

# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(83) 781 final

Brussels, 5 January 1984

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
NEW COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMME ON THE PROMOTION OF  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

---

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(83) 781 final

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
NEW COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMME ON THE  
PROMOTION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

---

Introduction

1. On 9 December 1981, the Commission submitted to the Council a communication on a New Community Action Programme on the promotion of equal opportunities for women 1982-1985.

On 12 July 1982, the Council adopted a Resolution on the communication. In the Resolution, it requested the Commission to submit an interim progress report on the implementation of the new programme, together with appropriate proposals if necessary, by 1 January 1984.

2. In order to draw up the progress report, the Commission requested the Member States to provide information. In view of the replies received, which varied considerably, particularly as regards the volume of information and the implementation of specific actions laid down in the Programme, the Commission decided to focus principally on its own activities, leaving the actions taken by Member States to be included in the full report it is to make in 1985 on the basis of Member States' contributions. This is why the first part of this report will be limited to a brief run-down on certain specific aspects of actions undertaken by Member States.
3. The Commission considered that as this is an interim report, it should take the form of a summary, even with regard to own activities, which will be described in greater detail in the 1985 report.

## I. Review of several developments in the Member States

A review of the measures adopted by the Member States which sent data shows that, in general, very few legislative provisions have really helped to implement the new Action Programme. These will be mentioned briefly, without discussion of the various draft texts and measures cited by the governments.

On the other hand, a growing number of positive action measures are to be found of varying impact, in the fields of desegregation in employment, education and vocational training, evolution in attitudes, sharing of family work and social responsibilities.

\* \* \*

### A. Equal treatment legislation

In view of the limited replies already received, it was considered preferable to examine the measures as a whole rather than individually, with the emphasis on a few major legislative changes, at least as regards the first part of the new Action Programme on the strengthening of individual rights.

- In France : the Law of 13 July 1983 amending the Labour Code and the Penal Code as regards occupational equality between women and men aims at achieving occupational equality between men and women by prohibiting all discrimination in access to employment, remuneration, training, posting, qualification, classification, and occupational promotion (Art. L 123.1. a, b and c).

In addition to the specific improvements to previous regulations on equal treatment for men and women, this law groups together a number of scattered texts into a single, cohesive whole (1).

As well as requiring compliance with the principle of equal treatment, the law makes extensive provision for the achievement of equal opportunities, notably by permitting the introduction of temporary measures to remedy de facto inequalities affecting equality of opportunity for women. (Art. L 123.3). These measures take the form either of regulations; or of agreements established in accordance with the laws in force (Art. L 900.4); it therefore provides a means of controlling legality.

(1) Detailed analysis of this provision will be necessary to enable a decision to be made on whether it correctly implements Directive 76/207/EEC.

For the same reasons, employers are now required to submit an annual written report to the Works Council on the conditions of employment of women and men (measures taken, objectives, future action evaluation). A plan for occupational equality can be proposed by employees in respect of recruitment plans, training, job promotion, qualification, classification, working conditions, etc. The plan is checked by the departmental director for employment.

\* \* \*

2. Bodies dealing with equal treatment and opportunities (Action A 2)

In the Netherlands, the Emancipatieraad became, in May 1981, the Government's external advisory body on policy. The Government is now required to seek the Council's opinion in good time on all matters concerning equal treatment.

In Italy, a ministerial decree of 8 October 1982 set up, under the aegis of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, a national Committee on the application of the principle of equal treatment. Its task is to formulate proposals, suggest measures, actions and means of abolishing discrimination and obstacles to the achievement of equality and to express opinions on legal proceedings instituted by women in this field. The Committee has not yet taken up its duties.

In France, the Law of 13 July 1983 provides for the creation of a Council on Occupational Equality between men and women under the aegis of the Ministers responsible for women's rights, labour, employment and vocational training. It will have the task of "participating in the definition, implementation and application of the policy on occupational equality between men and women". (Art. L 330.2). The Council of State has yet to adopt a decree on the conditions for the application of the Law.

A department for occupational equality - an administrative department - will be set up to help apply the law and encourage the development of plans for equality.

It should be noted that in Ireland, the annual grant which the Agency for Equality in Employment receives from the Government has been nearly quadrupled in 1983 to encourage the Agency to carry out its tasks more effectively. An inter-departmental working party on women's affairs and family law reform was also set up in 1983 to assist the Minister of State for Women's Affairs to identify ways of eliminating existing discrimination and promote positive measures.

