000 workers and jobless can be trained in 1988. The starting point here remains that training the employed is primarily the responsibility of trade and industry. Special attention will be paid to computer training.

Since 1986 experiments have been under way with on-the-job training places for young people who have not yet been able to find a regular training place under the apprentice system. At the end of 1987 these experiments will be evaluated to ascertain the final shape of the scheme. By means of BVJ (Youth vocational training subsidy scheme) additional efforts will be made to double the intake of apprentices. This goal has in fact almost been reached. As a result of the population structure, the intake of young people in vocational training is likely to come under pressure.

LTUs usually lack work experience. To this end, employment offices are making increasing use of schemes supporting placement, particularly MOA (Measure to support integration into working life — see iM 14), the Ver-

meend/Moor Act MLW (see iM 16 and 19) and JOB, the temporary work experience scheme for LTU youths (see iM 11 and 19). By amending the Act, the MLW has adapted to bottlenecks encountered in practice. It exempts employers from paying social security contributions for hiring a LTU and makes a grant for training and accompanying costs. For 1988 the aim is to help 12 000 LTUs to find work through this scheme and 10 000 young LTUs through JOB, which is being extended to cover the whole country.

1988 will also see the continuation of job-seekers' clubs which were launched in 1987. In such clubs the jobless are helped in looking and applying for jobs.

The employment offices are going to use at least 12% of their 1988 budget for training and placing some 10 000 women who are re-entering the labour market. Part of the budget will be used for supporting the establishment of a national network of 33 'Vrouw en Werkwinkels' (Women and workshops. See p. 90.).

The preparation of the new Employment Services Act was completed in mid-1987. It is expected that a bill regulating the new structure of the public employment service will be sent to the Second Chamber before end-1987. The objective is to bring in, in 1988, a joint (government, employers and employees) management of the employment services. This tripartitism and the decentralization and flexibilization of the organizational structure will enable the shaping of labour market policy which is dynamic and in tune with local needs.

### **Emancipation**

The emancipation policy action programme will be submitted to parliament in 1987. This summarizes the plans of the government for the remainder of the legislative period. At the same time it complies with the government's agreement to develop emancipation policy into a specific and integrated policy aspect for each ministry.

Furthering the aimed economic independence of women requires additional

efforts to strengthen the position of women in the labour market. In addition to the measure aimed at women (re-)entering the labour market, the preparation of the new generation of girls and young women to be economically independent is an important element in emancipation policy. Figures indicate increased participation rates of women, especially of young married women. The increase among women with children seems to be greatest for those with very young children. This is linked with the changed conceptions of the extent to which women can be expected to earn their own living.

The Minister considers that girls and young women should have a greater market-oriented preparation for society, an important bottleneck being the existing bad response to the demand for work. Girls and young women should thus take part in training and employment measures. A project plan is being drawn up on the societal position of girls and young women.

Women on the labour market are characterized by having flexible work contracts. In this context, the ministerial working group on flexible forms of work, which also deals with limiting the undesired forms of work contracts, will soon be reporting.

### **Some budget figures**

The 1988 budget of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment totals some HFL 17 300 million. That is about HFL 1 300 million less than was indicated in the 1987 budget. The difference is due almost entirely to a cutback in the expenditure for the Unemployment Provisions Act as a consequence of restructuring social security. The lion's share of the total amount accrues to social security: some HFL 15 600 million of which HFL 9 700 million are earmarked for social assistance. Of the remainder, HFL 1 200 million are earmarked for the employment services and HFL 119 million for the work environment. The emancipation policy accounts for some HFL 28.9 million.

## **Portugal: Employment and vocational training policy**

The programme of the present government was published in August 1987. As regards employment, the policy is to intervene in favour of the most disadvantaged groups on the labour market to wit youths, the long-term unemployed (LTUs), women, the disabled and workers affected by structural adjustment and reconversion.

### **Employment policy**

Interventions will take the form, in particular, of:

- (i) supporting local employment initiatives and investment projects with a significant employment aspect;
- (ii) creating measures for reducing social security contributions for enterprises and activities in regions which are considered high priority or economically disadvantaged;
- (iii) encouraging and supporting self-employment, manpower mobility, hiring LTUs, integrating the disabled into working life and part-time work;
- (iv) bringing in programmes for maintaining employment in crisis sectors or regions which are undergoing restructuring;
- (v) coordinating employment policy with social security policy by developing in particular alternative means of finance which avoid penalizing the use of labour;
- (vi) modernizing IEFP's (the national employment and vocational training institute) network of dependent employment centres by taking account of the improved matching process between labour supply and demand.

### **Vocational training**

The government intends in particular to:

- (a) bring in legislation on the system of vocational training to consolidate the coordination of operational and financial instruments, in particular as regards the European Social Fund;

- (b) review the law on cooperation in training from the viewpoint of greater flexibility in managing vocational training aids;
- (c) review the apprenticeship law in order to consolidate coordination with the technical training provided by the school system;
- (d) strengthen and diversify training capacity, stimulating workers to request vocational training;
- (e) strengthen relations and cooperation with the Ministry of Education by making the most of the existing infrastructures and human resources.

### Portugal: Restructuring employment centres

A programme is currently under way for supporting the internal reorganization of IEFP as regards employment.

Its aim is to bring in new operating guidelines for IEFP's relationships with enterprises and job-seekers, thereby enabling an improved adjustment of supply to demand, reforming, developing and computerizing the network of employment centres.

An integrated medium-term development plan (1987-91) has been worked out for implementing this programme. This plan provides for the possibility of Community co-financing through the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

## Aid to the unemployed

### Italy: Recruitment of public employees through employment offices

Decree No 392 of the President of the Council of Ministers (18.9. 1987) sets out the criteria for selecting and designating workers in public adminis-

trations and in non-economic public bodies, to be assigned to jobs for which (as provided for under Art.16 of Law No 56 of 28 February 1987 — see iM 18) no vocational qualification certificate is required and compulsory schooling is sufficient. Hiring of such workers will take place by means of selections made from among job-seekers registered on the placement lists and the mobility lists.

The administration concerned will have to request the competent District Section for Employment ('sezione circoscrizionale per l'impiego') to select or designate a number of workers, equivalent to the number of jobs to be filled. To qualify for selection, the persons registered on the lists must meet the necessary requirements for access to public employment. The selection is made according to the position of the workers, designated by the District Section, on the classification list ('graduatoria'); it consists of an assessment of the worker's capacity to perform the job in question. Tests are carried out according to the rules of the administrations and the public bodies on the basis of the job descriptions in question. Workers who have not answered the call, who have not passed the tests or who have not accepted the appointment will be replaced by workers in the order of the list until all positions are filled.

Central government administrations, national non-economic public bodies and those carrying out activities in several regions recruit the aforementioned workers by means of selection on the basis of the classification list of the job-seekers concerned. The following criteria are used for drawing up the list: number of dependants, financial situation and property, duration of enrolment on the placement lists, age and previous employment in government administrations and public corporations.

On the basis of the data resulting from the request and of those established for the assignment of 'points', the Ministry of Labour and Social Security draws up single classification lists for each individual profile. The requests and the lists are transmitted to the Presi-

dent of the Council of Ministers — public service department — which provides the administrations in question, following the order of the list, with the names of the workers to be submitted to selection according to the number of jobs to be filled.

### Luxembourg: Reform of the unemployment benefit system

By the Law of 12 May 1987 (*Memorial A No 52*, coordinated text of 1 June 1987) the government has carried out a complete reform of the legal provisions as regards unemployment help. The main thrusts of the new provisions which came into operation on 1 June 1987 can be summarized as follows:

- (i) The name of the Unemployment Fund has been changed to the Employment Fund. This is to bring out the reorientation of the Fund's initiatives towards preparing and adapting manpower to the needs of the employment market.
- (ii) There has been an extension in time of the entitlement to unemployment benefit for the older unemployed according to their seniority in pension insurance (this extension constitutes a right from now on) and for the unemployed who are particularly difficult to place.
- (iii) The rates of benefit for the unemployed with dependent children have been increased (increase in the rates by 5 points).
- (iv) There has been an improvement in the compensation system of the unemployed who are forced to give up self-employment.
- (v) In specific cases there is a possibility for receiving benefit before the expiry of the notice period of dismissal.
- (vi) The Employment Fund has taken over the supplementary allowances paid to persons assigned to tasks declared to be in the public interest, as well as other expenditure connected with these tasks.

- (vii) There has been a reform of the administrative and legal appeal procedures.
- (viii) A special section has been integrated into the Employment Fund for promoting practical training within enterprises as well as the vocational integration and reintegration of job-seekers.
- (ix) There has been an enlargement of the tasks of the National Employment Commission and its advisory role.
- (x) New measures have been brought in seeking to prevent the abusive use of possibilities for allowances being claimed by persons who have been dismissed on serious grounds (conceivably the requirement to pay back).

- HFL 1 500 for a working week of 20 to 25 hours
- HFL 2 000 for a working week of 25 to 30 hours
- HFL 2 500 for a working week of 30 to 35 hours
- HFL 3 000 for a working week of more than 35 hours.

The subsidies are subject neither to income tax nor to social security contributions.

This scheme follows on from the previous 'Wage supplement scheme'. Since the social security reform came into force on 1 January 1987, no new applications have been able to be introduced for the previous scheme. HFL 10 million are available for the scheme annually.

### **The Netherlands: Pay subsidy scheme for accepting lower wages**

As from 1 September 1987 persons who have been unemployed for not more than a year or who are threatened with unemployment can claim a one-off subsidy if they accept a job at a rate of pay lower than that paid in their former post. To qualify for the subsidy, the persons must earn in their new job less than 80% of the wages they were paid in the last three months by their previous employer. Under the new 'Pay subsidy scheme for accepting lower wages', 'wages' are understood as the income on which the social security contributions are levied.

The amount of the subsidy depends on the number of hours to be worked in the new job. To be eligible for the subsidy, the claimant must conclude a work contract of at least one year and have a minimum 15-hour working week. Claims for a subsidy will not be considered if, in the opinion of the director of the labour office, the work in question is 'suitable'.

The one-off subsidy amounts to:

- HFL 1 000 for a working week of 15 to 20 hours

## **Training**

### **France: Apprenticeship reform**

On 23 July 1987 Parliament passed a law reforming the apprenticeship system. The law has six main aims:

- (i) To open up access to higher levels of qualification. By means of apprenticeships, young people can, from now on, prepare not just CAPs ('certificats d'aptitude professionnelle' = certificates of proficiency) but any technological education diplomas, notably the 'baccalauréat professionnel'. They can also obtain qualifications which are confirmed by ministerial decree.

Thus an apprenticeship contract will no longer be of two years' standard duration, but will vary between one and three years according to the qualification prepared for. Similarly it will be possible to conclude several apprenticeship contracts one after the other.

- (ii) To improve the quality of the training provided.

The minimum length of teaching in an apprentice training centre (CFA) is being raised from 360 to 400 hours per annum for CAPs. Obviously it will be higher for a higher level of training.

- (iii) To simplify procedures.

The authorization of apprenticeship masters — the guarantee of quality — is being maintained, but the procedure simplified.

- (iv) To encourage the employment of apprentices by continuing to reduce companies' contributions.

Companies with more than 10 employees will be exempt from all employer's social contributions whereas those with fewer than 10 employees will continue to have an overall exemption from social charges.

- (v) To give the social partners a new role.

The trades and the social partners will be involved in defining the qualifications being prepared for and will jointly determine the duration of apprenticeship contracts. They will also fix apprentices' pay.

- (vi) To foster action by the regions.

The regions will be able to establish regional apprenticeship approaches, thereby strengthening the coordination of their actions and those of the State and the trades.

### **Accompanying measures**

To accompany these measures the law also lays down that:

- (i) To raise the general level of future apprentices, the Ministry of Education will develop youth training.
  - (a) A training and development programme is being put on for teachers of all the classes preparing for apprenticeship;
  - (b) Students of the 'classes préprofessionnelles de niveau' (CPPN) (pre-vocational consolidation classes) can henceforth participate in at least three in-company traineeships a year.





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(c) Students of the 'classes préparatoires à l'apprentissage' (CPA) (pre-apprenticeship classes) will continue to have sandwich training at school and in-company. These classes will gradually be brought into the technical schools ('lycées professionnels') and CFAs.

(ii) The financial resources of the CPAs will be strengthened. 'Quality contracts' can be concluded between the CFAs, the regions and the State.

CFAs which have concluded such contracts will get a State grant for their modernization.

(a) Individualized support will be given to apprentices in difficulties.

(b) Teachers will be able to take part in a new training programme.

This programme will be carried out in collaboration with the bodies managing CFAs. It will strengthen the quality of teaching provided and prepare trainers for opening up apprenticeships to higher levels of qualifications.

(iii) The dynamics and monitoring of the learning in apprenticeships will be developed. The resources of the think-tank ('cellule de réflexion et

d'animation') on sandwich (alternating) training at the Ministry of Education will be increased.

CFAs will have improved monitoring of their training.

The role of the apprenticeship inspectorate will be strengthened.

The whole of the accompanying plan came into operation in the autumn of 1987. Altogether, by means of these various actions, the State will more than double its contribution to apprenticeship financing from FF 130 m to FF 310 m per annum — and thus complement the regions and the trades.

## **United Kingdom: The MSC Skills Unit**

In May 1986, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) issued a consultative paper on 'Improving information on skill supply and demand'. That paper suggested that greater attention should be given to analysing skill supply and demand issues, identifying relevant research and other studies, sponsoring additional work to provide a more comprehensive assessment and disseminating the results widely. The outcome was the establishment, in December 1986, of the MSC Skills Unit, as part of the labour market information branch at MSC Head Office in Sheffield.

The unit brings together a mixture of statistical, economic, programme management and research expertise. Its job is to focus more attention on the changes taking place in the labour market and how those changes affect occupations and skills. It also aims to help promote the exchange of information amongst those organizations collecting skills information. It aims to achieve this by:

- (i) establishing a library and information service to provide a comprehensive collection of skills information, including research reports, periodical articles and statistical data;
- (ii) working with others to identify and publicize relevant research; by commissioning work to meet particular needs or to fill gaps and publishing the results;
- (iii) providing an overall national labour market assessment to give guidance on changing patterns of skill supply and demand as a guide to planning training provision;
- (iv) developing, analysing and publishing regular surveys on skill shortages;
- (v) widely disseminating skills information through regular publications.

