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DOCUMENT 2-1776/84

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social  
Affairs and Employment

on the guidelines for the management of the European  
Social Fund for the years 1986 to 1988

Rapporteur: Mr. J.-P. BACHY

PE 95.433/fin.  
Or. Fr.



At the meeting on 28/29 January 1985, Mr Sutherland, Member of the Commission, requested the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment to deliver an opinion pursuant to Article 6(1) of Council Decision 83/516/EEC on the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1986-1988.

At its meeting of 17/18 December 1984, the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment had appointed Mr Bachy rapporteur.

Since the consultation of Parliament is a result of the conciliation procedure on the European Social Fund, by letter of 25 February 1985 the committee requested authorization to draw up this report.

On 26 February 1985, the committee was authorized to report on this subject. On the same date, the Committee on Women's Rights was authorized to draw up an opinion.

The committee discussed the draft report at its meetings of 28/29 January, 14 February and 21/22 February 1985. At the last meeting the committee unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole, which embodies Parliament's opinion.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Welsh, chairman; Mr McCartin, second vice-chairman; Mr Bachy, rapporteur; Mrs d'Ancona, Mr Cassidy (deputizing for Sir Jack Stewart-Clark), Mr Chanterie, Mrs Marinaro (deputizing for Mrs Hoffmann), Mr Sakellariou, Mr Stewart and Mr Tuckman.

The opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights is attached.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will be indicated in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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A  
MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1986 to 1988

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1985 to 1987<sup>1</sup>, adopted by the Commission pursuant to Article 6(1) of Council Decision 83/516/EEC<sup>2</sup>,
  - having been consulted by the Commission pursuant to Article 6(2) of Council Decision 83/516/EEC,
  - having regard to its resolution of 18 November 1983 on the outcome of the conciliation meeting between Parliament and the Council on the review of the texts relating to the reform of the ESF<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution on the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1985 - 1987<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution on the 'statistical machinery to establish the order of priority to be applied when granting European Social Fund assistance to regions'<sup>5</sup>,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights (Doc. 2-1776/84),
- A. having regard to the structural and lasting nature of the employment crisis in Europe, which is becoming increasingly acute and having a dramatic effect on the standard of living and prospects of all age groups in society,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 126, 12.5.1984, p.3

<sup>2</sup> OJ No. L 289, 22.10.1983, p.38

<sup>3</sup> OJ No. C 342, 19.12.1983, p.150

<sup>4</sup> OJ No. C 117, 30.4.1984, p.185

<sup>5</sup> Doc. 2-1333/84

- B. whereas, in the context of the general problem of employment, unemployment among young people is assuming dramatic proportions and is an issue which is fundamental to the Europe of the future and requires practical and imaginative job creation schemes and training programmes with sufficient financial backing from the Community,
- C. whereas the ESF is the main instrument available to the Community for implementing its policy to combat unemployment and the European as well as social character of the Fund must be strengthened to prevent it being sidetracked by national considerations and to preserve its unique role in the institutional framework of Europe,
- D. whereas the success of a strategy to combat unemployment which is designed to open up new sectors of growth and employment depends on the parallel implementation of an educational and vocational training policy which meets the challenges arising from technological and structural changes,
- E. whereas it is the role of the ESF to help finance positive action in the area of vocational training and job creation, particularly for young people and the most vulnerable groups on the labour market, concentrating particularly on practical experience in the workplace,
- F. whereas the guidelines are one of the basic elements of the rules governing the Fund insofar as they establish the criteria to which the Commission should give priority in assessing whether projects comply with the rules and further the objectives laid down in Decision 83/516/EEC,
1. Considers that improvements must be made to the operating efficiency of the Fund and particularly the way in which its management responds to Community priorities; believes that the distribution of resources from the Fund should flow from Community-based principles above all else;
  2. Considers moreover that the current guidelines, which cover a wide range of different operations, 24 to be exact, are defined in very general terms and all have the same degree of priority, and that this runs counter to the need for selectivity and prevents the Community objectives established by the reform of the Fund from being achieved;