In Greece, a new Council on Equality between the sexes was set up by Law No 1288/82. It gives opinions and submits proposals to the Prime Minister; it is an independent department under the aegis of the Ministry attached to the Prime Minister.

To date, the Federal Republic of Germany is the only country that does not have a Committee to promote equal opportunities.

3. Very few amendments have been made to legislation on the protection of women's employment since the adoption of Directive 76/207. However, in a number of countries, the competent bodies have examined the possibility of revising some of these laws in cases where the original reasons for their existence are no longer relevant.

Thus on 26 February 1982, the Irish Government gave notice that it would no longer apply ILO Convention No 89 as from 26 February 1983.

A draft law was tabled in the Netherlands with a view to amending the 1919 labour law by abrogating the prohibition on night work for women. In April 1983, a written statement was sent in reply to the second chamber.

\* \* \*

4. Several improvements to systems of pregnancy and maternity protection have been notified, notably in Ireland, Denmark and Belgium.

Ireland adopted a new provision for the protection of maternity in 1981 (Maternity Protection of Employees Act, 1981).

In Denmark, a committee has been set up to amend provisions on the length of maternity leave whose work has resulted in an extension as from 1 January 1981 of the period during which pregnancy, maternity and adoption allowances are granted.

Belgium has granted women receiving unemployment benefit the same rights as employed women as regards the possibility of taking either all or part of their ante-natal leave after post-natal leave (Royal Decree No 22 of 23 March 1982). Several bills aimed at giving added protection were also presented recently.

\* \* \*

5. In Social Security matters

The Federal Republic of Germany pointed out that by the Law (20-12/82) designed to boost the economy and employment and to reduce the federal budget, men and women's rates of contribution to the state pension scheme were harmonised into one rate from 1 January 1983.

For the survivor's pension (area not covered by the Directive 79/7) a change towards equality is being prepared, following a ruling of the federal Constitutional Court.

6. To ensure that female workers, unions, employers and all persons affected by the application of equal treatment provisions are well informed, some governments have published and distributed brochures, codes of practice, explaining what forms of legal redress were available in case of infringement, for example, in the Federal Republic of Germany (information bulletin "Treffpunkt") in Ireland (Explanatory booklet for Employers and Employees") in Belgium ("Equal treatment for men and women, a law that concerns you !" and "How to draw up an offer of employment").

#### B. Positive action

All governments claim that they are encouraging, stimulating and promoting positive measures or actions. The French law of 13 July 1983 makes express provision for plans for occupational equality to be made by employers (see above point A 1).

The type of action varies considerably, ranging from preliminary studies (1) and information to specific and sometimes binding measures.

In order to simplify matters, they are described below (2) according to the fields given priority by the Member States :

- vocational guidance and training
- employment, promotion
- the public sector
- women immigrants
- sharing of responsibilities
- changes in attitudes

#### 1. Vocational guidance and training

The States have shown imagination and willingness in this area : it is generally agreed that the most effective way of effecting changes is to respect the principle of progress and the need for intervention before women enter working life.

- a) In order to encourage girls to follow technical studies, the Ministries of Labour, Employment and Education in the majority of Member States have produced brochures, pamphlets and posters, organized seminars, plays and television broadcasts (particularly in the Federal Republic of Germany by the German Federal Labour Office which elaborates new teaching methods), (girls in Science and Technology in the United Kingdom).
- b) Primary school text books in Ireland are examined by inspectors from the Ministry of Education who point out any sexist texts or illustrations and give advice on "neutrality" to the publishers.  
The inspectors also ensure that girls and boys take part in every subject on the curriculum, including physical education.
- c) The French authorities have introduced a two year plan which, for 1984, sets at 25 % the proportion of women among trainees entering courses organised by the National Training Service (3).

- 
- (1) In order to concentrate on a limited number of concrete examples, the present report will not cover studies in progress on these subjects.
  - (2) The summary of the measures ratified by the governments is not of course an exhaustive list of all the measures introduced in all the countries.
  - (3) At present, the percentage of women trainees is 18 %.

