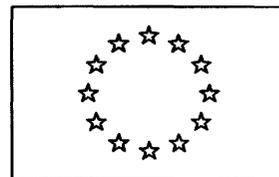


European Trade Union Information Bulletin



ISSUE 3 of 1998

New Directives Increase Protection For European Workers

Two new Directives will add important elements of protection for European workers. In June the Council adopted a Directive designed the supplementary pension rights of employed and self-employed people moving within the European Union. It complements a whole series of Directives on pension rights and adds an important dimension of protection of the rights of free movement between EU Member States. Although the full provisions of the Directive will not come into force until early in the new millennium, once they do the supplementary pension rights of workers and their dependants who choose to work and live in another Member State will be fully protected.

In July the Council adopted an updated Directive on collective redundancies. Over recent years a number of drawbacks in the existing Community legislation on collective redundancies have been highlighted. The new Directive is designed to close many of these loopholes and contribute to the greater protection of workers.

Full details of both Directives can be found in this edition of the Bulletin.

This issue of the Bulletin also contains the 1998 Annual review of trade union sites on the internet and World Wide Web (WWW). The most recent Eurobarometer survey indicates that 12% of European currently have access to the internet and that the number is growing by about 8% per year. For those with access to the internet there is an increasingly rich and comprehensive choice of materials on European trade union issues and our annual survey is designed to identify some of the key European trade union sites.

CONTENTS

New Legislation:

Council Directive 98/59/EC On Collective Redundancies	2
Council Directive 98/49/EC On Supplementary Pensions	3

Focus:

Implementation of Community Law On Social Policy	4
Commission Proposals For Leonardo II	6
Commission Adopts Annual Report On Equal Opportunities	8

European Trade Union Information Bulletin WWW Guide

9

News:

Tourism and Employment	13
Carcinogens Directive	13
Trade Union Density	13
Eurobarometer	14
Structural Fund Reform	14
GDP in EU Member States	15
Cost Competitiveness	15

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**NEW
LEGISLATION****Council Directive 98/59/EC On
Collective Redundancies****Title:**

Council Directive 98/59/EC of 20 July 1998 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to collective redundancies.

Background:

The proposal for a European Directive designed to give greater protection to workers in the event of large-scale redundancies (collective redundancies) was first put forward in a Social Action Programme adopted by the Council in January 1974 and a Directive (75/129/EEC) was adopted in the following year. Whilst this 1975 Directive has formed an important part of the general legislative framework in the field of employee rights, several shortcomings have been identified over the last twenty years and consequently the Commission believed that it was in need of up-dating.

Definitions and Scope:

The provisions of the Directive apply in the case of "collective redundancies". These are defined as dismissals unrelated to the individual worker. In terms of calculating the number of redundancies to determine whether or not they are "collective", Member States are given the choice of two approaches:

- (1) Either, over a period of 30 days, 10 redundancies in establishments employing between 20 and 100 workers, 10% of workers in establishments employing 100 to 300 workers, and at least 30 redundancies in establishments employing over 300 workers.
- (2) Or, over a period of 90 days, at least 20 redundancies, whatever the number of workers normally employed in the establishment in question.

There are just three situations in which the provisions of the Directive will not apply:

- where collective redundancies involve fixed-term contract workers except in the situation where the redundancies take place prior to the expiry date of the contract.
- the Directive does not apply to workers employed by public administrative bodies or establishments governed by public law.
- the Directive does not apply to the crews of seagoing vessels.

For the purposes of calculating the number of redundancies, terminations which occur on the employer's initiative for one or more reasons not related to the individual worker concerned shall be assimilated to redundancies, provided that there are at least five redundancies.

Basic Provisions:

1. Where an employer is contemplating collective redundancies he is required to begin consultations with workers' representatives "in good time with a view to reaching an agreement"
2. Such consultations should, at least, cover ways and means of avoiding collective redundancies or reducing the number of workers affected, or mitigating the consequences by the use of social measures aimed at redeploying or retraining redundant workers.
3. During the consultations, employers must notify workers' representatives, in writing, of:
 - the reasons for the proposed redundancies;
 - the number of categories of workers to be made redundant;
 - the number of categories of workers normally employed;
 - the period over which the redundancies will take place;
 - the criteria proposed for selecting which workers are to be made redundant;
 - the method for calculating any additional redundancy payments.
4. These provisions will apply irrespective of whether the decision regarding collective redundancies is taken by the immediate employer or an undertaking controlling the employer. In the event of a failure to supply such information, it will not be a defence for an employer to claim that the relevant information has not been provided by the controlling undertaking.

Procedures for Collective Redundancies:

1. Employers must notify the competent public authority in writing of any projected collective redundancies. Member States may modify this requirement in cases where the collective redundancies arise from the termination of the establishments' activities as a result of a judicial decision. The notification must contain all the relevant information and a copy of such a notification must be provided to the workers' representatives.



2. Projected collective redundancies will not take effect before 30 days following notification to the public authority. This period can be extended by the public authority in certain circumstances.

Final Provisions:

1. Member States retain the right to apply or introduce laws or collective agreements which are more favourable to workers.
2. The introduction of this Directive means that Directive 75/129/EEC (the original collective redundancies directive) and Directive 92/56/EEC (an amendment to the 1975 directive) are now repealed.
3. The Directive comes into force on the 1st September 1998

Council Directive 98/49/EC on Supplementary Pensions.