3. Points out that, under the current guidelines, the lack of an effective set of selection criteria determining the policy of the Fund leads to a lack of transparency in its management;
4. Considers that the very wide range of operations permitted under the current guidelines accentuates the disproportion between the number of applications and the appropriations entered in the budget and believes that this gap will widen in the future if the guidelines do not foster greater selectivity in line with Community priorities.
5. Considers that the automatic selection of applications for aid now in force
  - reduces the effectiveness of action by the Fund insofar as it neutralizes the 'conditionality' of Community intervention',
  - places insufficient weight on the quality of applications submitted,
  - reduces the Community's role to merely monitoring compliance with the rules,
  - and must be avoided as the Commission itself states in its document on ways of increasing the effectiveness of the structural funds;
6. Considers also that more careful selection, especially on a regional basis, is a better way forward for the Commission, since the present method, which is based on inadequate and non-comparable national statistics, does not always give a true picture of the regional situation and hence does not permit the Commission to make a fair assessment;
7. Believes therefore that the criteria established in the next guidelines should allow the priority objectives laid down in the basic decision to be pursued and, in particular:
  - the geographical concentration of ESF grants in regions where the problems of unemployment, reconversion and restructuring are most serious,

- concentration in terms of quality to prevent resources from being spread too thinly,
  - organization of meaningful pilot projects on these lines, especially through expanding the facilities of the innovatory section of the Fund to publicize these possibilities in local areas;
8. Regards it as vital that, in establishing the criteria contained in the guidelines, it should be borne in mind above all that action by the Fund constitutes a real Community policy and is not a channel for reimbursing expenditure on national policies which have no more than a European veneer, thus betraying the very concept of the Fund and the principle of Community solidarity on which it is based;
  9. Recommends that when distributing resources the Commission should carry out detailed checks to establish to what extent the Member States have used the funds to create new jobs in accordance with the 'additionality' principle rather than to cover their national budget deficits;
  10. Is worried by the current trend in the management of the Fund, which tends to reflect the concerns of the national governments and the specific interests of the Member States to the detriment of local developers and firms which have difficulty in complying with the procedures in force;
  11. Emphasizes that the Commission must do its utmost to provide more information for applicants for ESF grants from both the public and private sectors who are not familiar with Community regulations and calls for the publication as soon as possible of a pamphlet in plain English, which would serve not only as a practical guide to the use of grants and the application procedure but would also encourage the implementation of suitable projects, especially through an expansion of the innovatory section of the Fund;



12. Takes the view that applications submitted under multiannual programmes are more likely than isolated projects to ensure that the principle of 'conditionality' is adhered to and to achieve significant improvements both in the preliminary, technical, economic and financial assessment and in the subsequent monitoring of the results achieved; in fact, control should no longer be confined to checking that the funds have been correctly spent but could also provide an assessment of the results in economic terms;
13. Considers that in future the Commission should be able accurately to assess the specific impact of projects carried out with ESF assistance, by conducting a qualitative analysis from the point of view of the beneficiaries (by means of opinion polls, surveys, etc.) so as to provide a cost/benefit (particularly in the areas of vocational training for young people);
14. Is firmly convinced of the importance of encouraging programmes which involve grants from various financial instruments, such as NCI and EIB loans and ERDF grants, so that joint projects can be better coordinated and make a more effective contribution towards improving regional economic performance and increasing the multiplier effect of the European Social Fund;
15. Considers that coordination between the management of the European Social Fund, the approaches adopted by other directorates of the Commission's DG V (employment, vocational training) and economic services (Competition directorate) should be improved so that the guidelines for the European Social Fund can be based on an analysis of the requirements which incorporates social data and economic and industrial variables;
16. Recalls here the positive impact on employment that the European Social Fund can have on special innovative projects designed to help the rapid setting up of local job creation schemes thought up and agreed on by both sides of industry;

also recognizes the high rate of success achieved by many local authorities with their local employment initiatives, including assisting small firms and cooperatives, and with 'mise a niveau' schemes, which were encouraged by Council Resolution of 7 June 1984 on 'the contribution of local employment initiatives to combating unemployment' and the Commission Communication to the Council of 14 September 1984, referring to the advantages of such schemes 'to improve basic skills, including literacy and numeracy';