The Skills Unit Library acts as a reference point for information on skills issues. Through its links with external organizations, local authorities, and other libraries in related fields it has estab-

lished systems to exchange information and to build up a comprehensive data base. Its computerized services include regular production of subject bibliographies and a monthly digest of abstracted periodical articles and new acquisitions.

The main focus of research managed by the Skills Unit is on identifying skill requirements resulting from: changes in industrial structure; changes in technology, including the development of new products or materials; or changing work practices. The unit also looks at the causes of and remedies for persistent skill shortages and at the constraints inhibiting the supply of skilled people. Research is funded for the most part in conjunction with government departments. The unit is working on developing and strengthening these links to make more effective use of the joint resources.

The Skills Unit occasionally sponsors conferences and seminars on skills issues. The conference proceedings are usually published as part of the unit's information service.

The unit produces two regular publications: the *Skills Bulletin* is a quarterly publication, providing an update on research and initiatives affecting future skill requirements. *Skills Monitoring Reports* are published every six months on recent evidence about the extent to which skill needs are being met.

The unit's services are available to anyone seeking information on skills issues, whether as an employer, researcher, educator or training provider.

## **Job creation**

### **Portugal: Allowance for enterprise creation**

In the second half of 1987, IEFP, the employment and vocational training institute, launched a programme 'New enterprises — new jobs' for helping the

creation of companies in the Setubal region. The aim of this programme is to stimulate the creation of small firms either by individuals aged more than 18 years or by companies and cooperatives. The company has to have its registered office within the area covered by the Setubal programme and it must work within the ambit of that town's integrated centre for employment and vocational training.

The projects put forward are selected according to their technical and financial viability. Aid provided by IEFP is of three types:

- (i) a grant of ESC 302 400 for every job created;
- (ii) making available, free of charge, facilities for three years;
- (iii) training and technical assistance.

In addition to these aids, the overall amount of the investment will be 60% financed by a State credit institution.

## **Special categories of workers**

### **Belgium: Affirmative action for women**

The MB of 26 August 1987 published the Royal Decree of 24 July 1987 dealing with measures to promote equal opportunities for men and women in the private sector.

Enterprises are invited to undertake affirmative actions for women, i.e. actions aimed at remedying *de facto* inequalities which impair women's opportunities. These actions are carried out in the form of plans for equal opportunities which consist of either corrective actions for the detrimental effects towards women stemming from traditional social situations and behaviours or measures promoting their presence and their participation in all walks and levels of working life.

Equality of opportunity plans can be established either within a given industry or an enterprise jointly with the representatives of the workers.

### **Federal Republic of Germany: Extending counselling services for young foreigners**

For some time now progress can be seen in the educational and training situation of young foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany. There has been an increase in in-plant training relationships of young foreigners under the 'dual system'. More and more young foreigners are leaving school with at least a 'Hauptschulabschluß' — lower secondary school leaving certificate.

Compared with young Germans, far too few young foreigners receive a complete vocational training. Yet this is an essential basis for becoming vocationally integrated into the system of work and employment in the Federal Republic. For this reason, the vocational guidance service of the Federal Employment Services (BA) has decided to broaden its range of activities for young foreigners (Circular directive (*RdErl.*) 44/87).

The aim of the various measures is to strengthen the motivation of young foreigners and their parents for vocational training as well as to foster the readiness of companies to train them.

Leaflets in the languages of the persons concerned are intended to narrow the information gaps of the young foreigners and their parents. In the careers information centres of the vocational guidance service there is furthermore extensive information on training for various careers. Since the parents of young foreigners have considerable influence on the career choice of their children, cooperation with parents will be strengthened.

Every employment office has at least one careers officer who is specially responsible for young foreigners. For these particular functions the officers receive special additional training.

Despite their improved school qualifications, young foreigners still experience difficulties in the transition from school to work. The reasons for this are in particular linguistic and general educational gaps. For these reasons, the vocational guidance service offers young foreigners preparatory courses for vocational training to enhance and strengthen motivation for training, learning abilities and competitive chances. Completion of a course should give the young foreigner improved chances of access to a training place.

MBSE (measures for the vocational preparation and social integration of young foreigners) expire in 1987 (*RdErl.* 12/87). This will not harm young foreigners since they have been given specific help through vocational preparation measures. The efficiency of these measures for young foreigners will thereby be enhanced.

### **France: New law on the employment of disabled workers**

Law No 87-517 of 10 July 1987 on the employment of disabled workers indicates a new trend in the policy of the public authorities in this field.

The new law is designed around three key ideas:

- (i) It replaces procedural obligations with the requirement to achieve results: that of employing 6% who are disabled workers, war victims and the like.

To make this requirement compatible with a company's economic needs, the law provides for a number of changes compared with previous legislation. The quota has dropped from 10% to 6% and the size of the companies subject to the legislation has been raised from 11 to 20 employees.

The beneficiaries are, in addition to disabled workers who are recognized as such by Cotorep (these technical commissions for vocational guidance and rehabilitation recog-

nize 70 000 disabled workers annually), war victims and the like, the disabled paid for under Social Security and the occupationally disabled who are permanently incapacitated for at least 10%. In other words, the law has refocused the scheme on the most disabled, those needing most collective action.

To back up this willingness to help severely disabled workers to be employed by companies, the law lays down that they can count for more than one unit. The same will be the case for certain other categories of disabled persons: young people, older workers, those leaving sheltered workshops or a vocational training centre.

- (ii) Besides this formal requirement, the law is also innovative in involving the social partners in the policy for vocationally integrating the disabled, i.e. by bringing the employment of the disabled into the sphere of collective bargaining. For the law authorizes enterprises to fulfil their legal requirements by concluding and implementing company or branch level agreements providing for annual or multi-annual programmes for the recruitment, integration, training, or adapting to technological change of the disabled or their maintenance within the company in cases of collective dismissal.

Besides the appeal to the responsibility of the social partners, the law provides for an alternative: the company can get out of its obligation by paying a voluntary contribution to a Development Fund for the occupational integration of the disabled.

This fund is being established and managed by the social partners and by the associations who will be in charge of its statutes, its functioning and its activities. The law has, however, given the broad framework of these activities so that they remain in line with the rest of the scheme. Thus it has been foreseen that the fund could contribute to the training of the disabled by financing the additional costs of training when it is for the



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disabled, support for hiring disabled workers by companies with fewer than 20 employees and financing systems accompanying disabled workers, notably those suffering from mental deficiencies, in the process of their integration into working life.

The principle of this fund is to ensure that the money paid by companies which are unable to hire, train or more generally to undertake themselves actions for employing disabled workers, goes to companies which can do so or to disabled workers to provide them with the possibility, in particular through training, of being in a better position of putting in for a job.

Where a company does not comply with any of its obligations, it has to pay a penalty calculated on the basis of each shortfall in beneficiary amounting to the contribution increased by 25%.

(iii) The law extends the same employment requirements for the disabled to the whole of the public sector: central ministries, territorial units, hospitals and public enterprises.

Finally, as in the previous legislation and in order to strengthen the economic links between sheltered workshops and public and private enterprises, the latter can partially discharge their employment obligations

by concluding contracts for the provision of services and subcontracting with the former.

### **The Netherlands: Vrouw en Werkwinkels (women and workshops) subsidy scheme**

HFL 10 million are being earmarked annually for financing 33 Vrouw en Werkwinkels spread throughout the country.

The scheme, valid for four years, has been made retrospective to 1 July 1987. On the expiry of this period, an examina-

tion will be made to determine how the *Vrouw en Werkwinkels* can be fitted into the regular policy.

The aim of *Vrouw en Werkwinkels* is to ease the (re-)entry of women to the labour market. This is being done by providing information on the labour market, advice and support in training and employment guidance and encouragement to women to undergo vocational training.

The scheme is one part of the government policy aimed at improving the position of women who are entering or re-entering the labour market.

### United Kingdom: Religious equality of opportunity in employment

Religious discrimination in employment is illegal in Northern Ireland, and has been since the passing of the Fair Employment (Northern Ireland) Act 1976. However, figures published in July 1985 indicated a continuing wide differential in unemployment between Protestants and Roman Catholics. As a consequence the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland initiated an urgent and wide-ranging review of government policy. In September 1986 a Consultative paper set out future strategy options and invited public comment; and, on completion of the consultation process, in July 1987 the Secretary of State announced that new legislative proposals were to be brought forward to improve the practice of religious equality of opportunity in employment. In that statement the Secretary of State also announced that, as suggested in the Consultative paper, a new guide to the effective practice of religious equality of opportunity in employment should be published. The guide, published in September 1987, contains clear practical and detailed advice not only for employers but also for trade unions, employees and employment agencies.

Though the guide does not have the force of the law, the Fair Employment Agency — which is responsible for enforcement of the Act — is obliged to take its recommendations into account in determining whether or not equality of opportunity in employment is being provided. So the guide is a most significant and important advance on the road to more effective practice. It concentrates on four key areas: recruitment, selection and promotion, monitoring and affirmative action. On recruitment, employers must spread their net as widely as possible. They should, *inter alia*, set out the basic facts about each job to be filled and about the requirements and qualifications they are looking for in the person who fills it. They must, so far as is practicable, make sure that all eligible and qualified persons are aware of the vacancy and encourage them to come forward for consideration on merit.

The guide's advice on selection and promotion is similarly practical and incisive. The emphasis is on selection on the basis of merit. Among other things, this involves deciding on the qualifications, ability and potential ability needed to do the job; making sure that these requirements are job-related; advertising them clearly and even-handedly; applying them consistently throughout the processes of short-listing, interviewing, and selection; making sure that all candidates get the same chance; and cutting out all irrelevant requirements. Selection and promotion procedures should be reviewed from time to time to ensure that they are fair and efficient and work solely on the basis of merit and of criteria that are relevant to the job.

Monitoring is crucial because without it an employer will not be able to tell whether he is achieving equality of opportunity in his company. The guide explains that the ideal is to identify any job category or occupational level within a work-force where there are fewer applicants or workers of a particular religious affiliation than might reasonably be expected, given the religious breakdown in the company's catchment area. To help companies work out what this should be, the guide gives figures for

the distribution of Protestants and Roman Catholics in each District Council area in Northern Ireland. The guide then goes on to explain how to establish the perceived religious affiliation of employees and job applicants and sets out in detail three different ways in which this might be approached. It emphasizes that the need to monitor religious affiliation should be explained clearly to employees and job applicants, pointing out particularly that it is of itself a non-discriminatory step which is essential if discrimination is to be avoided.

The fourth, and perhaps more important, area of guidance is on the affirmative action which an employer must take if his monitoring shows an underrepresentation of employees or job applicants from one religious grouping or the other. (Affirmative action should also be taken if there is significant underrepresentation of a religious grouping in an area within a firm, e.g. within particular occupations, salary levels, or shifts.) The guide makes a large number of specific suggestions of types of affirmative action. These include ending all word-of-mouth recruitment and preferential treatment for relatives of existing employees; ending the use of unsolicited applications; widening the advertising of jobs; increasing awareness of job opportunities among the schools and community groups of the underrepresented section of the community; introducing special 'outreach' training programmes; setting goals and timetables for improvement; and ending the display of flags, emblems, posters and graffiti which are likely to give offence or cause apprehension among any section of the population.

A copy of the guide has been sent to every employer in Northern Ireland and its publication has been welcomed by both sides of industry. It has set a new benchmark for the effective practice of equality of opportunity in Northern Ireland and has given a clear signal to the whole community of HM Government's resolve to take whatever steps are necessary to eliminate discrimination in employment on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion.

## Working time

### Belgium: Temporary work

The Law of 24 July 1987 (MB of 20 August 1987) regulates definitively temporary work, interim work and placing workers at the disposal of users. Since the end of 1981 there has been no specific law governing this matter.

To fill this gap, a certain number of CCTs (collective agreements) have been concluded within the CNT (National Labour Council): CCT No 36 to 36.6 and CCT No 37. But since a CCT cannot depart from certain mandatory provisions of the law, the CNT was restricted in its action. The new law remedies this situation and enables in particular successive fixed-term employment contracts to be concluded for carrying out temporary work. Furthermore, the new law also applies to the public sector, which was not the case for the CNT agreements. Over and above this, the new law by and large takes over the terms of the agreements indicated above, for which reason no details are given below.

#### Temporary work

Temporary work is the activity which is carried out within an employment contract with the aim of:

- (i) replacing a permanent worker;
- (ii) coping with a sudden and unexpected increase in workload;
- (iii) ensuring the completion of an exceptional task.

'Replacing a permanent worker' means:

- (a) the temporary replacement of a worker whose employment contract has been suspended (except in cases of shortage of work for economic reasons or because of bad weather);
- (b) the temporary replacement of a worker whose contract has ended.

Despite the law not defining what is meant by 'a sudden and unexpected in-

crease in workload', these terms must be interpreted according to the application of labour law.

A royal decree will define what is understood by 'an exceptional task'.

An employment contract which has the performance of temporary work as its subject matter is concluded for a fixed duration, for a specific task or for replacing a permanent worker, under conditions laid down by the law. When the parties conclude successive employment contracts for carrying out temporary work, they are not held to have concluded an indefinite employment contract. The contract must be in writing, at the very latest at the time when the worker takes up the job. The reason for the contract and, when the case arises, its duration and the reason for the replacement must be set out in the contract. Failing a written contract in accordance with these provisions, the contract is governed by the rules of indefinite employment contracts.

#### Interim work

The temporary 'interim' employment contract is a contract by which a temporary worker ('*intérimaire*') undertakes to work for a temporary employment business, for payment, to be hired out to a user of temporary work as defined above.

The interim employment contract can be concluded for a fixed duration, for a specific task or for replacing a permanent worker. The intention of concluding such a contract must be stated in writing by the two parties, for each worker individually at the latest at the time when the temporary worker is first taken on by the temporary employment business. For each assignment of the temporary worker to a user, the contract concluded must be in writing at the latest within two working days starting from the time the worker takes up the job. The reason and the duration must be stated in the contract.