- d) A number of training and apprenticeship programmes have been set up in all the countries with the aim of increasing the range of occupations available to women. They have been aimed at :
- trades where women are under-represented, e.g. engineering (UK), craft trades, metallurgy (D), electricity (B, D), banking, management (GB) etc.
  - sectors where their situation needs improving : agriculture (Ireland);
  - worksharing systems involving part-time work, return-to-work programmes for women in Ireland; part-time training in the Netherlands;
  - more flexible types of work units : Irish project on cooperatives;
  - specific measures for certain categories with special needs :
    - o occupational preparation courses for unemployed persons with few skills (Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium);
    - o specialised modules for unemployed women in Denmark : "access to non-traditional posts for women" and "position of women in society";
    - o courses for women having interrupted their career for several years (e.g. Netherlands, and the Westminster Bank in the U.K.).

## 2. Employment and promotion

The dividing line between the preceding section and this one is not very distinct. However, the following measures certainly contribute to the desegregation of the labour market.

- in Denmark, counsellors were appointed in 1981 in each regional placement office. Their task is to ensure that the placement offices comply with the principle of equal treatment, and to work out placing and guidance methods which remove the prejudices traditionally attached to the roles of men and women, and to the notion of adequate qualifications. In four regions, the counsellors have set up groups to support women seeking non-traditional training and jobs.
- In the United Kingdom, several measures have been adopted on training for counsellors and instructors; local authority careers officers are advised to take account of equal treatment practices by the Department of Employment in its "advisory booklet".
- In Germany, further training and retraining courses are available to all guidance and placement staff to keep them up to date with the problems of women seeking work and equal opportunities policies.

- In the United Kingdom, the Equal Opportunities Commission reveals that, of 500 industrial enterprises, seven have organized positive action on behalf of women.

The Engineering Industrial Training Board pays premiums to employers who take on women for training in engineering, in addition to their quota of trainees.

- The Danish job creation programmes (Law No 286 of 9 June 1982 on job creation and Ministerial Decree No 66 of 18 February 1983 on the same subject) for the young unemployed aged 18-25 enables positive action to be taken on behalf of women. The aim of the programme is to create ordinary jobs in the private sector at the local level. It can, for example, be stipulated that beneficiaries are to comprise a number of women which is proportional to the number of unemployed women in the region.

### 3. The public sector

Although this subdivision is somewhat theoretical as the aim in this sector is also to promote desegregation in employment, it is taken separately as it is felt that this sector should set an example.

However, Member States have reported only a very small number of positive measures within their administrations. Many are only at the stage of analysing the present position of women.

Thus, in the United Kingdom, a study Committee was set up in 1980, composed of employers and trade unions (the Joint Review Group). Its task was to examine the position of women in the major public sector jobs. The report of this group is mainly concerned with the development of part-time work and the reasons for the different promotion rates for men and women.

In Belgium, the Ministry of Employment and Labour set up, in collaboration with the Committee on Women's Employment, a team responsible for studying the position of women in the public sector and their chances of promotion. The Committee also questioned the Ministries about any remaining recruiting criteria and practices as regards access to employment which could be detrimental to women in the Public sector, in particular in certain male bastions.

A seminar was also held in Belgium, lasting several days and open only to women civil servants, which was designed to identify obstacles encountered on the path to promotion, and possible remedies.



- In France, the Circular of 24 January 1983 relating to equality between women and men and to desegregation in the public sector requires, in respect of promotion, that Ministers ensure that applications from women are neither discouraged a priori nor set aside on the pretext that their putative "feminine nature" would not allow them to carry out their duties successfully. Indeed, applications from women are even to be sought. Lastly, the circular calls for reports to be made on each measure in order to assess its effectiveness.

#### 4. Women immigrants

Because of the special difficulties facing immigrant women in every European country, a number of measures have been taken on their behalf. The majority of such measures consist in organizing literacy and language classes in the host country. In the United Kingdom, training is provided by the State.

In Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany, the state gives subsidies to other bodies for the provision of training.

In the Netherlands, the state also finances three cooperatives for women from Mediterranean countries.

#### 5. Sharing of responsibilities

In order to improve women's position in decision-making and consultative bodies, some countries have adopted ad hoc measures, e.g. the Netherlands, which wishes to increase the number of women mayors and women in senior civil service positions.

In Ireland, the National Women's Talent Bank, created by the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, plans to correct the imbalance in the representation of men and women on committees and boards by submitting to the decision-making authorities whose task is to nominate candidates for positions in other State bodies and departments lists of names of women with either exceptional abilities or the requisite qualifications.

#### - Social infrastructure

In France, a system known as the "crèche contracts" scheme is run jointly by the National Family Allowances Fund and local authorities for the creation and management of day nurseries; the number of available places is expected to quadruple. The contracts will also mean improved services to families (low-income and single-parent families), taking account of flexible working hours and the need to associate them in the running of the nursery.