17. Calls for vocational training to be closely linked with job creation and emphasizes here that vocational training guidelines should be defined in such a way that technical innovation does not speed up redundancies but opens up new outlets for those with the necessary vocational training and qualifications;
18. Underlines the importance of basic skills and considers that training must be geared to real qualifications, be multi-skilled and lead to a diploma recognized both by the Member States and by collective agreements, but also recognizes that in many instances, within appropriate schemes, such qualifications need not require such formal recognition or approval, provided that they are approved and well-founded in the needs of the local community;
19. Draws attention also to the problems often encountered by young people during the transition from school to employment and considers it vital that vocational training should take account of socio-economic developments in the regions concerned, conditions on the labour market and the determination to combat discrimination between men and women; recognizes also that many local schemes, especially those initiated by local authorities, have found widespread acceptance and approval in the local community, because they have been adapted to meet local needs;
20. Requests that the allocation of funds should, in practice, reflect the wish repeatedly expressed by the European Parliament that grants from the Fund should be more fairly shared between the sexes and should also benefit the most vulnerable groups such as migrant workers and the handicapped;

21. Points out that as regards geographical concentration the drawing up of guidelines demands the introduction of reliable statistical machinery to establish the order of priority for granting funds to the regions and emphasizes once again that the list attached to the current guidelines fails to take account of the most recent instances of unemployment caused by industrial restructuring, the most serious pockets of unemployment, or the groups most vulnerable to unemployment;
22. Calls on the Council to adopt and apply such machinery as soon as possible bearing in mind the views expressed by the European Parliament;
23. Hopes that the timetable for decisions on the granting of funds will be arranged so that the local authorities and developers responsible for projects can obtain this finance when the budget is adopted;
24. Considers that it would be useful if the report on ESF activities for the previous year could be submitted by the Commission in time for it to be considered before the guidelines for the management of the Fund have been adopted (Art. 1(6) of Council Decision 83/516/EEC);
25. Considers that since the annual report on the ESF, a useful and detailed document, is not forwarded to Parliament until the beginning of the second half of the financial year concerned, the Commission should, after deciding on the allocation of funds, forward a note to the relevant parliamentary committee detailing the fund management for the current year.
26. Calls on the appropriate parliamentary committee to carry out during 1987, i.e. after entry into force of the new guidelines, an inquiry based on a public hearing involving both sides of industry and experts from the national and, possibly, regional authorities to allow a more accurate assessment to be made of the effects of the new guidelines; believes also that this should lead to increased parliamentary accountability, especially the prior approval by Parliament, before any changes are made to future guidelines;
27. Considers that the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment could usefully meet the members of the Social Fund Committee at least once a year to examine jointly any problems arising in the operation of the European Social Fund;

28. Shares the Commission's belief in the need for a genuine dialogue between it and the Member States to allow Community and national priorities to be defined jointly;
29. Points out, finally, that in drawing up the guidelines account should be taken of the forthcoming enlargement of the Community to include Spain and Portugal and of the specific socio-economic situations in those two countries;
30. Hopes that in drawing up guidelines for the years 1986 to 1988 the Commission will bear in mind Parliament's recommendations as set out above and will continue to consult Parliament at regular intervals as provided for in Article 6(2) of Decision 83/516/EEC;
31. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and to the governments of the Member States.