Failing a written contract in accordance with these provisions, the contract is governed solely by the rules of indefinite employment contracts. When these

conditions are respected, the parties can conclude successive interim employment contracts without the parties being held to have concluded an indefinite employment contract.

#### Subcontracting labour

As a general rule, there is a ban on any activity whereby a natural person or corporate body leases persons that he/she employs to third parties who use these workers and exercise over them some part or other of the authority normally belonging to the employer, if this is done outside the rules governing interim work.

An employer can, however, as an exception, make some of his/her permanent workers available to a user if he/she has the prior agreement of the inspectorate of social legislation. The inspector checks if the circumstances warrant the request to depart from the regulations and if the request is exceptional in character.

Prior authorization is not, however, required if a permanent worker, who continues to be bound to his/her employer by his/her initial employment contract, is, as an exception, placed at the disposal of a user:

- (i) within the context of inter-enterprise cooperation of the same economic and financial unit;
- (ii) for the purpose of temporarily carrying out specialized tasks which embrace a particular vocational skill.

In these cases, the user informs the inspectorate of social legislation at least 24 hours in advance.

Before placing the person at the disposal of a user, the conditions and the duration of the period for making the person available must be established in writing and signed by the employer, the user and the worker. During the period of the assignment, the employment contract binding the worker to his/her employer continues to remain in effect; however, the user and the employer together bear responsibility for payment of social security contributions, pay, and the allowances and benefits which result from it.

**Belgium: Social security: End of two-hour rule**

The Royal Decree of 24 August 1987 (MB of 4 September 1987) has abolished Art. 16 of the Royal Decree of enforcement concerning social security for workers. This article provided for an exemption from social security contributions for employing workers who do not normally work more than two hours a day.

Art. 16 has been replaced by a new provision which exempts workers carrying out casual work and the employers who employ them, from the application of the law on social security. Casual work is understood as work carried out for the employer's or his family's household needs provided that the work does not exceed 8 hours a week for one or more employers.

The most important consequence of the abolition of the exemption from social security contributions is the return to the social security system of workers who were previously excluded. Previously, working for two hours or less did not require paying contributions to the ONSS (national social security office) and would hence not have given any rights to social security payments. Now, since there are contributions, there is also a proportional entitlement to social security.

**Luxembourg: Law on early retirement**

On 1 April 1987 a law bringing in an early retirement system came into force (Law of 28 March 1987 on early retirement, *Memorial A No 19*). Through this definition of the legal framework for a policy of early retirement from working life the government intends to offer employers and workers a platform, temporary and reversible, for concluding an employment pact between the State and the social partners.

The policy for promoting early retirement from working life which is being carried out by the government is seeking to:

- (i) foster the integration into working life of unemployed job-seekers and those threatened with job loss;
- (ii) create an efficient instrument for intervention on the labour market in cases where there is a sharp deterioration of the situation;
- (iii) achieve a social objective in harmony with the government's economic purpose.

Thus the law consists of two distinct thrusts: First of all, a policy has to be brought in for the early retirement of older persons from working life. This is to be seen as an instrument of an active policy of solidarity between the generations, to be achieved by replacing each older worker voluntarily deciding to leave the enterprise (the so-called 'solidarity early retirement').

Second, the intention is to create an instrument of personnel management enabling there to be a quantitative adjustment of surplus manpower made redundant or threatened with redundancy through structural change (the so-called 'adjustment early retirement').

*Qualifying conditions for early retirement*

Under the terms of the law, workers can retire from the age of 57. The maximum duration of the early retirement period is three years. Drawing an early retirement allowance is incompatible with paid work, whether or not as a wage-earner.

*Early retirement allowance*

A monthly early retirement allowance is paid to the wage-earner admitted to early retirement by the employer or the Employment Fund, depending on the case. The monthly early retirement allowance which is paid by the employer or, depending on the case, by the Employment Fund to the worker entitled to take early retirement is equivalent, for the first 12 months, to 85% of the monthly gross pay actually received by the worker during the three months im-

mediately preceding the compensation period. This rate is reduced to 80% for the second period of 12 months and to 75% for the third period of 12 months.

The early retirement allowance has a ceiling at four times the minimum social reference wage (LFR 110 374 at the 428.67 index). It is subject to the social and fiscal charges which are levied on wages and salaries.

*Solidarity early retirement*

The purpose of the solidarity early retirement is to enable enterprises to rebalance their age pyramid and restructure their workplaces by means of simultaneous or successive movements of departures and replacement hirings. These changes are intended to contribute to accelerating corporate modernization and improving competitiveness and hence companies' capacity to create new jobs.

Only the workers of those companies which have accepted to apply the early retirement system by an express clause in the collective agreement filed with the Ministry of Labour are entitled to take early retirement. For enterprises which are not covered by collective agreement, an agreement concluded directly with the Minister for Labour is required.

The right to be admitted to early retirement is not, as a general rule, an unconditional right of the worker. It is rather the possibility he can assert towards the employer who conforms to the requirement of compensatory hiring of an unemployed job-seeker assigned to him by the Employment Administration or of a wage-earner immediately threatened with dismissal for economic reasons and who agrees to mutual termination of an employment contract and to the payment of an early retirement allowance.

However, older workers who have been working shifts for 20 years or have been working nights for 20 years, have the unconditional right to take early retirement which is conditioned neither by a previous contractual commitment by

the employer towards the trade unions or the Minister for Labour, nor by the fulfilment of the condition for compensatory hiring.

It is up to the employer to fix by common consent with the trade unions or with the Minister for Labour the priority criteria for being admitted to early retirement in one specific case: where the profile of the available job-seekers would not enable the employer to agree to the simultaneous departure of all the wage-earners fulfilling the legal conditions opening up the right to early retirement.

Secondarily, it is up to the joint works committee to fix or to complete the priority conditions for being admitted to early retirement.

The law includes a safeguard clause authorizing the employer to refuse the departure on early retirement when and for as long as the number of workers who have already left on early retirement during the calendar year is in excess of 10% of the wage-earners of the enterprise.

### *Contribution of the Employment Fund*

As a general rule, the employer who conforms to the requirement of compensatory hiring is entitled to an intervention of the Employment Fund. This amounts to 50% of the costs connected with the early retirement allowance and the employer's associated social security contributions. The law opens up the possibility for employers to be exempt from the condition of compulsory hiring when they are faced with economic problems, conjunctural or structural, which are so serious that they are unable to respect the legal hiring requirement.

For shift workers (where compensatory hiring is not required), there is a full reimbursement by the Employment Fund.

### *Adjustment early retirement*

Adjustment early retirement is intended to enable enterprises which

have to cut down on surplus manpower for structural reasons to draw on the instrument of early retirement as a part of the indispensable restructuring measures for ensuring the survival of the enterprise.

The application of the system is subject to the condition of concluding a previous agreement with the Minister for Labour, once the committee on the state of the economy or, in enterprises having at least 150 wage-earners, the tripartite coordination committee have given their opinion.

This same possibility is given to trustees of enterprises which have been declared to be in a state of bankruptcy, commissioners of enterprises under supervised management, and corporate liquidators.

Entry to adjustment early retirement is an unconditional right which the worker can assert irrespective of any consideration of priority.

The cost of the early retirement allowance and the related employer's social security contributions are assumed entirely by the Employment Fund.

The compensatory hiring condition does not apply for the reimbursement of funds. In cases of corporate closures or insuperable financial difficulties making it impossible for the employer to honour his legal obligations, the Minister for Labour can agree to the direct payment of the early retirement allowance to the wage-earner who has retired early.

## **Placement**

### **Germany: Armed forces' 'job centres' start up**

The new 'Stellenbörse' (job centres) at the careers promotion service of the armed forces (BFD) are gradually taking up their work. They are an important part of the general agreement between the Federal Minister for Defence and the

Federal Employment Services (BA) on cooperation for integrating soldiers who have signed on for a set time (SaZ) into civilian working life.

The varied contacts between the different services of the armed forces and working life as well as the more or less marked shortages in specialists with certain skills have led to an increasing number of employers informing the armed forces about vacancies to be filled exclusively or in priority by former soldiers. A random sample in the summer of 1986 indicated that there were some 1 000 such vacancies going every month.

According to § 7 of the Law on provisions for soldiers, the armed forces are required to help SaZ integrate into civilian working life. Given the coming years of low births, the armed forces are trying to maintain their attractiveness among young persons to sign on for several years as SaZ. Representative surveys show that success in this respect will depend to a large extent on the career opportunities open to them on completion of their contracts.

The placement task set out in the Labour Promotion Act (AFG) in connection with BA being the sole responsible body for placement, requires the BA to adapt its services to the situation and developments on the labour market. Thus in close cooperation with the Federal Defence Minister a form of cooperation has been developed which:

- (i) takes account of the employers' preferences for their vacancies without excluding the SaZ and conscripts, who are leaving the armed forces and are looking for a job, from the job offers available at the employment office for which they could be considered;
- (ii) makes available to the senior placement officer commissioned to fill a vacancy, the specialized knowledge and experiences of BFD staff in assessing the qualifications the candidates have acquired in training and through experience in the armed forces with regard to the requirements of the job offered;



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(iii) leaves room for a flexible design of cooperation between the BFD, the job centres and employment offices so that the local conditions can be taken into account and that all ne-

cessary efforts can be geared to providing industry with the manpower required and job-seekers with a job according to their professional qualifications.

Successful cooperation of the BA in the job centres once again shows that the BA is in the position of adapting its range of services to the conditions and needs of the labour market.

# New technology and social change:

## Overview of recent events in the Community countries<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

#### I. Government policies

1. R&D and industrial policies
2. Civil liberties

#### II. The attitudes of the two sides of industry towards new technologies

1. Employers
2. Trade unions
3. Collective agreements and labour disputes

#### III. Studies and research on the social effects of new technologies

1. Diffusion of information technology
2. Employment
3. Women's employment and work
4. Qualifications and training
5. Work organization and industrial relations
6. Working conditions, health and safety

This survey of events and information on the social implications of technological change refers to the second half of 1987 and covers three main subjects: government policies, the attitudes of the two sides of industry, studies and research on employment and related issues.

The elections and government changes which took place in some countries did not modify basic policy orientations in the technological field. In most countries, ongoing programmes keep on meeting with considerable success in terms of industry's participation, available funds often being exhausted much before the scheduled completion of the programmes. Greater efforts are being made to orientate research towards applications, to induce closer cooperation between academic institutions and private industry, to establish infrastructure for technology transfer and dissemination. A 'hot' issue remains the future of telecommunications services. Industry is following, not always with success, its own strategy aimed at strengthening domestic producers through mergers and establishing transnational cooperation: among recent moves we can mention the agreement between GEC and Plessey in the UK to merge their telecommunications equipment manufacturing interests with the creation of a jointly owned company, and the long discussed and eventually aborted merger between Italtel and Telettra of the Fiat group in Italy. On the public side, a measure which some countries plan to implement is the institutional separation between deficit-struck postal services and profitable telecommunications services: the proposals in the Federal Republic of Germany and Portugal are mentioned below. These plans do not usually satisfy either private employers, who claim access to and full deregulation of advanced telecommunications services, or trade unions, who fear a deterioration of no longer supported conventional services and job losses.

Besides statements and opinions on proposed policy measures in various countries, one novel piece of information from the employers' side is the at-

tempt of British employers in computer services to regulate competition in the rather tight market for software specialists through compensation or a commonly agreed training syllabus. The preoccupations expressed by trade unions in several congresses held in this period are also focused on labour market policy measures and on the demands for better information and consultation on the introduction of new technology. Moreover, in the two countries where unions have traditionally been organized by craft or occupational groups, mergers are slowly coming through; among the reasons pushing for this rather complex organizational change several are related to the need to adapt to changes in the industrial and employment structures brought about by technological change. But there are also more immediate objectives, at least in the British case, namely the attempt to attract members from the growing number of people working in high-tech industries, which at present exhibit a very low degree of unionization. Collective agreements signed in this period were mainly at firm level: a few contain rather innovative clauses on information and the qualification structure. However, information clauses are not always complied with in actual practice: an example is provided by a number of closures and conflicts which occurred in Belgium in high-tech firms where, despite the provisions of collective agreements, trade unions and works councils were in most cases informed after the event.

Surveys of the trends in the information technology market continue to indicate high growth, though at decreasing rates. The slower growth of the hard-

<sup>1</sup> Prepared by the Commission on the basis of information provided by the EPOS network of correspondents on new information technologies, which comprises the following experts: G. Valenduc (B), J. Reese (D), N. Bjørn-Andersen (DK), J. I. Palacio Morena (E), N. Azoulay and V. Champetier (F); M. Nikolinos (GR), M. E. J. O'Kelly and J. F. Dinneen (IRL), P. Piacentini and B. Ingraio (I), D. van der Werf (NL), L. Tadeu Almeida (P), T. Brady (UK). Coordinator for the Commission: A. S. Piergrossi.

ware market is partly explained by falling prices; software, by contrast, holds an increasingly important share of the market. However, the favourable expectations of a continuing growth of small-scale software producers in a fully accessible market are being disproved by some signals of changes on the supply side: a process of concentration of suppliers seems to be taking place, with the entry of large-scale firms from other sectors of the economy. Moreover, small-scale software producers have a high birth- and death rate and studies carried out in a number of countries point out that only few of them are viable in the medium term, most of the others not being equipped to face broader markets or for a diversification of their activities. As regards the employment consequences of computerization, two studies on the service sector published in 1987, in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands respectively, point to opposite conclusions. One refers to the recent past, the other to the medium-term future and the methodology and scope are different; nevertheless, whether services will keep on compensating for job losses in the other sectors remains an open question. What continues to be confirmed, by contrast, is the shortage not only of informatics professionals, but also of industrial electronics and telecommunications engineers at all levels. On other issues, it can be observed that women are attracting some interest as a specific subject of study also in relation to the impact of new technologies on their employment situation; and that a number of studies, including a recent official French report, stress the importance not only of work organization, but also of management models and patterns in order to make optimum use of new technologies in firms.