The Ministries of Social Affairs, Health, Culture and Internal Affairs in the Netherlands have set up an inter-departmental group on childcare which has the task of improving and increasing childcare facilities.

## 6. Changes in attitudes

This is an extremely broad field in which a large number of very different measures have been taken.

The French Government conducted a campaign for occupational equality in 1982-83 which used all the mass media. The two themes were first, promoting public awareness about inequalities and the urgent need to overcome them and, second, guidance and training for girls.

The Netherlands uses television sequences and radio broadcasts ("gesprekken met vrouwen").

The ad hoc Committee on "role of the sexes and training" set up under the Danish Ministry of Education, published a white paper in 1981 entitled "positive action - a path to equal treatment", which discusses the question of positive action (arguments in favour, forms, proposals) and, in particular, the application of quotas by sex.

Periodicals are published in the United Kingdom (Women and Training News by the Manpower Services Commission), in Germany ("Treffpunkt"), and in France ("Citoyennes à part entière").

In Ireland, the Employment Equality Agency is drawing up a code of practice for the two sides of industry to help them eliminate illegal instances of discrimination and prevent their recurrence. The code will contain the types of measures that are illegal under the 1977 Employment Equality Act and recommendations on positive measures:

Seminars are held in a number of countries for representatives of both sides of industry, governments, scientists, etc. (e.g. Ireland, Germany, Belgium).

## II. Implementation of Commission actions

### Implementation of specific actions provided for by the Programme

#### Action 1 : Monitoring of the application of the Directives

The Commission has continued with its task of controlling the application of the directives in its capacity as guardian of the Treaties.

In 1982, it also created a group of experts composed of independent persons chosen for their practical knowledge and experience(1) in the field of the three Directives on equality (2).

The first task entrusted to the Group was to focus mainly on the problem of indirect discrimination under each of the three Directives at the level of :

- laws, regulations and administrative provisions (3), and caselaw,
- collective agreements,
- undertakings (in firm regulations, individual company agreements, particularly revealing specific cases, etc.).

The Commission requested the Group, composed of two European experts per country, to maintain contact with the various groups and persons particularly involved in their countries, at the level of the government, and of the courts, as well as of legal practitioners, the two sides of industry and, in particular, the members of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities. The Group has just finished its first report.

The Commission intends, after studying the report in detail, to use it to assist Member States in a better understanding and application of Community legislation and to facilitate the Commission in its duty as guardian of the Treaties.

#### Action 2 : Legal redress in respect of equal treatment

The Commission is at present undertaking an analysis of procedures for the use of legal redress in Member States, in particular with a view to identifying examples of good practice. The research work should be completed in 1984.

---

(1) barristers, legal practitioners, teachers, research workers, representatives of both sides of industry, etc.

(2) EEC Directives 75/117, 76/207 and 79/7.

(3) Not including work already carried out by the Commission in the context of its reports on the application of Article 119 and Directives 75/117 and 76/207.

It is clear that it is closely linked to the first action and in this context close contacts have been established between the experts responsible for implementing the two actions.

Action 3 : Revision of national and Community protective legislation

The Commission has finalized a study on the status of legislation in the Member States in this field and on the most appropriate guidelines within the meaning of Directive 76/207.

The study revealed the considerable variety of legislation and the frequent link with a concern for protection based on antiquated and outmoded situations.

After consulting the two sides of industry and the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities which gave an opinion on the study and its conclusions, the Commission will draw the appropriate conclusions, in particular with a view to the correct application of Directive 76/207 and future action, for example as regards the fundamental problem of night work.

Action 4 : Equal treatment in matters of social security

The Commission has submitted a proposal for a directive on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes.

It also commissioned a study on the fields not covered by or exempt from Directive 79/7 with a view to preparing a legal instrument on these subjects.

Action 5 : Application of the principle of equal treatment to self-employed women and to women in agriculture, particularly in family enterprises

The Commission has had a study carried out on the problems of self-employed women and women in agriculture, on the basis of which it is drafting a legal instrument aimed at improving the legal status of such women and the application of equal treatment.

Action 6 : Taxation and the employment of women

The Commission has had a comparative analysis of income tax systems in Member States carried out. The conclusions of the study, approved by the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities, show that only a separate tax system has a neutral effect on married women in employment.

This does not mean that appropriate solutions will not be adopted to take account of family responsibilities, particularly dependent children.

The Commission is preparing a memorandum on this subject for the Council.