Title:

Council Directive 98/49/EC of 29th June 1998 on safeguarding the supplementary pension rights of employed and self-employed persons moving within the Community.

Background:

One of the fundamental aims of the European Community has always been to guarantee the free movement of workers between Member States and over the years a whole range of Directives have been adopted in order to achieve this. Of particular importance has been attempts to ensure that the social security rights of workers moving between Member States are fully protected, and this is particularly true of pension rights. Whilst existing legislation fully covers the transferability of basic pension rights, occupational or supplementary pension rights have, until now, not been fully covered by European legislation.

In its Recommendation of July 1992, the Council called on Member States to eliminate obstacles to the mobility of employed workers by introducing changes to the conditions governing the acquisition of pension, and especially, supplementary pension rights. This call has now been backed by a new Directive at European level.

Objectives and Scope:

The aim of the Directive is to protect the rights of members of supplementary pension schemes who move from one Member State to another. It relates to pension rights under both voluntary and compulsory

supplementary pension schemes and applies to both members of such schemes and others holding entitlements under such schemes.

Definitions:

A supplementary pension scheme is defined in the Directive as "any occupational pension scheme, established in conformity with national legislation and practice such as a group insurance contract or pay-as-you-go scheme agreed by one or more branches or sectors, funded scheme or pension promise backed by book reserves, or any collective or other comparable arrangement intended to provide a supplementary pension for employed or self-employed person"

Provisions:

Article 4 of the Directive states that Member States must take the necessary measures to ensure the preservation of vested pension rights for members of a supplementary pension scheme in respect of whom contributions are no longer being made as a consequence of their moving from one Member State to another, to the same extent as for members in respect of whom contributions are no longer being made but who still remains within the same Member State. This rule also applies to all other persons holding entitlements under such schemes.

Article 5 requires Member States to ensure that supplementary pension schemes make payments in other Member States, net of any taxes and transaction charges, of all benefits due under such schemes.

Article 6 requires Member States to adopt such measures as necessary to enable contributions to continue to be made to a supplementary pension scheme by or on behalf of a posted worker who is a member of such a scheme during the period of his or her posting in another Member State.

Article 7 requires Member States to take measures to ensure that employers, trustees and others responsible for the management of supplementary pension schemes, provide adequate information to scheme members when they move to another Member State on the pension rights they are entitled to.

Final Provisions:

Member States may provide that the provisions of article 6 shall only apply to postings which occur on or after the 25th July 2001. The deadline for Member States to apply the provisions of the Directive is also the 25th July 2001. By the 25th January 2002, Member States must submit the text of the national legal provisions implementing the Directive to the Commission.

**FOCUS**

Implementation of Community Law on Social Policy : European Commission 1997 Report

According to the latest Commission survey on the national implementation of Community law in the social policy field, only one Member State (Sweden) has implemented all 52 social policy directives that were applicable on the 31st December 1997. Implementation rates in other Member States range from 79% in the United Kingdom to 98% in Finland. The situation in the United Kingdom is slightly different to the other Member States as a number of directives have only just become applicable in the UK following the decision by the UK Government to accept legislation introduced under the Maastricht social policy agreement procedures. The Directive on European Works Councils was still not fully applicable in the UK at the end of 1997.

The individual figures were as follows:

Member State	Directives Applicable	Measures Notified	%
Belgium	52	48	92
Denmark	52	50	96
Germany	52	50	96
Greece	52	47	90
Spain	52	50	96
France	52	48	92
Ireland	52	49	94
Italy	52	47	90
Luxembourg	52	44	85
Netherlands	52	49	94
Austria	52	50	96
Portugal	52	50	96
Finland	52	51	98
Sweden	52	52	100
United Kingdom	51	40	79

The 52 Directives represent the general body of existing Community law in the social policy field. The details of all 52 Directives are as follows:

Labour Law:

- 75/129/EEC Directive on collective redundancies
- 77/187/EEC Directive on employee rights in the event of transfers of undertakings
- 80/987/EEC Directive on protecting employees in the event of insolvency of their employer
- 87/164/EEC Amendment to 80/987/EEC
- 91/533/EEC Directive on employers' obligations to provide information on contracts of employment
- 92/56/EEC Amendment to 75/129/EEC
- 94/045/EC Directive on European works councils

Equal Opportunities:

- 75/117/EEC Directive on equal pay for men and women
- 76/207/EEC Directive on equal treatment for men and women in employment and training.
- 79/007/EEC Directive on equal treatment in matters of social security
- 86/378/EEC Directive on equal treatment in occupational social security schemes
- 86/613/EEC Directive on equal treatment for self-employed men and women



92/085/EEC Directive on improving safety and health protection of pregnant women workers
96/097/EC Amendment to 86/378/EEC

Free Movement of Workers:

64/221/EEC Directive on the movement and residence of foreign nationals
68/360/EEC Directive abolishing restrictions on the free movement of workers and their families
72/194/EEC Directive on the right of workers to remain in another Member State after being employed

Health and Safety at Work:

78/610/EEC Directive on vinyl chloride monomers
80/1107/EEC Directive on exposure to physical, chemical and biological agents at work
82/130/EEC Directive on electrical equipment in potentially explosive atmospheres
82/605/EEC Directive on exposure to metallic lead and its compounds
83/477/EEC Directive on exposure to asbestos
86/188/EEC Directive on exposure to noise at work
88/035/EEC Amendment to Directive 82/130/EEC
88/364/EEC Directive banning the use of certain agents and work activities
88/642/EEC Amendment to Directive 80/1107/EEC
89/391/EEC Framework Directive on health and safety at work
89/654/EEC 1st Individual Directive : Workplace safety
89/655/EEC 2nd Individual Directive : Work equipment
89/656/EEC 3rd Individual Directive : Personal protective equipment
90/269/EEC 4th Individual Directive : Manual handling of loads
90/270/EEC 5th Individual Directive : Visual display equipment
90/394/EEC 6th Individual Directive : Carcinogen risks
90/679/EEC 7th Individual Directive : Biological agents
91/269/EEC Amendment to Directive 82/130/EEC
91/322/EEC Directive establishing limit values under Directive 80/1107/EEC
91/382/EEC Amendment to Directive 83/477/EEC
91/383/EEC Directive on health and safety protection of fixed-term and temporary employees
92/029/EEC Directive on improved medical treatment on board vessels
92/057/EEC 8th Individual Directive : Temporary or mobile construction sites
92/058/EEC 9th Individual Directive : Safety and health signs at work
92/085/EEC 10th Individual Directive : Health protection of pregnant women
92/091/EEC 11th Individual Directive : Mineral extraction through drilling
92/104/EEC 12th Individual Directive : Surface and underground mineral extraction
93/088/EC Amendment to Directive 90/679/EEC
93/103/EC 13th Individual Directive : Health and safety on fishing vessels
93/104/EC Directive on the organisation of working time
94/033/EC Directive on the protection of young people at work
94/044/EC Amendment to Directive 82/130/EEC
95/030/EC Amendment to Directive 90/697/EEC

Public Health:

89/622/EEC Directive on the labelling of tobacco products
90/239/EEC Directive on the maximum tar yield of cigarettes
92/041/EEC Amendment to Directive 89/622/EEC

**infoBASE EUROPE Flash**

The weekly on-line update of all the latest development in European social and industrial relations policy. If you have an e-mail address and would like to receive free of charge a weekly summary of the latest developments in European social and industrial relations policy, simply send an e-mail request to:

Flash@mboelma.demon.co.uk

or check out the weekly postings on our internet site at

<http://www.ecu-notes.org/infoBASE/Flash>

**FOCUS**

Education and Training

Commission Proposals For Leonardo II**BACKGROUND:**

In May 1993, the European Commission outlined its plans for the regrouping of its existing funding programmes in the field of education, training and youth support. By December 1994, three broad programmes had been adopted to replace the patchwork of existing programmes and initiatives in the field.

Leonardo da Vinci : Support for projects in the field of vocational training and language training. The new Leonardo Programme replaced a number of existing initiatives including Comett, Force and Petra.
Socrates: Support for projects in the field of education, including both school-level education and higher education. The new Socrates Programme replaced the Erasmus Programme and certain aspects of the Lingua Programme.

Youth For Europe: The Youth For Europe Programme pre-dated the 1994 reforms, but was strengthened and extended by them. It provided support for all types of initiatives in the field of youth support policy.

Each of the programmes was given a five-year duration: from January 1995 until December 1999.

RENEWAL AND REFORM:

With the existing three programmes coming towards their end, the European Commission announced its plans for the next generation (2000-2004) of programmes in May 1998. According to the Commission, actions would continue to be structured around three distinct programmes - education (Socrates), vocational training (Leonardo) and youth, but greater synergy between these funds would be achieved by common transversal measures.

The Commission said that education, lifelong training and youth integrate three types of objectives:

- to strengthen the European dimension in education;
- to promote co-operation in all sectors and at all levels;
- to encourage innovation.

The three political objectives in the vocational training area were:

- individual mobility through the European Voluntary Service;
- group mobility through the promotion of youth exchanges;

- joint actions with other areas of Community initiatives.

For the implementation of these actions, the Commission proposed a significant increase of the amount of aid devoted to Community actions in these areas. The proposed global amount of ECU 3,000 million represented an increase of about 60 % as compared with the present generation of programmes and fell in line with the recommendations of the Agenda 2000 proposals. The proposed distribution of funds among the programmes for the years 2000-2004 was as follows: ECU 1,400 million for the future Socrates programme; ECU 1,000 for Leonardo da Vinci; and ECU 600 million for Youth.

THE LEONARDO II PROPOSALS:

On the 1st September 1998, the European Commission submitted a proposal for a Council Decision establishing a second phase of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. The main elements of the proposal are as follows:

Article 1: The programme will start on the 1 January 2000 and end on the 31 December 2004. Its objective is "to contribute to the Community's knowledge policy through the implementation of a European education area fostering the development of lifelong education and training". It will permit the development of the knowledge and skills likely to "foster the full exercise of citizenship" and support and supplement actions taken by Member States.