As a conclusion, it may be interesting to observe that concern about negative social implications of new technology is spreading to larger groups in society. This is evident in the debates on data protection; another example is provided by the concern expressed by some religious groups. The Dutch DISK (an organization operating in industry and linked to the Churches) organized a meeting on 'New technology, man and

world at stake', where several examples of the negative consequences of technological change were discussed: reduction in employment, insufficient information to works councils, the emergence of a dual society where weaker workers are marginalized and fewer opportunities for women. Moreover, in a society where machinery becomes the dominant factor, the human element is in danger of being considered a 'construction error'. When the logic of technological development becomes dominant, what is technically possible is going to be done, irrespective of the results, warned a theologian at the meeting.<sup>1</sup>

## I. Government policies

### 1. R & D and industrial policies

In *Spain*, the Advisory Council for Science and Technology, which is part of the institutional framework foreseen by the Law on the promotion and general coordination of scientific and technological research, was established in September 1987. The Council is made up of representatives of the scientific community, private research associations, employers' associations and trade unions; it is responsible for ensuring the participation of the scientific community and the economic and social partners in drawing up the national plan for science and technology, following it through and assessing it.

On the other hand, the ongoing 'National electronics and informatics plan' (PEIN), covering the period 1985-87, is progressing beyond expectations: in the first two years, 93% of the total investment foreseen had already been made. However, different performances

have been recorded in the various sub-programmes: thus, while the implementation of the subprogramme aimed at promoting technological diffusion and demonstration projects is far beyond the original target, the subprogramme aimed at generating national technologies attained only 11% of the planned investment.<sup>2</sup>

The government is going ahead with the progressive liberalization of imports of foreign technology. According to the government's draft decree, preliminary application for and verification of such imports will still be necessary, but the authorization can only be denied if the value of the benefits to non-residents is clearly greater than the real value of the technology transferred.<sup>3</sup>

The *Greek* Ministry of the Presidency has prepared a three-year plan for the development of information technology in the public sector, to be approved by the Government Council on Informatics. The main issues covered by the plan include: the integrated and coordinated introduction of information technology in the public sector; central control of procurement; more flexibility in purchasing procedures; a global approach to the utilization of computer equipment and personnel.

In June 1987, the *Irish* Government announced that science and technology is to receive a special budget of IRL 2.5 million to advance the government's policy in this vitally important area. The sum will be allocated to the following areas: provision of capital equipment for the Institute of Industrial Research and Standards; provision of microchip design equipment and augmentation of resources at the National Microelectronics Research Centre (in these two cases the new allocation implies a significant increase in expenditure, which will allow the centres to employ more highly quali-

<sup>1</sup> *Automatiseringsgids*, 14 October 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Informe Anual sobre la Industria Española, 1986*, Madrid, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Cino Dias*, 28 October 1987.

fied scientific staff); establishment of a national biotechnology programme (to encourage research activities by both indigenous and overseas companies and attract foreign investment); establishment of an advanced manufacturing technology programme (under which industry's own resources will be supplemented by expertise from third-level colleges); expansion of teaching companies: establishment of a national programme for technological innovation involving collaborative research between universities, research institutes and industry.<sup>1</sup>

The Danish Technological Council plans to spend DKR 30 million to further develop the technological service centres. The centres, one in each county, help small local firms in their decisions on technological development. Furthermore, the Council plans to finance in the next four years local initiatives aimed at furthering the use of new technology.<sup>2</sup>

Following a long debate on the future of telecommunications services in the Federal Republic of Germany, the government commission on postal and telecommunications services presented its final report to the Federal Chancellor. It proposes to divide the Bundespost into two separate public enterprises, one covering postal and conventional telephone services, the other (Telecom) supplying digital telecommunications networks. Since the Telecom company will be obliged to offer all digital services at the same price independently of the region, some members of the commission predict that it will not be able to compete with private suppliers, particularly in large towns. The services trade union (Deutsche Postgewerkschaft) announced heavy resistance to the splitting and possible privatization of part of the services.<sup>3</sup>

The situation and problems of scientific and technological research in Italy were discussed in October 1987 on the occasion of the presentation of the annual report of the National Research Council. Total R&D expenditure increased by 22.3% in money terms in 1987 and by 17% in real terms, confirming the consistent increase in the re-

search effort over the past five years; however the ratio between research expenditure and GDP is still only about 1.5%, i. e. well below the levels of other advanced countries. According to a recent report on research policy ('Rapporto Dadda'), this ratio should be doubled by the mid-1990s.<sup>4</sup> The public sector, including universities, accounted for 46.4% of the total research expenditure, the remainder having been spent by the firms, including those under State control. Among ongoing projects of the National Research Council, the majority of funds have been allocated to projects falling under the broader coverage of electronics and information technologies: basic electronics technologies and materials, robotics, telecommunications, information systems and networks. The problem of human resources was discussed in the debate on the report. The Minister for Research, who will take over responsibility for university research, previously in the hands of the Education Minister, gave an assurance that increasing funds will be made available for the postgraduate training of young researchers. The scarcity and increasing average age of the research staff was in fact a matter much complained of; research expenditure 'per researcher' is rather high in Italy in comparison with other countries and higher funding was deemed to be ineffective if not accompanied by greater quantity and higher quality of human resources. The problem is particularly acute in the South. It can be mentioned that the staff employed by public research agencies obtained a substantial improvement in their salary and career prospects in the last agreement; this is expected to end the brain drain which affected these institutions in recent years.

Southern Italian regions have not only the problem of scarcity of research staff, they also obtain a very small share of research expenditure. Only 7.2% of the total R&D expenditure of private firms in 1986 was carried out in the South, as against 70.4% in the North-West of the country. The government, under a 1986 incentives law, is trying to induce investment in southern regions by private firms and public State-hold-

ings; investment should include advanced technological projects with a view to the modernization of the southern industrial sector, which is heavily based on problem sectors such as metalworking and basic chemicals. However, due to the scarcity of investment projects, budgetary allocations are not being fully used up, so that the 1988 budget cut by half the funds to be spent for the development of southern regions, in the belief that it was impossible to secure any greater degree of investment.<sup>5</sup>

What was, on the contrary, quite successful was a measure of industrial policy passed by decree and later approved by Parliament in October 1987, providing innovation incentives for small and medium-sized firms through financial aid for the purchase or leasing of industrial equipment incorporating new electronically controlled technology. The measure, which applies to the whole country and gives more favourable terms to firms in southern regions, is a new version of an older measure which has already been quite successful in the past. Even before the law was definitively approved by Parliament in October, 1 500 applications for financing had been approved, exhausting the available budget and leaving behind a queue of unsatisfied demands.

Equally successful appear to be some of the ongoing Dutch programmes to promote technological research. The PBTS programme of the Ministry of Economic Affairs (Planned technology promotion for business), which supports R&D in the fields of informatics, biotechnology, new materials

<sup>1</sup> 'McCarthy launches IRL 2.5 million science and technology programme', *S + T News*, June 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Berlingske Tidende*, 4 November 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 8 August and 16 September 1987. For the positions of the two sides of industry, see below, Ch. II.

<sup>4</sup> 'Tutti i nodi della ricerca in Italia', *Media 2000*, November 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Cafiero, S., 'Queste le tre condizioni per il decollo del Sud', *Mondo Economico*, 30 November 1987.

and medical technology, received applications for three times the amount planned in the budget, so that the government plans to increase the funds to be made available. The subprogramme of SPIN for small and medium-sized enterprises also attracted a large number of demands. SPIN is a programme of the Ministry of Economic Affairs to promote research in informatics. It finances feasibility studies, prototype development and eventually it may also finance real product development. The subprogramme for SMEs aims at helping small firms which do not normally have the financial means to invest in fundamental research. Some changes are being implemented in the institutional framework. On the one hand, the three Microelectronics centres (Eindhoven, Delft and Twente), created some years ago as one of the R&D policy measures following the publication of the Rathenau Consultative Commission report on microelectronics, are being partly privatized. The three centres are being split into a commercial and a non-profit-making part, following an evaluation study commissioned by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. On the other hand, the Minister for Economic Affairs announced, despite some criticisms in Parliament, the creation of seven regional centres for innovation, the first set of a complete network as recommended by the Dekker Commission.<sup>1</sup>

One of the major technological programmes in the *United Kingdom*, the Alvey programme on information technology, is approaching completion. Details of its progress were presented in July 1987: some 113 companies and 55 universities had participated in the programme since its launch in 1983 and some 250 projects had been funded. Independent monitoring of the first phase of projects showed that most had made good technical progress and had resulted in effective collaboration between academics and industry. Commercial exploitation plans existed for about half of the projects. As a follow-up to the Alvey programme, the Bide committee report recommended a five-year UKL 1 000 million programme with more emphasis on development than research

and with more financial participation from industry. The government decided to establish another committee, the 92 committee, consisting of technology suppliers and users, to consider the original report.

A number of institutional changes were announced in a government White Paper replying to the critical report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology. Under the proposal, the central structure for R&D contains two components. First is collective responsibility via a cabinet committee headed by the Prime Minister, which will determine national priorities. The second is the establishment of a new body to provide independent technical advice to ministers across the whole science spectrum. The new body will be known as Acost — Advisory council on science and technology — and will advise ministers on priorities in science and technology, applications, coordination and the nature and extent of UK participation in international science and technology collaborations.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, the government published a report from the Advisory Board of the Research Councils, the overseer of academic science in the UK. The report recommends that universities and polytechnics should be differentiated into three types, according to the scope of research activities and facilities; it also urges the research councils to give higher priority to programmes of research undertaken collaboratively with users, to increase the chances of exploitation and reduce the information gap between business and science.<sup>3</sup>

Earlier on, in May, the Education Secretary announced the first seven regional new technology centres which will eventually form a national network. The centres, co-financed by the Department of Education and Science and by companies, will act as transfer points of information and technology for companies interested in learning about the research being carried out in institutes of higher education in their region. They will also provide training and consultancy services.

## 2. Civil liberties

The *Greek Law* on new identity cards passed by Parliament in 1986 (No 1599/86) was first implemented in July 1987 amidst strong opposition from several parties. The law provides for new identity cards for all citizens including children, having a computerized uniform register code number (URCN). The opposition came from the Church and various religious organizations, from left-wing parties claiming that the URCN can be used to store personal information, and from a variety of other groups, local authorities etc. who reject the idea that citizens should be identified by a number. The problems are aggravated by the fact that no law on the protection of citizens from the electronic storage of personal information has yet been presented, although the government did appoint a task force to prepare a draft.

From 11 November 1987 people in the *United Kingdom* have the right to examine computer files held on them by government departments, local authorities, banks and companies under the Data Protection Act which came fully into force on that day. Individuals can pay a fee, of up to UKL 10 maximum, to see any personal information held on computers by applying to the organization concerned. There are some important exemptions to the rights of individuals to see all the data held on them, including any records held for reasons of national security, for the prevention or detection of crime or for tax collection. Far fewer organizations have registered than the estimated number of those which should be bound to do so under the terms of the Act. Organizations that fail to register are liable to be prosecuted, and in December the first case of failure to register came to the courts.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Social Europe*, No 3/1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Civil Research and Development. Government response to the first report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology, 1986-87 session*, HMSO, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *A strategy for the science base*, HMSO, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> *Financial Times*, 16 December 1987.

In the *Federal Republic of Germany*, where data protection and civil liberties are the subject of continuing debates, some recent specific issues concerned the centralized computer registration of cars and car owners and the so-called temex service. On the former the *Bundesrat* passed a bill less strict on data protection than that originally proposed;<sup>1</sup> the latter is a distant control system via telecommunications for some public utilities, such as the registration of electricity consumption in private houses. Following the warnings of several data-protection officers and politicians that this service was a threat to privacy, several *Länder* passed special regulations for the use of temex, enabling for example the consumer to disconnect the system, or introducing a red flash which informs the consumer when the system is being used.<sup>2</sup>

## II. The attitudes of the two sides of industry towards new technologies

### 1. Employers

German employers' positions on government proposals concerning the postal and telecommunications services were expressed on several occasions. The 'Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie' (BDI) called for a greater market orientation and more competition particularly for the telecommunications services.<sup>3</sup> The 'Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft', which often articulates the employers' views, stated that there is no need for the postal and telecommunications services to be provided by a public agency, as shown by the Japanese, American and British examples; it also criticized the policy of the 'Deutsche Bundespost' to use the surplus obtained in the telecommunications sector

in order to cover the deficit in conventional postal services, rather than returning it to the users through lower prices. According to the Institute, this policy hinders technological progress and modernization of the economy. Firms would develop their own data banks and software services as a consequence of the artificially high prices of such services when provided by the public sector.<sup>4</sup>

The 'Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft' also adopted a stance on the intention of some parliamentary groups to set up a new 'Commission of inquiry on technology assessment', as had existed in the previous Bundestag. It opposes this proposal by listing several obstacles, such as the unreliability of known methods for assessing technological impacts (only 30% of previous forecasts turned out to be correct); the danger that greater government intervention induced by assessment studies could change the framework in which firms can act, thereby retarding technological progress; the danger of one-sided analyses; the uselessness of public technology assessment, since this is already done by many enterprises.<sup>5</sup>

In the *Netherlands*, the management of Philips reacted to the memorandum of the FNV Industrial Union on the employment situation in the company,<sup>6</sup> arguing that, contrary to trade union expectations, employment at Philips Netherlands and Philips International will slightly increase, to just under 75 000 for the two combined (in the Netherlands). It acknowledged a shift in the employment structure leading to a reduction in the ratio between lower qualified and higher qualified jobs. According to the company's director, the impact of reorganization measures on employment has been marginal, in the order of magnitude of 0.5 to 1%; since 1983, low-qualified jobs have decreased by 2.8%, while employees with university or higher education have increased by 6.1%. The Works Council and union representatives were criticized for distorting reality by deriving biased impressions of the global employment prospects from partial events.<sup>7</sup> However, as regards European prospects for the same company,

the Director of Philips International stated some days later that the number of Philips plants in Europe is expected to be reduced by a third or more over the next 10 years. Manufacturing plants will close down, while laboratories, software houses and the like are expected to increase, producing an impact on the quality of jobs and qualifications. Quantitative effects on employment were not specified.<sup>8</sup>

In the *United Kingdom*, the Computing Services Association announced in October 1987 that it was trying to impose a transfer scheme for computer professionals on its members in an attempt to prevent the poaching of trained staff. The proposed scheme involves the poaching firm paying a certain agreed set sum of x pence in the pound of the training costs incurred up to the point where the person leaves. In December, another scheme developed by Cosit, the Computer services industry training council, and designed to ease the critical shortage of computer software specialists through a common syllabus for all trainees taken on by all participating companies, was weakened by the withdrawal of one of its leading partners, Arthur Anderson. It was thought that Arthur Anderson withdrew because it considered its own training to be superior to the extent that it gives it a competitive advantage.