Action 7 : Improvement in living and working conditions  
Parental leave, leave for family reasons

Research has been carried out into the different experiences acquired in Member States and in certain non-Member States.

On the basis of the results of that study, the Commission put forward a proposal for a directive (1) on parental leave and leave for family reasons aimed at giving entitlement to such leave for men and women on an equal basis and on conditions which would be harmonized throughout the Member States.

At the same time, the Commission is preparing a survey on the development of the network of public child care facilities and services in the Member States.

Action 8 : Protection of women during pregnancy or motherhood

A comparative analysis of measures adopted in Member States on maternity leave is underway with a view, if necessary, to proposing a Community legal instrument.

Action 9 : Development of positive action

An analysis and evaluation of measures applied in Member States and certain non-Member States has been carried out. It had showed the importance of a legal framework for a more generalized development of positive action.

A major seminar was held on this subject in Athens, organized jointly by the Greek Government and the Commission. The Commission is drawing up a Community initiative on the promotion of positive actions in the Member States.

Action 10 : Integration into working life (in particular with respect to new technologies)

A series of actions are underway; the ESF is continuing its ~~programme~~ of support for training activities aimed at diversifying the choice of occupations, including those connected with new technologies; the CEDEFOP is currently evaluating measures already taken in order to draw conclusions for actions to be developed in the future.

In addition, two analyses are currently being carried out by the Commission, one on the impact of office technology on women's employment, the other on vocational training for women and new technologies based on case studies, with a view to producing guidelines for positive action.

---

(1) COM (83) 686 final

Action 11 : Vocational choices

The Commission recently set up an experimental network of equal opportunities' advisers in order to foster integrated national programmes on education and training. The network comprises one expert per Member State - a specialist in education or training - attached either to an administration or to institutes or bodies. The expert's task is to set up a network of persons in his country capable of taking part in such an exercise (administration, two sides of industry, instructors in the field, research workers, etc.). The experts will have to analyse and assess problems and difficulties and promote measures to diversify vocational choices, principally in connection with the introduction of new technologies.

Action 12 : Desegregation of employment

The public sector was the first one to be chosen : the Commission undertook a comparative analysis of desegregation in the public service in certain Community countries and the practical measures needed to improve the situation of women.

The cooperatives sector was also closely examined by the Commission, which carried out a study on measures for women in this field, and provided support, including financial backing, for the creation of a certain number of cooperatives involving the employment of women.

Lastly, the Commission continued and developed the action started in the banking sector. In 1982, it organized a seminar of representatives of some fifty banks which had agreed to play an experimental role. Following the seminar, action has been taken in several banks and received Commission support.

Action 13 : Analysis of trends in female employment

A group of experts has been set up to define common indicators for a system of monitoring women's employment trends and the impact of national policies in this sector.

Action 14 : Application of the principle of equal treatment to women immigrants

The Commission is currently analysing instances of discrimination in legislation and administrative practices seen in relation to the social and cultural setting of immigrant women.

At the same time, CEDEFOP is studying and evaluating vocational and language training measures implemented in Member States with a view to defining guidelines for action.

Action 15 : Sharing of occupational, family and social responsibilities

A number of actions are underway in this field :

- the study on public facilities and services (1) has been finalized,
- the analysis of women's position in decision-making bodies has also just been completed; it will serve as a basis for the proposals for Community guidelines the Commission plans to submit,
- in addition, the growing inconsistencies between changing social values and the organization of work are being considered within the framework of a preliminary Commission study.

Action 16 : Evolution in public attitudes

The Commission is pursuing and intensifying its information campaigns, directed in particular towards the various women's groups and associations, the press and the media in general.

Two further projects have also been started, one on the position of women in television and the other on the image of women in television, with a view to preparing a seminar to increase the awareness of television officials and on positive measures to improve the position of women and eliminate stereotyped images.

III. Community measures affecting equality of opportunity

The Commission has submitted several proposals to the Council which contribute to the promotion of equal opportunities. They include the draft recommendation on the reduction and reorganisation of working time (2), the communication on youth employment (3) and the communication on the development of local initiatives (4) in addition, the Council Resolutions on vocational training and new technologies and vocational training in the 1980's (5), based on Commission proposals, include commitments to take positive action on behalf of women.