Article 2: The aims of the programme are defined as:

- (a) to improve and strengthen the social and occupational integration of young people, particularly through work-linked training and apprenticeship;
- (b) to expand and develop access to quality continuing training and access to lifelong skills, particularly in order to consolidate technological and organisational innovation, and investment in training;
- (c) to support the vocational training systems to assist, those in difficult circumstances owing to inadequate or outdated skills, to find employment and to better insert themselves in the labour market.

Article 3: The aims set out in Article 2 will be pursued through six main types of action:



- (a) support for the mobility of people undergoing vocational training;
- (b) promotion of virtual mobility in the context of vocational training, particularly by promoting access to educational multimedia;
- (c) support for the development of European level co-operation networks permitting mutual exchange of experience and good practice;
- (d) promotion of language skills and understanding of different cultures;
- (e) support for innovatory pilot projects based on transnational partnerships designed to develop innovation and quality in vocational training in order to create training products, instruments of skills accreditation or in order to test out any new approach;
- (f) the constant improvement of the Community terms of reference through support for the dissemination of good practice and through the observation and dissemination of innovation.

Article 4: Participation in the Leonardo II Programme will be open to all public and private bodies and institutions involved in vocational training. This includes training establishments, research centres, companies and consortia, trade organisations, social partner organisations and local and regional bodies.

Article 5: Article 5 deals with the implementation of the programme. Member States are required to establish co-ordination organisations, follow-up provisions and an integrated management structure.

Article 6: Article 6 provides for the implementation of the programme objectives through joint actions with other Community programmes, in particular Socrates II and Youth for Europe II.

Article 7: The Commission will be assisted in the implementation of the programme by a committee composed of representatives of the Member States and chaired by a representative of the Commission. The Committee will examine a draft of the measures to be taken to implement the programme and the criteria for a breakdown of the funding which will be submitted by the Commission.

Article 8: The Committee to be established under Article 7 will also contain representatives of the two sides of industry. These representatives - the same number in total as the representatives of Member States - will participate in the work of the Committee as observers. The social partner representatives will have the right to request that their positions be recorded in the minutes of the Committee meetings.

Article 9: Article 9 is concerned with ensuring consistency and complementarity with other programmes and actions. It also seeks to ensure that the measures taken under the programme are consistent

with the annual employment guidelines.

One very important paragraph from a trade union point of view is the fourth paragraph of Article 9, which states:

"When implementing this programme, the Commission in close conjunction with both sides of industry at Community level will endeavour to develop the social dialogue at the Community level, particularly by providing support at all levels, including sectoral levels, and by disseminating its results."

Article 10: Article 10 lists the countries, in addition to the fifteen Member States, the programme will be open to. The programme is open to the participation of the associated Central and Eastern European countries. It is also open to the participation, funded by additional appropriations, of Cyprus, Turkey and Malta.

Article 11 calls for the programme to strengthen co-operation with non-Community countries and with relevant international organisations.

Article 12: Article 12 deals with monitoring and evaluation. The Commission is required to continually monitor and evaluate the operation and implementation of the programme and there will also be periodic external evaluations. Member States are required to submit to the Commission by 31 December 2002 and 30 June 2005, reports on the implementation and impact of the programme and on the vocational training systems and arrangements which exist in Member States.

The Commission is required to submit to the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee an interim report no later than the 30th June 2003 and a final report no later than 31st December 2005.

Article 13 states that the Decision will enter into force on the day of its publication in the Official Journal.

There are three annexes to the draft Decision: Annex A sets out in detail the six action areas set out in Article 3 along with the type of funding available. The annex also sets out details of joint actions and accompanying measures. Finally, Annex A also sets out the decentralised and centralised selection procedure which will be used to determine which projects will be funded.

Annex B provides the procedure for determining the overall budget breakdown. Annex C provides a list of definitions of terms used in the Decision.

The Commission draft will be discussed by the various Community institutions and it is expected to be finally adopted during 1999.

**FOCUS**

Commission Adopts Annual Report on Equal Opportunities

The European Commission has adopted its second Annual Report on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the European Union which covers the year 1997. Like its predecessor, the Report reviews the most important developments and trends in the area of equal opportunities policy, both at European and national level. Three developments in particular are highlighted - equal opportunities and the Treaty of Amsterdam, equal opportunities and the new employment strategy and mainstreaming.

THE AMSTERDAM TREATY

The Amsterdam Treaty was adopted by European leaders during 1997 although the process of national ratification is still ongoing. The Commission points out that the Treaty "confirms the importance of equal opportunities in the European integration project" and opens up new possibilities for advancement.

Article 2 of the new Treaty confirms the concept of equality between men and women as a founding principle of the European Union.

Article 3 gives the Union the duty to eliminate inequalities and promote equality in all its activities and thus provides the formal basis for the process of "mainstreaming".

Article 13 permits appropriate action to combat all discrimination, including discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation.

Article 141 extends the scope of the former Article 119 and gives equality of treatment between women and men a specific legal base, particularly in terms of employment. It also confirms the right of Member States to take measures providing for specific advantages in order to make it easier for the under-represented sex to pursue vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers.

NEW EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

At the special Employment Summit held in Luxembourg in November 1997, the European leaders agreed on the mechanics of the new employment strategy. In addition, they recognised that the position of women in the labour market merited particular attention and that the equality of opportunity was a matter of economic interest. The Commission believes that the establishment of the new employment strategy means that progress on equal opportunities in the labour

market can be scrutinised at the highest level on an annual basis from now on.