The attention of the social partners in *Portugal* has focused in the most recent period on two government proposals concerning broader issues of labour market regulation and the privatization of nationalized firms. Proposed changes in labour legislation are aimed at making dismissals easier, by introducing the possibility of dismissals 'on reasonable grounds' (hitherto individual dismissals have been possible only as

<sup>1</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 6 June 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 30 May 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 5 June 1987.

<sup>4</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 8 August 1987; *Medien-spiegel*, No 23/1987.

<sup>5</sup> *IWD-Nachrichten*, 18 June 1987.

<sup>6</sup> See *Social Europe*, No 1/1988.

<sup>7</sup> *NRC*, 9 October 1987.

<sup>8</sup> *NRC*, 14 October 1987.

disciplinary measures in the case of serious faults on the part of the worker), and at making recruitment more flexible by introducing fixed-term contracts in specified cases. The employers' confederations are, in general terms, in favour of the proposals, though they would have expected government proposals to cover more issues, such as working time, absences, etc. From the union side, UGT objects to the government not having taken into account the criticisms levelled at a previous bill of law and considers that the present proposal gives employers a discretionary power to dismiss workers. CGTP objects to the number of reasons which can be presented as 'reasonable grounds' for dismissal and to the distinction between firms with more or less than 20 employees, the latter being less constrained in their dismissal procedures. On the issue of privatization, and particularly the widely discussed privatization of the press, employers in the sector state repeatedly that the presence of State-owned newspapers is harmful to the industry's interests: common criticisms focus on their large financial losses and their overmanning. Some private groups have declared their interest in buying some State-owned newspapers, on the condition, however, that the majority of capital can be kept in private hands and that whatever public participation is maintained it does not affect editorial policies. It may be recalled that there is a wide technological gap between private and State-owned newspapers, so that a sudden restructuring and technological modernization of the latter might imply significant job losses.

## 2. Trade unions

German trade unions also expressed their opinion on the previously mentioned government proposals to reorganize the postal and telecommunications services. They reject the proposed changes, arguing that the services of the Deutsche Bundespost can compete with those of any other postal organization in the world. In their opinion, only a State enterprise can invest the enormous amount of funds necessary to

completely renew technical infrastructure in the telecommunications sector. The union representative in the government commission rejected the commission's final report.<sup>1</sup>

On the broader issue of new technologies, the unions reiterated on several occasions their demands for a social design of technology. The DGB called for the following objectives: human design of work, technology in firms to be used in line with human needs, the effective prohibition of misuse of data.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion, a member of the board of directors of the DGB criticized the lack of proportion between the financial support granted by the Ministry of Research and Technology (BMFT) to technological research and the little money spent on the social consequences of new technologies. From the data he provided, technological research has been granted some DM 35 000 million since 1982, while impact research has received only 18.5 million.<sup>3</sup> More impact research was also demanded by the union representing bank employees 'Deutsche Angestellten Gewerkschaft' at its 11th convention for the banking sector. The union also stressed that in order to achieve job enrichment, shorter weekly working hours are necessary; it further demanded more co-determination on new technology and more effective control over the use of personal data.<sup>4</sup> Finally, IG-Metall proposed that public research expenditure should directly finance projects originated in small and medium-sized enterprises and based on the capabilities and qualifications of the workers, and particularly of skilled workers. The present top-down procedures, by contrast, would benefit predominantly large-scale firms.

In Spain the process of collective bargaining is blocked by the inability of the social partners to reach an agreement on the 'Acuerdo Marco' (Framework agreement), which expired at the end of 1986, which constitutes the point of reference for collective bargaining at sectoral level. The subject of disagreement is the ceiling to wage increases for 1988: the government fixed a 4% wage increase for staff in the public sector

and the same was put forward on the negotiating table between employers and unions; the workers' organizations are pressing for about 5.5%. In the absence of a process of actual negotiation, the trade unions are developing their positions and demands on the introduction of new technologies. At a meeting ('Jornadas de Accion Sindical') organized in November 1987, the socialist union UGT restated its position by claiming that any large project for introducing new technologies, or any project having significant effects on work organization, training, working conditions, qualifications and wages, must be agreed upon at sectoral level and further defined within the company concerned. The agreements should include information and consultation with the committee of workers' representatives ('Comité de Empresa'); information and training to be provided to the trade union, ranging from the economic and technical objectives of the project down to the foreseeable effects on employment, work organization, working conditions, qualifications and wages, health and safety etc.; information and consultation with the Health and Safety Committee; training to avoid workers without knowledge of the technology being replaced by other workers; periodic joint reviews and evaluation of the introduction of new technology.

The November 1987 congress of the Federation of Danish Trade Unions (LO) discussed, among its main topics, job security and the proposed changes in the union organizational structure. Job security was considered a prerequisite for the necessary development of industry in order to keep up with technological change. The main demands approved at the congress concern: better opportunities for employment and education, genuine participation in decision-making, more healthy workplaces; better employment conditions and pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 8 August 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Nachrichten zur Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik*, No 4/1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 9 May 1987.

<sup>4</sup> *Handelsblatt*, 18 May 1987.

tection against redundancies; improvements in the social security and unemployment insurance systems. As regards organizational structure the proposals, long opposed by some unions, were to start moving away from the old guild-based structure, by which up to 30 different unions may be present in one organization, and establish cartels between unions. Decisions were postponed to an extraordinary congress in 1989; meanwhile, proposals will be formulated and discussed. Another issue discussed at the congress was training: LO demands that training should have a broader scope and be less company-specific than is the case now and that employees have an influence on the training policy of their company. Better training is believed to be also in the interest of the companies, which would gain a competitive advantage when producing high-tech products.<sup>1</sup>

Several training and awareness courses continue to be organized by Danish unions. The metalworkers' union (Dansk Metal) has launched, with the financial support of the Technology Board, a technology awareness project, to be run for two years, offering shop stewards and union representatives the information and awareness that should allow them to have some influence on technology with the aim of improving working conditions and, at the same time, the competitiveness of the companies. In another project, called MUST and addressed to semi-skilled workers, employers' and employees' organizations cooperate in developing a centre for training in new technology, which will train employers in the first place, to enable them to provide better training for their semi-skilled workers.<sup>2</sup>

Mergers between unions are being discussed also in the *United Kingdom*. Ballots of the members of the white-collar unions TASS and ASTMS have both come out in favour of a merger between the two unions. The new union will be called Manufacturing, Science and Finance (MSF); it hopes to attract currently non-union employees in high-tech industries.<sup>3</sup> Another merger is proposed between the engineers' union AEU and the electricians' union EETPU; they also

wish to recruit members from high-tech industry and feel threatened by the creation of the MSF.<sup>4</sup>

Meanwhile, the Trade Union Congress is offering discounts on computer equipment to affiliated unions in an attempt to increase computerization. Examples of unions currently using computers include the EETPU computerized data base of all its members, which has also been used to provide companies with lists of unemployed members in the area when they have tried to use electricians from overseas, claiming that there were none available in the UK. The AEU (the engineers' union) runs a computerized legal system to be used, for example, to facilitate claims by its members against employers for industrial accidents. NUPE (the National Union of Public Employees) had begun to use expert systems as an aid in negotiations, by transferring into the expert system the knowledge built up by national officers who have been involved in negotiations.<sup>5</sup>

In the Netherlands, while the tri-annual FNV Congress held in December 1987 discussed the issues of labour market flexibility (the unions remaining rather reluctant on the issues of temporary and other forms of flexible employment contracts), social security, working time and the decentralization of union claims, sectoral trade unions continue to be concerned about information of new technology and the efficiency of works councils in this respect. A survey of 350 works councils in printing and publishing showed that the information given by employers on the introduction of new technology is in general incomplete and provided too late. 66% of the respondents, though having a positive attitude to technological innovation as such, said that their knowledge of actual innovation in their company was insufficient for an adequate response. None the less a majority of respondents had the impression that their influence on technological innovation had not been negligible.<sup>6</sup> Another study in the banking sector, carried out among the members of the FNV Dienstenbond (services union) at the ABN Bank, found a considerable amount of apathy in the branch offices

with respect to the possibility of influencing innovation through works councils or otherwise. ABN (17 000 employees) is about to implement an 'open space' project, equipping each teller with a terminal linked to the general network and to be used for all operations. The project is expected to eliminate what remains of paper work. 50% of the survey respondents believe that the project is mostly aimed at reducing costs; there is disagreement on who will suffer in terms of job reductions, since the new organization will imply the integration of activities now separately performed by teller and back-office staff. Overall, despite bank management's promises that there will be no redundancies, the employees expect job losses ranging between 2 500 (i.e. 14%) and 4 000 (24%).

In *Belgium*, the union of textiles workers COTB, belonging to FGTB, discussed and defined its priorities on the issue of new technologies on the occasion of its September 1987 congress. The textiles sector has deeply changed, thanks to new technology, from a labour-intensive to a highly capital-intensive sector, with negative consequences for employment but with positive effects on competitiveness and product innovation. In this framework, the strategy of the trade union has been defined in terms of maintenance of the employment targets negotiated in the last two collective agreements (of 1985 and 1987), in order to avoid collective dismissals after the expiry of the present agreement. Moreover, the union is calling for a further reduction of weekly working time, more attention to be paid to training and retraining for new technology, and a continuous updating of job descriptions and wage scales.

<sup>1</sup> *Metal*, No 20, 1987; *LO-Bladet*, 2 November and 12 November 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *LO-Bladet*, 26 November 1987; *Fagbladet*, 10 November 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Bassett, *Financial Times*, 8 December 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Bassett, *Financial Times*, 14 December 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Caroline Berman, 'Building up new muscle', *Guardian*, 25 June 1987.

<sup>6</sup> *NRC*, 30 September 1987.





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It may be mentioned in this light that an institute for research and training in the textiles/clothing industry (IREC) was set up in Belgium in September 1987, thanks to a joint initiative of employers and trade unions in the sector. This institute will launch research activities, help the diffusion of new technology in firms, and take care of training for new technology and new working methods.

### 3. Collective agreements and labour disputes

In October 1987, the *French* automobile firm Citroën signed an agreement with four trade unions on the new

job description and grading system in the automated departments. It amends and updates the previous agreement signed in 1984, which was the first attempt to rethink globally and adapt the structure of classifications to the new work organization. Six new occupations are defined in the agreement: 'opérateur' (machine operator), 'conducteur d'installation' (machine supervisor, also in charge of maintenance; this is the largest group), 'assistant de production' (production assistant, including material management), 'agent de maîtrise' (foreman, two levels), 'technicien de production' (production technician, multi-skilled and in charge of the relations with the other departments). Wage differentials

range between the lowest coefficient 165 and the highest coefficient 335 (that is approximately 1:2). Moreover, the agreement provides for extensive training courses (400 to 500 hours according to the level), with the possibility of access to a new job on completion of the course. In the short run, 2 000 people should be retrained. The structure of classifications has moved upwards at Citroën in the last few years, due also to the decrease in the number of unskilled workers and the recruitment of technicians; more recently, the firm has been hiring engineers and middle managers. However, the agreement has not been signed by all unions present in the firm: among those which did not sign, CFDT

declared that the agreement was too limited, since it did not include any provision on the introduction of new technologies.<sup>1</sup>

Still in *France*, a one-month-long strike affected the Central Bank at the end of 1987. The conflict arose on a number of issues, such as salaries, threatened staff reduction and retirements. More globally, the bank's staff was worried about the planned restructuring measures, aimed at reducing costs and raising productivity, largely through subcontracting of some specialized activities. Moreover, the changes occurring in the financial sector, such as deregulation and financial liberalization, imply adaptation of the organizational structure and the use of human resources, a matter which many employees felt was not being adequately addressed by the bank. The failure to discuss the social consequences of the computerization plans was also a complaint. After some initial friction involving the occupation of the headquarters and the intervention of the police, participation in the strike diminished; it was called off by the trade unions on 21 December; bank management agreed to implement only half of the planned 1% staff reduction and to open discussions on further reductions of employment.<sup>2</sup>

The renewal of the collective agreement for the banking sector is a subject for dispute in *Ireland*. The last pay agreements between the banks and the Irish Bank Officials Association (IBOA) expired in November 1986. The IBOA demands a higher salary increase than the banks are ready to offer; moreover, the union wants to renegotiate the technology clauses, while the banks maintain that there is no overall termination date to the 1982 agreement which included a section on technology and change. The disagreement arises from a Labour Court recommendation which forms part of the agreement: the Court recommended a five-year agreement on technology but said the agreement should be limited by reference to content rather than by reference to time. Pending the solution of the dispute, in April 1987 the IBOA imposed a ban on all technological and organizational

changes, and sales of new products. This prevents any kind of reorganization and even any new commercial policy. The banks claim that all the new technology they need has already been introduced; they are nevertheless prepared to negotiate a procedure for dealing with any dispute regarding 'major changes'. For its part, the IBOA remains unconvinced that major technical changes have already been completed and demands not only monetary rewards, but also guarantees that jobs are not at risk.