Lastly, the recent Commission communication to the Standing Committee on Employment on women's unemployment (6) comprises specific guidelines which affect both the promotion of equal opportunities and Community action to combat unemployment. The Standing Committee on Employment examined this communication at their 26th meeting in November 1983. The conclusions from the Chair requested, amongst other things, that the Commission should take the necessary initiatives to ensure that a discussion could be held in the Council on this subject, in the light of the work already undertaken in this meeting of the Committee.

In this context the Commission proposes that the Council should examine this communication and make a policy commitment on the basis of its conclusions.

(1) See Action 7 above

(2) COM(83) 543 final

(3) COM(83) 211 final

(4) COM(83) 662 final

(5) O.J. No C 166 of 25 November 1983 and OJ No C 193 of 20 July 1983.

(6) COM(83) 653 final

#### IV. Positive action within the Commission

In the context of the Community's new action programme on the promotion of equal opportunities for women (1982-1985), the Commission gave an undertaking to implement a number of measures aimed at bringing about greater equality between men and women within its own personnel.

In the light of the above commitments and of the need for an overall strategy on the promotion of equal opportunities, it was decided to implement a number of organisational changes with a view to the development of such a strategy.

These changes relate particularly to the following aspects :

- a) the creation of a Committee on Equal Opportunities to advise the Administration in this area of personnel policy;
- b) the imminent nomination of an official within DG IX with special responsibility for monitoring the situation of women in the Commission. One of the first tasks of this official will be the establishment of a data base to be constantly updated and on which future action can be based, and also the research and monitoring of the implementation of the changes to be made and acting as a channel of communication between the staff and the Administration.
- c) a series of administrative measures to increase the representation of women in the Commission services and, on the other hand, to eliminate discrimination with regard to female staff and to take their particular needs into account.

Among these specific measures, are some that have already been put into effect on the basis of the work done by the Committee for Equality, the following included :

recruitment :

- a better drafting of texts announcing competitions and vacant posts in order to reassure candidates on the availability of posts at all levels for both sexes;
- an attempt to ensure a systematic female participation in juries, either as members or as assessors;
- advice to the Services that women should not be eliminated without reason from recruitment;



- presenting the joint staff Committee with a proposal to apply a series of changes to the age-limits (conditions of entry to competitions) which would take account, amongst other things, of the situation of women who had interrupted their career in order to bring up children.

Career development :

- systematic presence of women in all promotion committees

Training :

- action to make internal and external trainers aware of the necessity to take the principle of equality into account in all training programmes;
- nomination of a woman as a member of the Steering Committee on Training

With regard to the social infrastructure and the adjustment of working time

- staff to be informed on the conditions for short-term leave on personal grounds to deal with difficult family situations, whatever the sex of the official, and on the granting of longer periods of leave on personal grounds in particularly difficult circumstances, following the recent revision of the Statute;
- Staff to be informed on the availability of professional child care;
- provisions to be made for the future of the Brussels "Centre de la Petite Enfance" to be studied. Construction of the "Centre de la Petite Enfance" in Luxembourg to go ahead when agreement is reached with the appropriate authority.
- pilot schemes for flexible working hours to be launched. The question of the reorganisation of the working hours of the creches, if flexible workings hours should be introduced generally, to be studied.
- action in the part-time work field to continue, with the proposal to the Council for amending the financial Regulation in order to increase flexibility now nearing adoption.

V. Consultation and dialogue with the institutions, bodies, groups and associations concerned

1. The European Parliament has actively pursued its work, especially at the level of the Committee of Inquiry into the situation of women in Europe.

Its findings continue to stimulate developments in Community action and Commission proposals in particular.

2. The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities, created by the Commission when it adopted the above-mentioned Action Programme, made a major positive contribution to the measures developed by the Commission, in particular its opinions on the adoption of new legal instruments and on the development of positive action.

3. Consultation of the two sides of industry, who are important partners in the implementation of equal opportunity policies has also continued and been expanded within the framework of the Community consultation machinery.

4. Lastly, the Commission is conducting an active and constructive dialogue with groups and associations involved in the problems of equal opportunity.

CONCLUSIONS

The process of promoting equal opportunities is advancing at Community level in spite of the threats posed by the economic crisis, budgetary restrictions and technological innovation.

The situation calls for greater vigilance, both as regards legislation and the de facto situation of women. It makes it all the more necessary to generalize the development of positive action to remedy actual inequalities.

It is in this perspective that the Commission has completed or started all the actions listed in the Action Programme on Equal Opportunities. In the same manner the Member States should reinforce their action, in the context of the Programme, to implement the commitments contained in the Council Resolution of 12 July 1982.