In its employment guidelines for 1998 which were adopted by the Council in December 1997, the Commission set out targets and objectives in the four main areas of the employment strategy, one of which is equal opportunities. Member States have already submitted national action plans in which they detail actions they are taken to improve equal opportunities in employment.

MAINSTREAMING

The Commission reports that mainstreaming - the strategy of integrating the equal opportunities dimension into all major policy areas - saw significant progress during 1997. Examples of progress made include:

- the incorporation of equal opportunities as a major element in the new employment strategy.
- During 1997, 29 Commission services designated officials to have specific responsibility for facilitating and encouraging the development of mainstreaming in their Directorate-General.
- During 1996 in their Resolution on Equal Opportunities and the Structural Fund, the Council declared that the structural funds had an important role to play in supporting equal opportunities and that the role should be further strengthened. The Commission took this into account during 1997 in their preparatory work on the new generation of structural funds and a strengthened commitment to the active promotion of equality of opportunity has been incorporated into proposals recently released.
- In the context of the European Union's development co-operation policies, the Commission presented a proposal for a Council Regulation on the integration of gender issues in development co-operation which is currently being discussed by the European parliament and the Council.

Commenting on the publication of the 1997 Report on Equal Opportunities, Social Affairs Commissioner Pdraig Flynn said "1997 was a good year for equal opportunities" and pointed, in particular, to the incorporation of equal opportunities within the new European employment strategy.

European Trade Union
Information Bulletin**WWW GUIDE**

European Information On The WWW

This is our third annual survey of internet World Wide Web sites dealing with information for European trade unionists. Over the three years, the number of available sites has increased substantially, as has the quality of and sophistication of the sites themselves. The sheer number of new sites means that no listing can hope to be complete and comprehensive and we apologise to any sites we may have inadvertently left out. We are always pleased to receive information about sites for inclusion in future listings (email details to: Bulletin@mboelma.demon.co.uk). The listing below provides a brief overview of each of the selected sites, details of the main site address (URL) and information on the languages used. An asterisk (*) indicates that some pages and documents are available in these languages in cases where the site is not fully multilingual.

infoBASE EUROPE

Our own site, the infoBASE EUROPE site, contains the electronic version of the European Trade Union Information Bulletin, the weekly infoBASE Flash European Social Policy Newsletter, and a sample edition of the new weekly

on-line "newspaper" on European social policy - European Newslink. The infoBASE site is part of the ECU-NOTES site which is also the home site of the Trade Union Regional Network (TURN) and the A to Z of European Terms and Acronyms published by Joe Mitchell Associates

LANGUAGES

English French* German*

SITE URL<http://www.ecu-notes.org/>

InfoNet

"Infonet - trade union and social information" is a general information internet network managed by the Trade Union Division of the European Commission (DGX/A5). The site

contains copies of the two regular Commission information services - inforapid and infospecial, and a direct link to the site containing the electronic version of the European Trade Union Information Bulletin. There are also sections on key issues - employment policy, the Amsterdam Treaty, EMU - and a calendar of meetings and events. Access is open to trade unions and other social policy organisations but in order to enter the site a password is required. Passwords can be requested by email (trunsoaf@dg10.cec.be)

LANGUAGES

English French

SITE URL<http://europa.eu.int/infonet/>

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) represents a major on-line resource for all those interested in European-level trade union developments. The site provides access to three types of information:

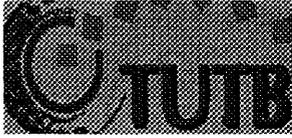
1. General information on the structure and functions of the ETUC and details of its key policies.
2. The latest information on developments in the form of press releases and the regular weekly Press Report.
3. Restricted information (access by password) intended for ETUC Committee members and key members of constituent organisations.

There is also a useful calendar of events, a guide to what is new on the site and a efficient internal site search engine.

LANGUAGES

English French* German*

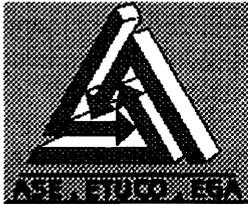
SITE URL<http://www.etuc.org/>



The European Trade Union Technical Bureau for Health and Safety was established in by the ETUC in 1989 to monitor the drafting, transposition and monitoring of EU health and safety at work legislation. Its WWW site contains details of its role and organisation, copies of its recent regular newsletters, details of its current projects and information about health and safety databases. There is also a news and events section devoted to health and safety at work issues.

LANGUAGES

English French

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

The European Trade Union College (ETUCO) is the education and training arm of the ETUC. It organises and runs courses for trade unionists in collaboration with the Association for European Training of Workers on the Impact of New Technology (AFETT). Their WWW site provides details of all the current courses as well as access to a variety of European information services. It also has a section on training and European Works Councils and the latest copies of the regular "Trainers Digest" Newsletter.