By contrast with the situation in the banks, the other main financial services union, the ASTMS, has announced two important technology agreements for its members in the Irish Permanent Building Society and the Educational Building Society. The agreements secure not only salary increases but also improve the non-pay conditions of the workers (reduction in working hours, longer leave, sabbatical and study leave). For the two societies, the agreements mean greater flexibility in the deployment of branch staff, as well as greater cooperation with the computer systems which both societies have been installing; in one case, the parties have also agreed on some redundancies, though strictly on a voluntary basis. In the context of competition between banks and building societies, it was vital for the latter to computerize their accounts and procedures and to do so through staff cooperation. ASTMS sees the introduction of new technology not so much as a threat to jobs, but as a way to improve the companies' competitiveness and profit and ultimately pay and conditions.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Federal Republic of Germany*, an agreement reached at the chemical firm Hoechst introduces the obligation for management to inform shop stewards on the introduction of new technologies or on changes of existing production technologies already at the planning stage. Besides the shop stewards, also the workers concerned have the right to be informed in due time and to receive the necessary training at the firm's expense.<sup>4</sup>

Similar regulations were agreed at Bayer AG: also in this case employees

obtained the right to information on intended technological change at an early planning stage. In addition, they are protected against wage reductions and other negative impacts.<sup>5</sup>

Likewise, on information rights, the Federal Labour Court ruled that employers have to inform shop stewards on the utilization and processing of all personal data within the enterprise. The decision was based on the Federal Law on privacy protection (*Bundesdatenschutz-Gesetz*). The obligation arises also when data are processed by external subcontractors.<sup>6</sup>

A number of agreements in high-tech firms have been negotiated in the *United Kingdom*. The National Communications Union has negotiated an agreement with a division of British Telecom, UK Comms, under which temporary and short-term workers will be granted negotiating rights and safeguards on working conditions. The deal allows for the use of temporary workers by agreement; if the union suspects that management is making inappropriate use of temporary staff, it can resist and enter formal disagreement. The deal also emphasizes that surplus staff anywhere in BT should be redeployed in preference to using short-term or fixed-term workers. In another deal, clerical workers at BT have been recommended to accept an agreement on cooperating with the company's plan to introduce a computerized customer services system. Originally there were fears of considerable job losses — BT estimated that about 900 clerical jobs might be lost. However, the union, on the basis of pilot trials, reckons that job losses will be below these estimates and that implementation of the front-office initiative to streamline the handling of customer enquiries would actually lead to about 1 200 new

<sup>1</sup> *L'usine nouvelle*, No 45, 5 November 1987, *Le Monde*, 6. 11. 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Monde*, 15 December 1987.

<sup>3</sup> 'High stakes in latest bank row', *Business and Finance*, 20 August 1987; 'Sharp contrasts in technology agreements', *The Irish Times*, 20 July 1987.

<sup>4</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 25 August 1987.

<sup>5</sup> *Wirtschaft und Produktivität*, No 9/1987.

<sup>6</sup> *Der Betrieb*, No 29/1987.

jobs. The Cooperation in Change Agreement which guarantees no compulsory redundancies has been extended for a further two years to cover the introduction of the computerized system.<sup>1</sup> A so-called strike-free plant, the Hitachi factory in South Wales, saw its first industrial action in summer 1987 when employees staged a sit-in in the canteen in protest at the protracted pay discussions which had been taking place since April. The joint management/employees Company Members' Board had recommended a pay increase of 8% on basic rates. Under the terms of no-strike deals it is normally assumed that the board members' decisions are accepted by the management, but on this occasion the management declined the recommendation. After the industrial action took place, Hitachi offered 5.5% on basic rates plus a further 1.5% for merit increases. A ballot of the workforce rejected this offer but they subsequently accepted an improved offer of 6.75%. News International, the publishing group which has been at the centre of the most controversial industrial dispute in the UK press sector, has signed an agreement with journalists and announced a further change in industrial relations for the workers at its Wapping plant. The agreement signed with *The Times* journalists incorporates binding arbitration as the final stage in settling any industrial dispute. The union has agreed not to take any industrial action and management has agreed not to take any disciplinary action while an issue is going through the disputes procedure. On the other hand, News International announced in December 1987 that it was scrapping its works council and moving to a US-style arrangement involving individual employment relationships at its Wapping plant. This followed a vote in September by staff at the plant to be represented by a union other than the EETPU. It was understood that the EETPU was the only union News International were prepared to accept at the plant. Several changes affecting production staff will take place: non-negotiated pay deals, individual contracts and wages set on an individual basis and the withdrawal of negotiation rights from the works council.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, the CPSA (Civil and Public Services Association) and the SPCS (Society of Professional Civil Servants) have been engaged on a series of disruptive actions at various locations by computer staff in the Department of Health and Social Security and the Customs and Excise as part of their campaign for better pay. The action at Reading is considered to be the most serious as it threatens the satisfactory installation of programs for the microcomputers in local offices which are needed to cope with the switch from supplementary benefit to the new income support scheme — the local office microcomputer project (LOMP).<sup>3</sup>

A number of employment losses were announced or implemented in *Belgium* in the last few months of 1987; they all concerned computer and telecommunications industry and gave rise to industrial disputes, as well as to some discussions on the little power of both public authorities and the trade unions to negotiate and control the activities of multinational firms. The harshest dispute occurred at Memorex, a subsidiary of Unisys, the second largest producer of computers in the world.

Following the merger of Burroughs and Sperry Univac and the creation of Unisys in December 1986, the firm went through a process of restructuring of its subsidiaries worldwide, which included the partial sale of the Belgian Memorex and the transfer of some of its departments to the Netherlands. In June 1987, the factory was, in fact, partly dismantled in one night; this provoked severe criticism from the trade unions which had not been informed and the government. Negotiations followed with the government and the trade unions, the firm proposing to split up the Belgian factory into smaller subsidiaries. On the employment issue, the firm intended to dismiss some two-thirds of the 300 persons employed at the beginning of 1987 (there were 430 in 1981, when Memorex was purchased by Burroughs), including shop stewards; the proposal was not accepted by the FGTB, one of the two trade unions representing the workers in the factory, and the conflict escalated with the lock-out of the would-be

sacked workers and the occupation of the factory. An agreement was eventually reached in September, according to which the number of workers remaining in employment was further reduced to 75; redundancy payments were fixed for the sacked workers.

Unisys was at the centre of another major conflict, concerning this time the closure of its main factory in Belgium, which happened to be the only producer of computers in the country. This decision provoked criticism on all sides, not only because 400 production workers out of a total employment of 520 were to lose their jobs, but also because the operations of the firm on the Belgian market were profitable and it had recently obtained large contracts from the public sector and even from some organizations of the trade union movement. The trade unions, which had not been informed of the decision to close down, tried to find feasible solutions to maintain production; in December 1987, the factory was taken over by a Belgo-American investment company, having a subcontracting arrangement with Unisys to produce electronic circuits for three years. In terms of employment, the outcome is much more favourable than that originally envisaged, since 360 workers will keep their jobs; nevertheless, the Belgian industrial sector ended up losing its entire production capacity for computers.

Job losses were announced also in other information technology firms. In telecommunications, Bell Telephone announced in September 1987 a plan to reduce its Belgian workforce by 2 120 (out of a total of 8 200) by the end of 1988. Lower labour requirements are attributed to a lower share of the firm in public procurement and to productivity gains due to the changeover to digital switching. The employment reduction was negotiated with the trade unions

<sup>1</sup> Charles Leadbeater, *Financial Times*, 31 October 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Bassett, *Financial Times*, 8 December 1987.

<sup>3</sup> John Gapper, 'Bringing a Lomp to the throat of the DHSS', *Financial Times*, 12 May 1987.

and various solutions, such as early retirement, voluntary redundancy with compensation and retraining were agreed upon for the majority of the redundant workers; no agreement has yet been found for some 400 workers, whom the firm wants to dismiss without additional costs.

Two more firms in the telecommunications sector, namely SAIT-Electronics and 'Les Câbleries de Dour', announced dismissals; in both cases employment losses are large, ranging between 10 and 15% of total employment; moreover, legal and contractual provisions for dismissals have not been implemented or the required information has not been provided. Negotiations are taking place to define accompanying measures for redundant workers.

All in all, these reorganization measures and closures are changing the shape of the Belgian electronics and telecommunications sector. Two main issues have been widely debated in the course of these events. First, it has been pointed out that all firms concerned had either received investment aid from the Belgian State or had obtained public procurement contracts by claiming, among other things, that these were necessary to maintain employment in the country. Secondly, with the single exception of Bell, the provisions of Collective Agreement No 9, concerning the information to be given to the works council on employment plans, were not implemented; where the decisions to close down were taken abroad the trade unions were not even informed.

Workers of the *Portuguese* Postal and Telecommunications Service CTT expressed their concern about government plans to split the CTT into two separate enterprises, one in charge of mail distribution, the other supplying telecommunications services. As in other countries, the postal service runs a large deficit, presently compensated for by telecommunications services. CTT workers estimate that the proposed change may put in danger about 700 jobs and cause the closure of more than half of the present number of post offices.

Equal pay for men and women is still to be achieved, even in information technology jobs. This emerged from an arbitration case raised by the *Danish* National Union of Clerical Workers (HK) against one of the largest companies in the country, Danfoss. For all employees with five-year seniority HK claims that men are paid 6.7% more than women for the same job. It was also disclosed that statistics compiled by the Danish Employers' Association (DA) show that male computer-system specialists in the Copenhagen area are paid a monthly median salary that is 11.5% higher than the median salary of their female colleagues.<sup>1</sup>

### **III. Studies and research on the social effects of new technologies**

#### **1. Diffusion of information technology**

The *Italian* association of companies in the computer and software industries, Assinform, published in June 1987 its annual 'Report on the information technologies market', which provides an estimate of the market and diffusion of information technology in the Italian economy. In value terms, the market for hardware and software (not including telecommunications and the market for the office at large) grew by 13.5% in 1986, a much lower increase than the previous year (when it was 25.3%). The software market grew at a much higher rate (26%) than the hardware market (7%), so that the share of software in the total market increased from 33.7% in 1985 to 37.5% in 1986. These data are partly explained by the phenomenon of price-cutting, which has been dominant in the market for personal computers and in other segments of the hardware market, while the Italian software market was not involved in price competition due to the

lower degree of internationalization and the lower comparability and standardization of its products. The market for software products and information technology services has now reached fourth position among European markets by amount of sales: very high growth rates were recorded particularly in professional services (35%), software products (30%) and integrated systems (29%). On the supply side, the main prospective structural change is a shift from a traditional, existing specialization by products and services to a new specialization of software houses as problem solvers in specific areas, supplying integrated solutions. Likewise on the supply side, new entrants appeared on the software market in 1986, namely large users and some hardware producers who purchased innovative software companies, banks, and joint ventures between large-scale user firms or between major software houses. The report provides data on the computerization of different sectors of the economy: the degree of computerization is strongly related to the size distribution of firms within each sector, since firms of larger size are early adopters as compared to smaller firms. The banking sector shows the highest degree of computerization with 90% EDP users; in the industrial sector the percentage of EDP users is lower (60.5%) and with wide differences between large companies (where the percentage is over 90%) and small business (where it is 29%). However, the time profile of computerization suggests a speeding up of diffusion in the industrial and commercial sectors and in small business in particular.

These findings were confirmed by a survey of *Italian* software houses presented in October 1987 at the conference of Anasin, one of the two associations of firms operating in computer services. With a turnover of LIT 4 100 000 million in 1986, the Italian software market ranks fourth in Europe. One fourth of the software market is directly controlled by hardware firms, through direct production of software and servicing of customers. The remaining segment of the

<sup>1</sup> *Det Fri Aktuelt*, 11 October 1987.

market is held by some 3 000 independent firms, with employment levels estimated at more than 40 000 units. The average size of a software house is thus about 15 people, i.e. much lower than the international standard. Only about 200 firms, according to the survey, may be considered something more than partnerships among few professionals; a concentration of supply is considered unavoidable, although computer services is still a sector with low entry barriers for small operators having skills and ideas. The main check to further expansion of small software houses resides in the availability and/or cost of credit. Most operators are only engaged in specific applications and do not undertake independent research activities.

Likewise in *Italy* a number of surveys and reports have looked at industrial automation. The abovementioned Assinform report shows that flexible automation is spreading rather rapidly: for example, the number of installed CAD/CAE (computer aided design/engineering) work stations was 525 in 1982 and went up to 3 000 units in 1986, thanks to the availability of medium- and low-cost systems based on PC which facilitated diffusion among small and medium-sized enterprises. The diffusion of computer numerically controlled machine tools is estimated to have reached 4 to 5% of the total stock of installed machine tools: there were more than 18 000 units installed in 1985. With 3 300 robots installed at the end of 1985, Italy is estimated to be in fifth place after Japan, the USA, the Federal Republic of Germany and France as a user of industrial robots. Different data are provided by different sources on the number of flexible manufacturing systems: they range from 32 to 61, which is not many, and they are in general of a low degree of complexity.

More recent data confirming the favourable trend in the machine tool industry were presented at the 7th European exhibition of machine tools, held in Milan in October 1987. Producers reported annual growth rates in sales of 30% for CAD systems, 20% for industrial robots and 15% for industrial computers applied to production control.<sup>1</sup>

The market appears, however, to be highly fragmented in its demand specifications, creating problems for producers and system integrators. Thus the most sophisticated and integrated systems — FMS — are difficult to install: the figure given (19 FMS in 1986) was much lower than that obtained from the other sources, as they not only demand the ability to supply a complete range of machinery for integrated operations, but also software and installation services, and combined mechanical and informatics skills. Only two industrial groups in Italy appear able to supply complete FMS systems. On the demand side, the great majority of customers do not have the financial and technical strength to be able to invest in highly complex computer-integrated manufacturing systems. Their demand is still addressed to simpler cells and standardized machining centres. A survey carried out by researchers of the Milan Polytechnic shows that these technologies are still out of reach for the majority of smaller firms. As an example, only 7.6% of firms having between 10 and 200 workers had introduced CAD systems at the beginning of 1987, as against 44% of the firms with more than 500 workers.<sup>2</sup>

A slowing down of the computer market in the *United Kingdom* is indicated by two reports. First, a review of IT spending suggests that UK companies are planning to cut the amount they spend on computing and computer systems for the second year running.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, the specialist computer market research consultancy, Romtec, forecasts that demand for personal computers will slow down as the market becomes more mature. Recent growth has been explosive with an average annual increase of 38% by volume and 33% by value between 1983 and 1986. Current Romtec growth estimates are for 8% by value and 17% by volume between 1986 and 1991. The average price during that period is set to fall by about 30%.<sup>4</sup>

A recent *Spanish* study surveys the problems encountered by industrial firms when they introduce new technologies.<sup>5</sup> The main problems are found to

reside in the fact that most industrial automation and office computerization systems are imported, which creates problems of adaptation; the high cost of equipment and of software; insufficient information and training for the potential users and scarcity of companies which can provide advice and consultancy; the specific and larger problems of small and medium-sized firms. Two sectors are more specifically looked at. In the motor industry the high degree of incorporation of new technologies is explained by the fact that the companies belong to multinational groups and technological modernization is a key element in competition strategies. Employment has decreased more in the companies which have been slower in introducing new technologies; in the most advanced companies, there has been a shift in employment from direct labour in manufacturing to indirect labour and maintenance workers. The second case examined is a research centre linked to the cooperatives of Mondragon in the Basque Country: the centre acquires and disseminates technologies to the companies in the region, enabling them to overcome many of the problems of information, training, consulting and adaptation; the success of the experience is due to the high degree of integration between research, training and industrial activity.