B.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

A. Introduction

The regulation governing the ESF, an instrument set up under Article 123 of the Treaty establishing the EEC; has already been amended by the Council on three occasions, on the basis of an opinion delivered by the Commission and following consultation of the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament pursuant to Article 126 of the Treaty establishing the EEC. The provisions of the Fund Regulation were last amended on 17 October 1983<sup>1</sup> and the current provisions will be revised on 31 December 1988 at the latest pursuant to Article 10 of Decision 83/516/EEC on the tasks of the ESF:

Article 124 of the Treaty establishing the EEC stipulates that the Fund is to be administered by the Commission and that it is to be assisted in this task by the Fund Committee. The Committee delivers an opinion on the choice of projects. This means that the Fund operates on the basis of the guidelines laid down by the Commission taking into account the opinions expressed by the Fund Committee. The guidelines are therefore an essential element of the Fund regulation.

The Commission laid down its first guidelines on 28 November 1973 but it was until the reform of 1977, which came into force on 1 January 1978, that the Commission was required to set out, before 1 May each year, the guidelines it intended to follow in respect of the administration of the Fund for the following three years and to publish them in the Official Journal of the European Communities. The guidelines cover a three-year period but are revised each year. Their main purpose is to introduce a measure of discipline into the administration of the Fund as regards the projects selected. (A large number of applications for assistance have to be dealt with and the appropriations available are limited). They are also intended to ensure that the administrations of the Member States and the organizations responsible for the projects in question are informed in good time of the assessment criteria that will be applied during consideration of the applications they submit. They are further intended to provide the budgetary authority with more detailed information than that contained in the report concerning the preliminary draft budget on what use the Commission will make of the proposed appropriations.

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<sup>1</sup>OJ No. L 289 of 22 October 1983

Finally, these guidelines are designed to ensure transparency in the administration of the Fund and this cannot be guaranteed without a clear order of priorities.

B. The opinion of the European Parliament: background

The new regulation stipulates that the Commission must draw up the guidelines in close consultation with the Member States taking account of any views expressed by the European Parliament.

It should be pointed out, in this connection, that Parliament's involvement in fixing the annual guidelines of the European Social Fund was not originally specified in the Council's text. However, the Council introduced this provision in Article 6(2) of Decision 83/516/EEC following the conciliation meeting between Parliament and the Council of 19 September 1983 on the revision of the provisions governing the European Social Fund.

In accordance with the new procedure, the European Parliament delivered its opinion on the guidelines for the period 1985-1987 in its resolution of 30 March 1984<sup>1</sup>. In this resolution, Parliament proposes, in particular, that the list of Community regions worst affected by unemployment covered by the Commission's guidelines for the period 1984-1986 be revised for 1985 as the current list does not take account of the most recent difficulties caused by industrial restructuring in regions not included in the list. However, the Commission made no changes to its provisions for the years 1984-1986 when adopting its guidelines for the period 1985-1987.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 117 of 30 April 1984, pp. 186 et. seq.

### C. Comments on the current guidelines

According to Article 6(1) of Decision 83/516/EEC, the guidelines are intended to determine 'those operations which reflect Community priorities as defined by the Council and in particular the action programmes in the area of employment and vocational training'.

Although the rapporteur does not have all the information needed to give a detailed analysis and assessment of the Fund's management in 1984, he does admit to certain doubts and reservations. Bearing in mind the results of the 1984 financial year, his main cause for concern is how far the current guidelines have enabled the Commission to carry out the proposed reform and to what extent the conditions relating to the effectiveness of the structural funds have been respected, particularly as regards conditionality and the concentration of fund aid<sup>1</sup>.

The current guidelines are very broad and cover a very wide range of different operations - 24 to be exact - which are defined in very general terms and all have the same degree of priority. The fact that there is no scale of priorities obviously has an adverse effect on the process of selection, reducing it to a meaningless exercise which does nothing to meet the Community priorities established under the basic regulation and laid down in the framework of the guidelines. It therefore follows that cutbacks (across the board or weighted) are virtually the only way of bringing the number of applications received into line with the appropriations available; this mechanism was originally designed to cover a tiny percentage of the Fund appropriations. More than 27% of all applications received during the 1984 financial year were rejected as a result of cutbacks.