LANGUAGES

English

SITE URL<http://www.etuc.org/etuco/>

The Dublin-based European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions has a comprehensive WWW Site which has been considerably upgraded recently. There is full information about the six key themes that are central to the current work programme of the Foundation - employment, equal opportunities, health and well-being, participation, social cohesion and sustainable development. In each case there is a summary of the projects and details of the publications related to the individual themes. You will also find full information about the organisation of the Foundation, future conferences and the on-line version of its regular Newsletter. The site also provides access to the on-line versions of two databases : EMIRE (European employment and industrial relations glossaries database) and ELCID (European Living Conditions Information Directory)

LANGUAGES

English French

SITE URL<http://www.eurofound.ie/>

eironline _____

European Industrial Relations Observatory on-line

The European Industrial Relations Observatory (EIRO) initiates, collects, stores, disseminates and provides access to information and analysis on developments in industrial relations in the 15 EU Member States, plus Norway and the European / International level. Information is provided by a system of "national centres" and the overall project is co-ordinated by a Central Unit based within the European Foundation in Dublin. The WWW site (EIROnline) contains all news, feature and comparative records submitted by the National Centres. The available database provides a unique information resource on industrial relations in Europe. The site is well organised and easy to search by either subject or by Member State. Links are provided to the various National Centres. At present the on-line service is only available in English.

LANGUAGES

English

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



Any listing of WWW sites of interest to European trade unionists would not be complete without mention of the European Unions' own site - Europa. The site grows in scale and sophistication all the time and provides access to hundreds of sub-sites. The four main sections of the site relate to News, Institutions, Policies and basic information on citizens rights and key policy areas in the form of an ABC Guide. Another advantage of the site is that it is fully multilingual and available in all the official languages of the European Union. It incorporates a powerful search engine and a useful "What's New" page for those wishing to access just the most recent information.

LANGUAGES

All EU Official Languages

SITE URL<http://europa.eu.int/>

The WWW Site of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is known as Trade Union World. It provides access to information on current ICFTU campaigns and priorities. These include sections on trade union rights, organisation, jobs and justice and multinational enterprises. ICFTU press releases are available on-line and there is also full coverage of ICFTU Congress Resolutions and information on a variety of trade union educational resources.

LANGUAGES

English French Spanish

SITE URL<http://www.icftu.org/>

The Council of European Professional and managerial Staff (Eurocadres) operate their own WWW site as a sub-site of the ETUC. Information about the main policy issues confronting professional and managerial workers in Europe, and details of the organisation of Eurocadres can be found along with recent press releases and copies of the newsletter - Eurocadres Flash. There is also a facility for feedback to the member organisations of Eurocadres.

LANGUAGES

English

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

The WWW site of the European Metalworker's Federation (EMF) provides the usual mix of information about the structure and organisation of the Federation, key policy areas, documents and news. Copies of the Federation's regular Newsletter are available on-line.

LANGUAGES

English French German

SITE URL<http://www.emf-fem.org/>

The WWW site of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is a valuable source of information on international labour relations issues. It provides details of the various international labour standards and full information of all the campaigns and research projects being undertaken by the ILO. There is also information about ILO conferences and meetings and the various information services available. Copies of all ILO press releases are also available on the site.

LANGUAGES

English French Spanish

SITE URL<http://www.ilo.org/>



WWW SITE ROUND-UP

A brief guide to other sites of interest to European trade unionists.

- * **EUROPEAN TELEWORK ONLINE (English)**
A site devoted to information, news and discussion on teleworking
<http://www.eto.org.uk/>
- * **SAK, FINLAND (Finnish, some English)**
Site of the Finnish trade union confederation - SAK
<http://www.sak.fi/>
- * **OECD TRADE UNION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (English)**
A site dedicated to the work of the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development.
<http://www.tuac.org/>
- * **LO, DENMARK (Danish, some English)**
Site of the Danish national trade union confederation, the LO
<http://www.lo.dk/>
- * **INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WORKERS' EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS (English)**
News and publications on workers' education issues.
<http://www.poptel.org.uk/ifwea/>
- * **LABOURNET (English, Spanish, German)**
One of the main sites for international trade union news and campaigns.
<http://www.labournet.org.uk/>
- * **DGB, GERMANY (German, some French, English and Spanish)**
Comprehensive site of the German trade union confederation, the DGB
<http://www.dgb.de/>
- * **INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION (English)**
Information for trade unionists in the transport sector.
<http://www.itf.org.uk/>
- * **MALTA UNION OF BANK EMPLOYEES (English)**
A new site illustrating just what can be achieved by a relatively small trade union
<http://www.mube.org/>
- * **IRISH CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (English)**
One of the best national trade union confederation sites
<http://www.iol.ie/ictu/>
- * **CCOO, SPAIN (Spanish, some French and English)**
Home site of one of the two Spanish trade union confederations
<http://www.ccoo.es/>
- * **EUROPEAN TRADE UNION EDUCATION ONLINE (English)**
A "one stop shop" for trade union education and training in Europe
<http://www.etuenet.org/>
- * **FNV (FEDERATIE NEDERLANDSE VAKBEWEGING) (Dutch, some English)**
Home site of the Dutch trade union confederation. It also has one of the best listings of international trade union sites available on the WWW.
<http://www.fnv.nl/>
- * **TRADE UNIONS OF THESSALONIKI (Greek and English)**
Very impressive site operated by the Trade Union Centre of Thessaloniki in Greece.
<http://users.otenet.gr/~makine/>
- * **AUSTRIAN FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS (German, some English)**
Home site of the OGB (Austrian Federation of Trade Unions)
<http://edvvie.edvg.co.at/oegb/>

*This listing is produced annually by the European Trade Union Information Bulletin.
Organisations wishing to have their sites included in future editions of this
guide should contact Bulletin@mboelma.demon.co.uk*



NEWS

NEWS World Tourism Day Statement: Tourism and Employment

On the occasion of World Tourism Day - the 25th September - Commissioner Christos Papoutsis outlined the main elements of current European tourism policy. "Our work focuses on three key issues", he said.