Another *Spanish* study on technological diffusion focused on the use of computers in Catalonia; it was carried out by the autonomous government of the region. The survey found a high degree of diffusion (66% of the surveyed

<sup>1</sup> Supplement 'EMO' to *Il Sole*—24 ore, 14 October 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Mariotti, S., 'Sistemi flessibili per crescere', in Supplemento 'EMO' to *Il Sole*—24 ore, 14 October 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Grindley, K., *IT Review 1987*, Price Waterhouse.

<sup>4</sup> *UK business microcomputers*, Romtec, reported in the *Financial Times*, 22 September 1987.

<sup>5</sup> Castano, C., 'Nuevas tecnologías y sectores industriales: problemas y experiencias', in Consejo de Relaciones Laborales de la Comunidad de Madrid, *Nuevas Tecnologías en la Industria Madrileña*, Madrid, Consejería de Trabajo, Comercio e Industria, 1987.



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companies had a computer), a good degree of acceptance (93% of the staff in the companies was favourable and 84% of managers believed that computers had improved work organization), and that computers were most frequently used for standard activities, such as ac-

counting, stock control and administration.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Federal Republic of Germany*, a study on the spread of EDP in industry carried out by the 'Rationalisierungskuratorium' confirmed that, while diffusion continues to increase (e.g. according to

company plans, only 7% of the firms in the capital goods industry will not be using EDP at the beginning of the 1990s), computers are still predominantly used for administrative functions and only half of the firms reported positive experiences in improving working conditions.<sup>2</sup>

The latest survey of computers installed in *Greece*, published by the daily financial newspaper *Express* and covering the period from 1970 onwards, shows that IBM holds 48.9% of the Greek market for central processing units, the remainder being held by some 11 companies, each one having a small share (for most, less than 5%).

However, foreign trade data referring to imports of computer equipment show that, while the value of these imports increased by 273% between 1982 and 1986, the geographical distribution of imports changed quite substantially, with EEC countries gaining a growing share (from 65.8% in 1982 to 75% in 1986) at the expense of imports from the USA (which declined from 28.9% in 1982 to 13.6% in 1986).

In *Ireland*, a study by An Coras Trachtala (CTT) argues that many of the software companies established in the past few years will never be able to develop sales abroad and the number of firms still in the business is steadily contracting. CTT bases its analysis on an industry survey carried out in the latter part of 1986. The survey found around 140 indigenous companies specializing in software production and employing an average of nine people each. Adding management consultancies which run software divisions and captive software subsidiaries of overseas firms, it concludes that just under 2 000 people work in the industry. No indigenous micro-software company seems to have been able to develop a viable business solely on software products for the domestic market; as a result, they have been forced to engage in hardware sales domestically, or to seek overseas sales in a bid for business survival. However,

<sup>1</sup> *Cinco Dias*, 3 November 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Wirtschaft und Produktivität*, No 10/1987.

according to the study, their range and scale of activity, together with their limited management and financial resources, do not position them well for entering the export market. The results of the survey suggest that previous estimates of the Irish software industry may have been overoptimistic. But there is general agreement among the State agencies that the number of companies which are actively trading has been declining in recent times: it is likely that more than 100 small start-ups have been launched and abandoned since the early 1980s.<sup>1</sup>

A study of the development potential of the industrial sector in Wallonia has been published by the *Belgian* Institute of Economic Research (IRES) of Louvain University.<sup>2</sup> Among the criteria taken into consideration are growth prospects and technological innovation. The study comes to the conclusion that low-growth-potential industries, such as steel and construction, are still dominant in the regional economy. Small-scale innovative firms in high-growth sectors do exist, but their weight in terms of regional growth rate and employment is limited; moreover, they are not orientated towards the export market.

On the issue of the broader social impact and attitudes towards new technologies, the results of the main studies and research carried out in *Spain* have been summarized in two articles.<sup>3</sup> From these studies it appears that people have, on the one side, an overoptimistic view which overestimates the effects of new technologies and associates them with progress, modernness and welfare and yet, on the other side, they accuse technology of being the direct cause of unemployment. The latter opinion was shared by 63% of the people interviewed in the surveys.

More optimistic attitudes emerged from opinion polls in the *Federal Republic of Germany*. A survey carried out by the 'Institut der Deutschen Wirtschaft' among young people found that most young people do not have prejudices against new technology, although girls are still more sceptical than boys, and that more than half of the persons inter-

viewed had already worked with computers.<sup>4</sup> Another poll carried out by the EMNID-Institut in Bielefeld showed that 84% of the population believes that computer knowledge improves the chances of finding a job and only 10% fear losing their job because of information technology. However, only 8% believe that computers make work easier.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Employment

The third 'Meta-Study', published by the *German* Federal Ministry of Research and Technology (BMFT) in summer 1987,<sup>6</sup> provides a number of insights into the relationship between the spread of technology and employment trends in the services sector. The study disproves the hypothesis that productivity increases in the services sector could interrupt the employment compensation role (i.e. compensating for employment losses in agriculture and industry) that the tertiary sector has played so far. Employment in services increased by about 1.5 million from 1975 to 1986, raising the share of the sector in total employment from 48 to 54%. Among the different branches, those with the highest rates of increase in office machines and computers in the period 1980-84 are insurance (+165%), investment banks (+118%), education and science (+114%) and health services (+109%). These are also the branches with the highest increases in employment: 2 000 additional jobs in insurance, 42 000 in banks, 19 000 in education and science, 65 000 in health services. The report concludes that branches with high investment in new office technologies had the highest growth in employment within the sector (+8.6%); branches with average investment increased employment by 5.9%, while branches with lower-than-average investment reduced employment by 1.4%. The most dramatic trend was recorded in retail trade, which shed 170 000 jobs between 1980 and 1986.<sup>7</sup>

The impact of office automation in the service sector has been studied also in the *Netherlands* in a pilot project

applying to the Dutch situation a methodology developed at the Georgia Institute of Technology, USA. The study examines the functional impact of office automation on three occupational groups (namely middle managers, professionals/staff and secretaries), using three parameters (time-saving, workload and adoption of the technology) and putting forward maximum, minimum and most likely projections to the years 1990 and 2000. The study concludes that automation is always related to a decrease in employment under the conditions assumed in the analysis. According to the most likely forecasts and compared with 1987, total employment in the sector will decrease by 2 to 9% in 1990 and by 3 to almost 13% in the year 2000. The greatest employment losses will affect secretaries and the smallest middle managers. 'Minimum' and 'maximum' forecasts give somewhat different figures, but in all cases a reduction in employment, particularly for secretaries (11% under both assumptions).<sup>8</sup>

In *Ireland*, a survey carried out by the National Board for Science and Technology (NBST) has indicated that the rate of departure of the best technical computer people is higher than expected. It is nearly double the rate for third-level students in general. The survey, based on interviews in computer departments of universities and technical colleges, focused on the destination of the best graduates of the departments in the last few years. Among un-

<sup>1</sup> Techtalk, 'Software firms fail — CTT', *Business and Finance*, 4 June 1987.

<sup>2</sup> IRES, *Wallonie-Europe: horizon 1992*, Bruxelles, Editions De Boeck, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Roiz, M., 'Nuevas tecnologías y transformación de la estructura social española'; and Lorente, S., 'Las nuevas tecnologías vistas desde la sociedad', *Documentación Social*, No 65, October-November 1986.

<sup>4</sup> Rüdiger Falk, Reinhold Weiss (eds.), *Mikro-Computer, Herausforderung für das Bildungswesen*, Köln, Deutscher Instituts-Verlag, 1987.

<sup>5</sup> *Datenschutz und Datensicherung*, No 6/1987.

<sup>6</sup> See *Social Europe*, No 1/1988.

<sup>7</sup> *Wirtschaft und Produktivität*, No 7/1987; *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 May 1987; *Handelsblatt*, 18 May 1987; *BMFT-Journal*, June 1987.

<sup>8</sup> Zanders, H. and Willems, A., *Office Automation in the Services Sector*, CPI/KUB Tilburg, 1987.

dergraduates, 46% of the best tended to leave, while the percentage was lower for postgraduates (28%); those graduating from the universities turned out to leave more than those from technical colleges. Countries of destination are Britain, the USA and continental Europe. The report notes the high financial cost of this brain drain; it argues that State support is geared to industry and provides minimal resources for technology transfer, actually excluding commercial enterprises in the academic sector as a way to pass the benefits of new technologies onto Irish industry.<sup>1</sup>

A prospective shortage of electronics and telematics professionals emerged as the conclusion of a symposium of the *Dutch* Royal Institute of Engineers. The shortage would be the result of the gulf between the theoretical character of higher education and the practical nature of telecommunications jobs. Electronics and telecommunications are not very popular among students. Those who successfully complete these courses easily find their way to industry and software houses, while the — in terms of salary — less competitive higher education sector experiences a shortfall which in turn has a negative impact on the level of qualifications provided.

Similar shortages are reported from the *UK*. A report by the Engineering Industry Training Board suggests that electronics companies are now facing severe recruitment problems whilst more than a quarter of all engineering companies now expect skill shortages to limit output in the short term. The report also suggests that demand for engineers is increasing sharply. The most severe recruitment problems are being experienced by manufacturers of electronic industrial goods and telecommunications equipment.<sup>2</sup> In software, a survey conducted by the National Computing Centre among its 2 000 corporate members found an estimated shortage in applications software development staff engaged in R&D and an increasing shortage of systems programmers and network staff. Nevertheless, many companies forecast that there would be a strong growth in the number of most in-

formation technology related staff over the next five years. Some of the blame can be attributed to a shortfall in training — only a third of the companies recruited trainees last year.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Women's employment and work

The impact of new technologies on women's employment, training and working conditions has been analysed by two *Spanish* studies.<sup>4</sup> The main conclusion of the studies is that the effects of technological change on women's work are basically determined by socio-cultural factors having deep historical roots. New technologies open up new opportunities for women to enter the labour market, but how far these opportunities are taken up depends to a great extent on socio-cultural patterns, which cannot be changed by the technologies themselves. Looking back at the historical factors, the rate of activity of women is rather low in Spain (28%), although it increased in the last few years, and is very low for married women, women with children and poorly qualified women. The unemployment rate is higher for women (about 25%) than for men (about 20%) and most working women are employed in services, while in industry they can be found almost only in the traditional sectors (textiles, clothing, leather and shoes). A greater proportion of women than of men work in peripheral, non-permanent jobs and in unskilled posts. In this framework, the introduction of information technology does not have an unequivocal effect on women's work. On the one hand, some of the traditional barriers against women performing certain jobs have been removed, because computerization and automation have changed the nature of many jobs. But on the other hand, technology has revealed the vulnerable position of female workers: whenever technological change has meant the disappearance of jobs, women have been affected to a greater extent than men, because they used to perform the most unskilled jobs and because they have fewer opportunities to qualify for more specialized work. Examples are pro-

vided by the analysis of specific sectors: thus, in banking a polarization of jobs is taking place, having at the one extreme qualified and demanding commercial tasks, to which women usually cannot accede, and at the other extreme routine and largely unskilled jobs related to data entry where women's employment is high and increasing. However, the latter tasks are also increasingly subcontracted to external teams, which means that on balance there has been a slight increase in women's employment as bank staff, and even this increase mostly concerned unskilled jobs. In the automobile sector, women are more frequently to be found in newly created companies or in the most technologically advanced companies, and even there they are not numerous (6% of full-time employment) and are mostly in administrative jobs. On the shop-floor there are deeply rooted prejudices on the supposed unreliability of women; moreover, few women have a mechanical or technical training which would enable them to take up the new openings in production. Finally, in a typically 'female' sector, i.e. textiles and clothing, automation implied a drop in employment which has mainly affected unskilled jobs. Some activities have become more skilled, opening better job opportunities for women; however, these opportunities have not always materialized, because of different working conditions in automated departments (e.g. shiftwork) and because women cannot offer the technical skills required for these new jobs. Moreover, the stages of production where the workforce is almost totally female are those where little investment has been made,

<sup>1</sup> 'Computer specialist "brain drain" higher than expected', *The Irish Times*, 9 June 1987.

<sup>2</sup> EITB, *Economic Monitor*, No 26, November 1987.

<sup>3</sup> Jimmy Burns, *Financial Times*, 11 October 1987.

<sup>4</sup> Escario, P. and Alberdi, I., *El Impacto de las Nuevas Tecnologías en la Formación de las Mujeres*, Madrid, Instituto de la Mujer — Ministerio de Cultura, 1987; Casas, J. I. and Salle, M. A., *Efectos de la crisis económica sobre el trabajo de las mujeres*, Madrid, Instituto de la Mujer — Ministerio de Cultura, 1987.



because there was less pressure to substitute automated machinery for relatively cheap labour.