The process of selecting applications is simply a matter of checking whether the projects comply with the criteria laid down in the basic regulations. Under these circumstances, national factors prevail inasmuch as the number of applications submitted is a determining factor in the allocation of appropriations. This means that those Member States which have more substantial funds at their disposal and are able to submit more applications are favoured whilst those which are not able to make the same financial commitment, being economically weaker and less developed, are clearly penalized.

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<sup>1</sup>See the communication from the Commission to the Council on ways of increasing the effectiveness of the Community's structural funds (COM(83) 501 final).

This paradoxical state of affairs is clearly at odds with the very principles which were used as a basis for the setting up of the Fund.

An automatic procedure of the above type means that Community funds are no longer allocated selectively, i.e. the Community cannot ensure that its objectives are met or allocate aid on the basis of its own conditions of effectiveness. It should be pointed out in this connection that, in its communication on ways of increasing the effectiveness of the Community's structural funds<sup>1</sup>, the Commission stated that increased effectiveness was dependent on the recognition of the following principles:

- ' - the structural Funds must first and foremost be tools of development and structural adaptation, rather than financial redistribution mechanisms;
- ' - the structural Funds must act in support of objectives defined by the Community itself: those laid down in the Treaty and the Funds' basic regulations, those which are today imposed on the Community by the economic crisis, and those which derive from the development of its other policies;
- any automatic intervention by the structural Funds reduces the Community's role to merely checking that the requirements are in fact met, and must therefore be ruled out.'

In the same document, the Commission states that the conditionality of assistance is both an essential element and the initial pre-requisite for the effective use of Community funds and that 'as a general rule there must be a dialogue between the Commission and the Member State concerned in order to dovetail the Community priorities and the national priorities so that joint action can be taken'.

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<sup>1</sup>See COM(83) 501 final, p. 6



Furthermore, the fact that there is no precise scale of selection criteria in the current guidelines to ensure that funds are allocated most effectively and where they are most needed, means that the management of the Fund lacks the necessary transparency and also that there is a lack of discipline in the selection process given the large number of applications received in relation to the appropriations available. In 1984, the financing requested amounted to twice the total appropriations actually available. Given that in the 1984 financial year the late adoption of the reform of the Fund left the national authorities very little time to submit applications and become acquainted with the selection criteria applicable to those applications, it is highly likely that the disproportion between the number of applications and the appropriations available will double again within a very short time. Whatever our views on the subject may be, the appropriations available are limited and the Commission takes the decisions on applications before 31 March of the relevant financial year<sup>1</sup>. It is clear that, under these circumstances, the disproportion between the number of applications and the appropriations available will be a source of disappointment for a growing number of project leaders who submit admissible applications in priority areas only to be told in April that they will not be granted aid for a project which may have been launched in January.

How can we reduce this disproportion and improve an increasingly difficult situation which places an unnecessary burden on the Commission's administrative services and reduces their effectiveness? The only way is to establish guidelines enabling those who administer the Fund to be more selective in their choice of projects in accordance with the priorities and objectives laid down by the Community.

Any other method is likely to exacerbate the evident disparities in the allocation of Fund resources to the various Member States. The distribution of assistance in the 1984 financial year is a major cause for concern. The following table demonstrates quite clearly that the current guidelines did not allow the Fund to be administered as effectively or harmoniously as it should have been:

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<sup>1</sup>Article 4(2) of Council Regulation No. 2950/83 (OJ No. L 289 of 22 October 1983, pp. 1 et seq.)