1. Creating greater prosperity through creating jobs in tourism;
2. Protecting and improving the quality of European tourist destinations;
3. Encouraging ethically responsible tourism - within and beyond Europe - by supporting activities designed to combat child sex tourism.

Commenting particularly on employment creation in the tourism sector, the Commissioner stressed that tourism is one of the sectors that can create significant numbers of new jobs in the future. It was also a sector which could offer opportunities to groups who face particular difficulties in the labour market, such as young people and the unskilled. The Commission was therefore endeavouring to ensure that all tourism-related activities take full account of employment and job creation, he said.

The Commission's most important initiative was the new High Level Group on Tourism and Employment which will shortly be producing a Report on how tourism can make a greater contribution to growth and stability in employment in Europe. Currently the tourism sector directly employs 9 million people in the European Union - 6% of the total number of people in employment. "Tourism's role in creating more - and better quality - jobs is a very concrete example of its economic and social importance", said Mr Papoutsis.

NEWS Protecting Workers From Carcinogens At Work

The Employment and Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament has adopted a Report prepared by Quinidio Correia MEP on the protection of workers from the risks related to carcinogens at work. The Report relates to the Commission proposals to extend the 1990 Directive on carcinogens to include dust from certain hardwoods (oak and beech) and vinyl chloride monomer. The Commission, in their proposal, state that for the time being only the carcinogenicity of oak and beech dust has been confirmed by

scientific research. Several members of the Committee argued that it is highly likely that dust from other hardwoods constituted a carcinogenic danger. They therefore suggested that it would be in line with the precautionary principle if the proposed limit value of 5.0 mg/m³ within the Directive applied to all hardwood dusts. The Committee also called for further research on the dangers of all hardwood dusts so that the Commission could propose amendments to the limit values if necessary. Finally, the Committee suggest that the Directive should be implemented within three years of the date of adoption and - in order to safeguard employment - the provisions relating to hardwood dusts should only apply to existing work places after a transitional period.

NEWS Trade Union Density in European Countries

The ILO's 1997-98 World Labour Report contains statistics on trade union density (the percentage of wage and salary earners who are trade union members) in European countries. The figures for trade union density relate to 1995 and the percentage change figures relate to changes in trade union density in the ten year period 1985-1995

Country	Density	Change
Austria	41.2%	-19.2%
Czech Republic	n/a	-44.3%
Denmark	80.1%	+2.3%
Finland	79.3%	+16.1%
France	9.1%	-37.2%
Germany	28.9%	-17.6%
Greece	24.3%	-33.8%
Hungary	60.0%	-25.3%
Iceland	83.3%	+6.3%
Israel	23.0%	-77.0%
Italy	44.1%	-7.4%
Malta	65.1%	+35.8%
Netherlands	25.6%	-11.0%
Norway	n/a	+3.6%
Poland	33.8%	-42.5%
Portugal	25.6%	-50.2%
Spain	18.6%	+62.1%
Sweden	91.1%	+8.7%
Switzerland	22.5%	-21.7%
U.K.	32.9%	-27.7%

**NEWS****European Public Opinion: Support For EU Increases**

The latest results of the regular Eurobarometer public opinion survey (Eurobarometer 49) have just been released by the European Commission. The trend in the general level of support for EU membership continued the increase recorded in the last survey. 51% of those questioned now see EU membership as "a good thing", 28% see it as "neither good nor bad", and 12% consider it "a bad thing". The positive support - at 51% - is well down on the all-time high of 72% recorded at the end of 1990, but the downward trend in support which followed that seems to have bottomed-out at the end of 1996. It is perhaps interesting to note that the fall in positive support between 1990 and 1996 was accompanied by a significant increase in the more neutral response rather than a wholesale increase in the negative - "bad thing" - response. In this most recent survey, the highest level of positive responses came from citizens in Ireland (80%), the Netherlands (77%) and Luxembourg (71%). The lowest levels were found in the new Member States - Austria and Finland (both 36%) and Sweden (32%). The percentage seeing EU membership as "a bad thing" was higher than those seeing it as "a good thing" in only one Member State - Sweden (38% and 32%).

NEWS**Eurostat Survey: Computer and Software Sectors Still Male Dominated**

When questioned about specific policy areas and in such areas whether there should be national or joint EU decision-making, there was strong support for joint EU decision-making in such areas as foreign policy (70% for joint EU decision-making, 21% for national decision-making), currency matters (65% and 28%), regional support (63% and 30%) and the fight against unemployment (54% and 42%).

A new Eurostat survey suggests that the European software and computer services sector are still a male dominated preserve. The survey also finds that flexible working practices in the sector are not as widespread as is often suggested. The survey covers five Member States - Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland and the UK. Male workers in the sector were in a majority in all five Member States. Equally, the vast majority of jobs were of a permanent and full-time nature. Another surprising feature is that the incidence of teleworking is still very limited.