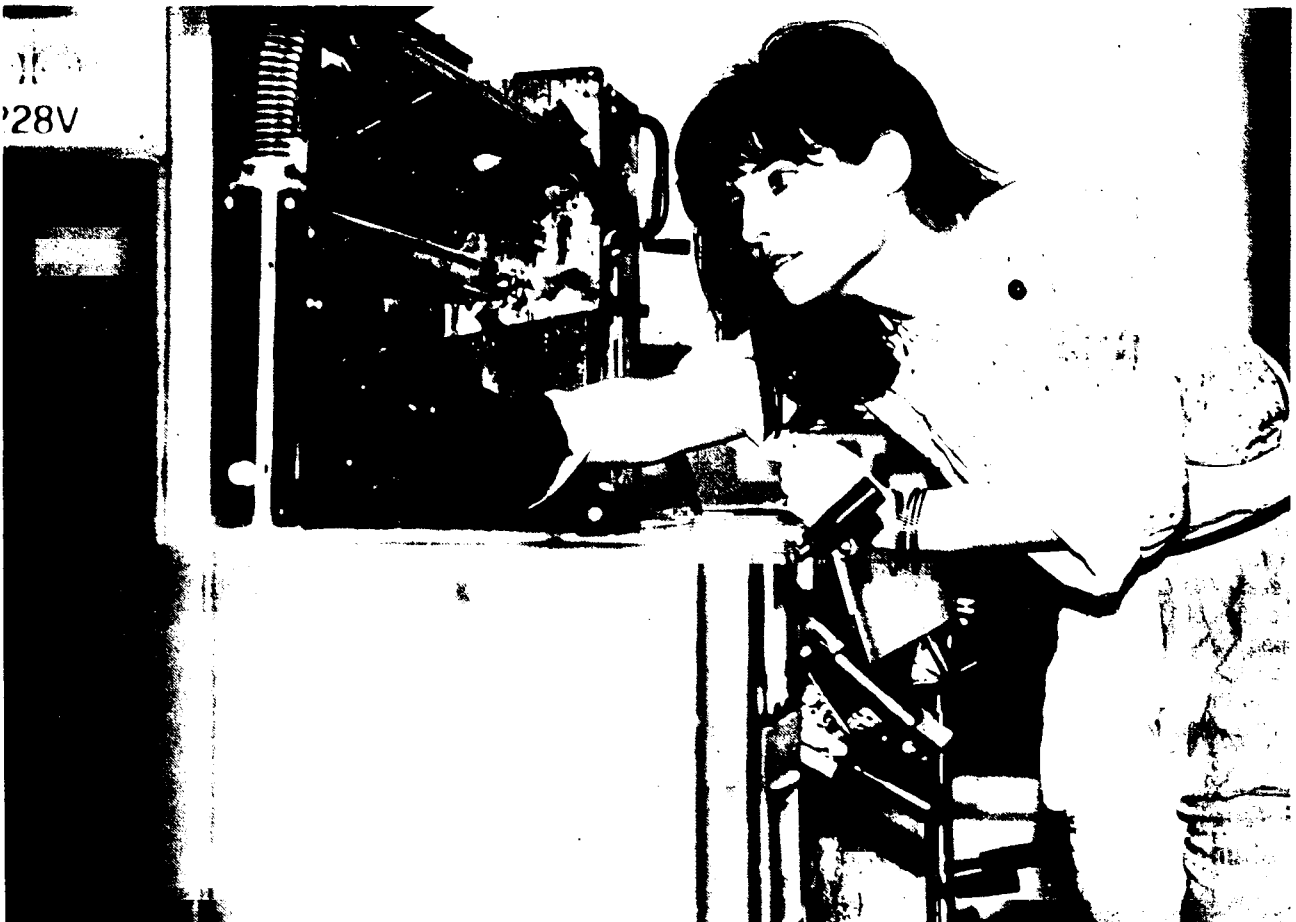
On the issue of training, the studies identify a number of socio-cultural factors hindering the access of women to a technical education and to technologically-oriented attitudes. Starting from childhood, the diffusion of home computers is connected to male stereotypes (e.g. the computer games by means of which many children become familiar with computers); from primary schools onwards teaching methods often widen the gap between boys and girls and computer science teachers are predominantly male; in higher education the

percentage of girls in technical and engineering departments is still very low; and finally, on the job, training sessions and retraining courses are often organized in such a way that women with family responsibilities find it very difficult to take advantage of them. Finally, on the issue of working conditions, notwithstanding the improvements that information technology has implied in many areas, there are also a number of specific problems induced by working with computerized equipment. Some of these problems seem to affect women more than men: the best known example being miscarriages which, if not directly related to working with screens are statistically more frequent in

women working in data processing. Stress and higher work-paces are among the factors of deterioration in working conditions, which affect more frequently women in unskilled jobs.

The problem of finding an appropriate approach to make girls and women more interested in computer technology is felt also in the *Federal Republic of Germany*. The Federal Ministry for Research and Technology started a DM 600 000 pilot project aimed at testing the advantages and disadvantages for women of different teaching methods.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, following the rejection

<sup>1</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 16 April 1987.





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by the University of Marburg of a woman student's application to be examined on 'Women and EDP' on the ground that there is no literature on this subject, the weekly *Die Computerzeitung* published the titles of 11 books in German dealing specifically with the relationship of women to computers. This appears to prove the increasing public awareness on the subject matter.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Qualifications and training

The October 1987 issue of the *Belgian Journal de réflexion sur l'informatique* focuses on training for information

technology jobs. It covers a broad range of training activities, public and private, in school and on the job. The main problem which emerges is the link between training and employment. If training appears to be a good individual strategy to obtain a job, the same does not hold true at macroeconomic level. A generalized training policy for information technology jobs cannot, according to the authors, be expected to have any significant impact on total recruitment in the short or medium term.<sup>2</sup>

In *France*, a comprehensive report on the effectiveness of employment and training measures for young people has been presented by Mr J. Bichot to the

Economic Council. It covers all measures aimed at youth employment, training and guidance taken by the French authorities since 1975. The main criticisms focus on the frequent changes and provisional character of such measures, which made them hard to utilize by employers and by the young people themselves. Moreover, given the wide differences in problems and situations of the young people concerned, those who have taken advantage of them are not the least-favoured groups: for exam-

<sup>1</sup> *Die Computerzeitung*, 30 September 1987.

<sup>2</sup> 'La formation à l'informatique en question', *Journal de réflexion sur l'informatique*, Presses Univ. Namur, No 7, October 1987.

ple, the share of young women decreased from 42% in 1977 to 35.8% in 1984 and that of unskilled young people from 53.7 to 25.6%. Youth unemployment decreased for the first time in 1985; however, according to the report, the effectiveness of the measures should be tested by the greater 'employability' in the medium and long term of the people concerned. In this respect, some positive trends are identified, such as the improvement in the quality of school education, particularly in technical subjects; the revival of apprenticeships; better and more individualized guidance; the spread of mixed work and training schemes. Finally, the report warns against the risk that the low cost to employers of some youth employment measures may favour the displacement of ordinary and standard employment relations.<sup>1</sup>

The argument that training may well contribute to a greater polarization of the labour market was put forward also in a study carried out by the *German* Infracrest-Institut. According to the report, advanced training courses are increasingly being taken up by workers who are already well-trained and enjoy a high status on the labour market. On the other hand, the participation of low-skilled, low-status workers in training activities is declining.<sup>2</sup>

In *Italy*, a rather comprehensive survey of the training activities of the regions was carried out by Isfol, the public research agency on training. Vocational training in Italy is decentralized at regional level. Special attention was devoted to courses in new information technologies. Three types of courses have been examined: courses in electronics and industrial applications of information technologies have become a permanent part of the training activities in many regions, but their content and the qualifications provided differ from region to region and in general are not designed following an analysis of demand on the labour market; courses oriented towards data processing and management applications mainly provide the qualification of 'programmer' and only some regions have made an effort to design more specialized skills; courses

aimed at integrating existing skills and qualifications in office work are very short, oriented to very specific applications and with a rather low qualification content.

Isfol has also drawn up a catalogue of occupations having a good market potential. For each occupation they provide the profile of a suggested training curriculum. It is significant to observe that only 15 out of these 115 promising occupations belong to the industrial sector; most of them are in fact in services. A pamphlet containing this information will be circulated to high-school students.<sup>3</sup>

Likewise the *Italian* employers' association, Confindustria, published a revised edition of a research on skill requirements in industrial firms, first carried out in 1986. Compared to the results of the previous year, the industrial labour market shows some improvements in 1987, with a deceleration in the downward trend of employment. Labour shortages are reported by employers in the following fields: marketing consultants, quality control experts, research and planning staff. The firms do not complain about a particular shortage of EDP experts.

## 5. Work organization and industrial relations

The report commissioned by the *French* Prime Minister to Mr A. Riboud, general manager of the agrofood group BSN,<sup>4</sup> was made public in November 1987. It is a comprehensive analysis of technological change, modernization and their impact on industrial and social organization. The approach of the report is based on three main ideas: that new technologies are the only chance for employment; that social and work organization must be adapted to technological change; that the gains derived from productivity growth must be shared at all levels in the firm. The definition of new technology adopted in the study includes all technical processes having the effect of raising productivity; the specificity of technological change in the past 10 years has been to deeply

change human work, which becomes on the one hand less important in comparison with technology, but on the other hand more intelligent and creative. Among the often discussed reasons for the insufficient competitiveness of the French economy, the report focuses on the inability of firms to adapt their management systems: particularly in the period of high growth, investment was made without taking into account the optimum utilization of existing potential. Six recommendations to the firms are put forward by the report. First, to define their strategy before any technical modernization project is chosen; this includes not only the analysis of the economic environment, but also the design of an appropriate work organization and the development of human skills necessary to cope with any innovation. Secondly, to evaluate productive investment in terms of an indicator of global productivity, which includes human factors as well as machinery; this implies that information, training and work organization must be part of the technical implementation. Thirdly, to design an appropriate work organization enabling all employees to participate in the change and to have the prospect of more qualified jobs; continuous training is an important element of the new organization. Fourthly, to provide information and negotiate with the employees on how new technology should be introduced and its consequences. Fifthly, to cooperate actively with public authorities with a view to developing and adapting basic training and education. Finally, to establish greater solidarity between firms, particularly with a view to helping medium-sized enterprises to cope with change.

In the *Federal Republic of Germany*, the director of the Institute for Labour Policy of the Science Centre in Berlin examined in an article the interconnec-

<sup>1</sup> 'Les mesures en faveur de l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes: esquisse de bilan et de réflexions', *Problèmes économiques*, No 2047, November 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 21 July 1987.

<sup>3</sup> The document was presented at a conference held in Rome on 16 October 1987.

<sup>4</sup> See *Social Europe*, No 3/1987.

tions between technology and social organization, drawing examples from the automobile industry. Three management models are identified, namely the German and Anglo-American model, the Japanese model and a mixed model. The article argues that the separate handling of new technology and social organization leads to a structural conservatism with suboptimal results as regards the labour-output ratio. By contrast, the Japanese management model attaches considerable importance to the social conditions in production and addresses both factors simultaneously. As a result, the Japanese worker has a broader view of the process and feels responsible for the whole output of his work, including quality; while the German worker has a more limited view and feels that responsibility for quality control should be left to the organization. The author believes that a more integrated planning of technology and organization, which he deems desirable, would have a much stronger impact on qualification profiles than the conservative German management structure.<sup>1</sup>

A study of the impact on telephone workers of digital switching has been published in *Belgium* by the 'Groupe de recherche et d'étude pour une stratégie économique alternative' (Gresea — Research and study group for an alternative economic strategy).<sup>2</sup> The study focuses on maintenance workers and concludes that, since software becomes increasingly important in relation to hardware, the need for conventional maintenance skills decreases. Moreover, maintenance activities are increasingly taken over by equipment manufac-

turers, so that the public telecommunications service loses control of the entire process. For the workers concerned, the consequences are a greater separation between design and execution and a greater breaking down of tasks.

A survey on labour performance and productivity in the North-West of *England* has found that half the electronics and health care plants are now non-union. The survey covered 150 companies — half UK-owned, half foreign-owned — which employed some 60 000 people in the region. Industrial relations were generally good since 82% of the plants had experienced no stoppages over the last five years due to disputes. Most foreign companies found labour performance compared favourably with their other overseas plants. The quality of manual labour was rated particularly high in the electronics sector. The results of the survey, carried out by Inward, the agency for investment in the North-West, are being used to promote further investment, particularly by US-owned companies.<sup>3</sup>

## 6. Working conditions, health and safety

As the debate on health hazards linked to work with video display units (VDUs) continues to be very lively in Scandinavian countries, Ericsson Information Systems from Sweden, followed by other Scandinavian companies, has put low-radiation VDUs on the market. They are selling well, even if not all companies believe it worthwhile investing in low-radiation VDUs. IBM Denmark, in

particular, claims that it is a waste of money, although it did eventually develop low-radiation VDUs for the Danish and Swedish markets. These are 5 to 10% more expensive than their conventional counterparts. The Danish National Union of Clerical Workers (HK) has threatened to blacklist IBM and Sperry as suppliers of computer equipment to government institutions because of their attitude on this matter.

Still on the issue of VDUs, the preliminary results of the survey carried out by HK among its female members on VDUs and miscarriages<sup>4</sup> suggest that there is no additional risk of miscarriage or of giving birth to handicapped children linked to working with screens.<sup>5</sup>

Some evidence pointing to the opposite conclusion was collected by a research group in Bremen, *Federal Republic of Germany*, after a radiation check of monitors for home computers and PCs. None of the 16 types examined was radiation-free. The researchers warned about possible long-term risks for pregnant women, the respiratory system, heart and eyesight.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Naschold, F., 'Technik und soziale Organisation', *WZB-Mitteilungen*, June 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Sokal, F., *Autres centraux, autre régies? Le service public face à l'évolution technologique*, Gresea, Série télé-textes No 9, September 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Labour performance and productivity in North-West England*, Inward, 1987.

<sup>4</sup> See *Social Europe*, No 1/1988.

<sup>5</sup> *Erhversbladet*, 15 June and 13 August 1987; *Berlingske Tidende*, 31 August and 19 November 1987; *Det Fri Aktuelt*, 16 November 1987.

<sup>6</sup> *Hessische Allgemeine*, 6 May 1987.

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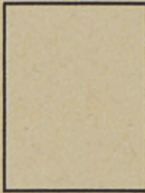
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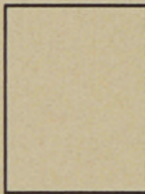
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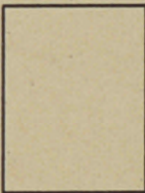
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