IX. 2 - BREAKDOWN OF AID ACCORDING TO THE DEVELOPER'S COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Commitments 1978 - 1984

Member State	Commitment										m EUA/m ECU from 1981				
	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	
Belgium	11.08	15.94	29.30	22.73	23.57	32.29	88.7	2.0	2.1	2.9	2.3	1.6	1.7	4.7	
Denmark	14.24	14.70	19.43	24.40	27.33	42.15	91.5	2.5	1.9	1.9	2.4	1.8	2.2	4.9	
Germany	57.26	52.88	107.96	73.69	94.97	110.32	81.2	10.1	6.8	10.6	7.4	6.3	5.9	4.3	
France	86.20	134.82	194.96	141.12	264.65	277.25	209.0	15.2	17.4	19.2	14.1	17.6	14.8	11.2	
Greece	-	-	-	29.87	52.38	113.25	95.1	-	-	-	3.0	3.5	6.0	5.1	
Ireland	44.41	58.13	79.69	105.68	143.11	181.99	212.3	7.8	7.5	7.9	10.6	9.5	9.7	11.4	
Italy	233.10	281.23	327.15	340.77	440.86	532.93	425.5	41.0	36.3	32.3	34.1	29.3	28.5	22.8	
Luxembourg	0.23	1.00	0.93	0.57	0.49	0.94	0.6	-	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	
Netherlands	9.81	19.32	18.30	12.68	15.88	23.73	52.1	1.7	2.5	1.8	1.3	1.0	1.3	2.8	
United Kingdom	111.75	196.43	236.50	248.64	442.70	557.56	602.3	19.7	25.4	23.3	24.9	29.4	29.8	52.4	

The table shows that the breakdown of the Fund aid available between the various Member States was not very equitable bearing in mind the seriousness of the unemployment situation and the ability of different Member States to deal with their economic problems. No explanation has been given for a number of sudden cuts which demonstrate that the utilization of Community funds is not clearly programmed.

It is hard to justify the fact that Germany or France received a smaller share of aid than other countries, given the serious conversion and restructuring problems facing those two countries. It is also unacceptable that Greece receives such a tiny amount of ESF aid when there is objective evidence of the need for training in that country. The fact that countries such as Italy, the United Kingdom and France, where the level of youth unemployment is roughly the same, are treated quite differently as regards the allocation of Fund aid seems to be at variance with the principles of equity.

One wonders whether the Commission has considered what effect the forthcoming accession of Spain and Portugal will have on the management of the Fund if the current guidelines are maintained.

Under these circumstances, the rapporteur feels that serious thought should be given to the vital need to formulate more specific guidelines which will satisfy all the Member States, ensure that fund aid is concentrated where it is most needed and provide an effective response to training requirements and measures to combat unemployment in the Community countries.

#### D. Conclusion

The European Parliament, the Commission and the Council have repeatedly affirmed their commitment in principle to measures to combat unemployment, particularly amongst young people.

The European Social Fund is the main instrument, if not the only instrument, available to the Community for dealing with and attempting to solve this problem on the basis of criteria which enable it to go beyond national interests and give practical effect to a genuine sense of solidarity between the Member States.

The economies of the European countries are currently undergoing major structural and technological changes having a profound effect on employment and the integration of young people, men and women, into the working environment and we must therefore exercise great caution when we formulate the Social Fund guidelines for the years to come.

The aim of this report is to provide food for thought. When all the debates and essential consultations have taken place, we must produce some constructive proposals. In making full use of its right to submit proposals, Parliament is acting in accordance with the provisions of the new Fund regulation which stipulates that the Commission must take full account of Parliament's views.

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## OPINION

of the Committee on Women's Rights

Draftsman: Mrs LEMASS

On 18 December 1984, the Committee on Women's Rights requested authorization to draw up an opinion on the guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1986 to 1988: on 26 February 1985 the committee was authorized to deliver an opinion on this subject.

At its meeting of 29-30 January 1985, the committee appointed Mrs Lemass draftsman of the opinion.

The committee considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 26 February 1985 and adopted it unanimously.

The following took part in the vote: Mrs CRAWLEY and Mrs CINCIARI RODANO (vice-chairmen); Mrs Lemass, draftsman; Mrs BANOTTI (deputizing for Mrs GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU), Mrs BRAUN-MOSER, Mrs DE BACKER-VAN OCKER, Mr ELLIOT, Mrs FONTAINE, Mrs GADIOUX, Mrs van den HEUVEL, Mrs LARIVE-GROENENDAAL, Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN, Mr NEWMAN, Mrs SALISCH and Ms TONGUE (deputizing for Mrs WIECZOREK-ZEUL).