Employment in the Software and Computer Services Sector (%) 1996 (*=1995)

	Sp	It	Neth.	Fin	UK
Permanent	69.3*	94.8	n/a	95.4	98.0
Full-Time	90.0*	90.5	96.2*	97.9	n/a
Women	35.0*	48.1	21.4*	31.6	31.0
Teleworkers	n/a	0.2	2.3	2.6	4.0

The survey also reveals that the majority of enterprises in the sector are small (90% have fewer than ten employees) and that the sector as a whole has limited international importance with exports playing a subordinate role.

NEWS**Germany and Benelux: TU Bargaining Experts Meet**

Trade union bargaining experts from the Benelux countries and from Germany met in Doorn in the Netherlands on the 4th and 5th of September in a unique meeting which could become the pattern for future co-operation in the field of European collective bargaining. The meeting concentrated on the general economic background to collective bargaining rather than specific bargaining aims. In particular, delegates were critical of the fact that current economic growth is not leading to either employment growth nor increases in disposable income.

Delegates felt that companies had been the main benefactors from recent increases in productivity and this has meant that the wage component of GNP had, in fact, declined. They declared that there was no economic nor social justification for such a state of affairs. They called for an increase in the co-ordination of policies on working conditions between trade unions at European level in order to provide a more effective counter to the practice of wage competition by employers. In a statement, ETUC General Secretary, Emilio Gabaglio, welcomed this first multilateral meeting of trade union bargaining experts. "It is a start which should be taken forward", he said.

NEWS**Commissioner Outlines Structural Fund Reform**

The European Commissioner responsible for Regional Policy, Monika Wulf-Mathies, attended the September Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee on the 10th of September to outline the Commission plans for the forthcoming reform of the structural funds. She emphasised the three political priorities underpinning the proposed reforms:-



- (1) The Commission's continued commitment to cohesion policy with the reformed structural funds remaining an indispensable instrument for strengthening the economies of underdeveloped regions and promoting economic and social cohesion.
- (2) Respect for budget discipline going hand-in-hand with concentrating resources on the EU's most needy regions, improving quality and supporting Central and Eastern European countries in their preparations to join the Union.
- (3) Stressing the principles of subsidiarity, simplification and diversification.

These priorities led, she said, to the importance being placed on the concept of partnership: "we want to formulate regional policy not only for, but also with, the citizens". She pointed out that one of the first tests for this new approach would come in the next few months when the practical questions of regional qualification for support would be determined. Without geographical concentration, she said, not only would the EU be entering a budgetary cul-de-sac, but it would also be sacrificing the cohesive benefits of European regional support for the sake of "a system of subsidies which gives equal handouts to everybody"

NEWS

Eurostat Report GDP In EU Member States

Eight EU Member States had a per capita GDP at current prices which is above the EU average in 1997, whilst in six Member States it is below the EU average. In the UK, it is exactly equal to the average level for the EU as a whole. These figures were released by Eurostat as part of a study on the GDP levels of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The individual figures are as follows:

EU GDP Per Person, 1997, % of EU Average.

EU	100	Belgium	113
Denmark	115	Germany	110
Greece	69	Spain	78
France	104	Ireland	96
Italy	101	Luxembourg	166
Netherlands	105	Austria	112
Portugal	71	Finland	99
Sweden	98	UK	100

NEWS

Cost Competitiveness In The European Union

Average cost competitiveness of companies in the European Union improved by 1.5% relative to 23 non-EU industrial countries in the first quarter of this year according to the latest Cost Competitiveness

Survey released by the European Commission. The main reason for this improvement has been the 3.5% depreciation of EU currencies against the US dollar. The highest competitiveness gains were recorded in Ireland (4%), Greece (2%) and Sweden (1.5%). Most other movements in competitiveness were relatively minor (less than 1%) except in the case of the United Kingdom where competitiveness decreased by 4%. This was mainly due to the increasing strength of the British pound. The survey notes however that no account is taken of the recent turbulence in the financial markets of South East Asia as all the necessary data is not yet available. Equally, the effects of the recent problems associated with the crisis in Russia will take some time to be assimilated in any assessment of changes in competitiveness.

NEWS

Commission Communication On Violence Against Women and Children

The Commission have adopted a Communication on measures to combat violence against children, young people and women. One of the stated purposes of the Communication is to encourage Member States to contribute to the campaign against violence towards women which the Commission along with the EP and the Council will be launching next year.

The Communication proposes the adoption of a funding programme (DAPHNE) covering the years 2000-2004 with a budget of ECU 25 million which will offer assistance to NGOs active in the fight against violence against women, young people and children. The new Communication is a follow-up to an earlier Communication on the Trafficking in Women and the Stockholm Declaration on the sexual exploitation of children. The main proposals outlined in the Communication are:

- * The proposal for the DAPHNE Programme which builds on the earlier 1997 DAPHNE Initiative. Actions will include the setting up and support of European networks and the implementation of pilot programmes.
- * The Commission will establish a series of activities to focus attention on violence against women which will include a Ministerial Conference on the 8th March 1999.
- * Eurostat will gather statistics on the sexual exploitation of children.
- * Europol involvement in the establishment, maintenance and standardisation of official registers of missing children in Member States

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