## General Observations

1. On 17 October 1983, the Council completely revised the tasks of the European Social Fund in such a way that 75% of the Fund's resources should henceforth be allocated to actions in favour of the employment of young people under 25, particularly those who have limited possibilities of finding employment or who have been unemployed for a long period. With regard to the other 25% of the Fund, it can be used to promote the employment of people over 25 who are also threatened with unemployment or have been unemployed for a long period, of women wishing to return to their professional activity, of the handicapped, of migrant workers, of people working in small and medium sized undertakings. It should be noted that 5% of this 25% is allocated to specific projects.
2. As a result of this new allocation of resources, it appears in comparison with the tasks of the old Social Fund, that there is no longer an article which allocates a specific part of the fund expressly for action for women over 25.

The Commission has in fact always contended that there never has been discrimination between men and women in any of the Fund's actions and has said that the withdrawal of this article, far from being detrimental to women, would in fact be profitable, as they can obviously figure equally or even predominantly, both in the 75% of the resources allocated to young people, and in the 25% allocated to people over 25.

3. In order to implement the tasks of the European Social Fund, the Commission adopts guidelines which are designed to determine actions referring to Community priorities as defined by the Council and particularly actions in the area of employment and vocational training. The latest guidelines were adopted by the Commission in January 1984 (OJ C 5 of 10.01.1984) and according to this text, it appears that priority is given to those actions defined in various Council resolutions. Amongst these resolutions figures in fourth place, the Council resolution of 12.7.1982 concerning the promotion of equal opportunities for women.

3. (cont'd.)

There is therefore, out of eight resolutions, one which is specifically on women. Moreover, among the priorities it has to be noted that inter alia are mentioned actions specifically designed for women who are unemployed, threatened with unemployment, under-employed, or wishing to return to professional activity, with a view to promoting a better balance in the job sectors where women are under-represented.

4. The draftsman very much regrets that, despite the Commission's promises, no figures for the 1984 financial year were made available for the purposes of this opinion. In the working document<sup>1</sup> concerning the twelfth annual report on the European Social Fund for the financial year 1983, the figures for 1983 are noted. These figures can be used only with difficulty given that, at that time, the new Council decision of 17.10.1983 concerning the tasks of the European Social Fund was not yet in force. However, in October 1984 Mr RICHARD, former Commissioner, had informed the members of the Committee on Women's Rights that there had been a progression from 30-39% in the actions in favour of women for the financial year 1984.

As that was merely an oral statement, it would be useful to verify to what extent the official figures for 1984 refute or confirm this tendency.

The fact remains that, according to the official figures, women do not benefit in due proportion from actions financed by the European Social Fund either in measures for persons under 25 years of age or measures for those over 25 years of age.

5. On 30 March 1984, the Parliament had already pronounced itself on the guidelines and it had reiterated inter alia concerning women that it was necessary to be vigilant with regard to a balanced distribution of Social Fund monies between men and women in both types of action, that is to say young people and people over 25, and it requested that complementary projects, specifically for women, should continue to benefit from Social Fund aid as long as this balanced distribution has not been achieved.
6. According to latest statistics, it appears that the number of unemployed women, both young (under 25) and older (over 25) is continually growing and that it is therefore necessary to ensure that as large a part as possible of fund resources be allocated to actions to promote the employment of young women and women over 25.

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<sup>1</sup> PE 93.683

6. (Cont'd.)

According to the Commission's communication to the Council and the Standing Employment Committee on "Action to combat long-term unemployment", women account for 40% of the long-term unemployed and of the work force as a whole. Consideration of the situation of women, therefore, in this category must also receive particular attention in the distribution of Social Fund financing.

7. The rapporteur considers finally that it is necessary to be particularly vigilant with regard to the necessity of improving training and employment openings for women by means of the resources of the Social Fund which is, after all, the only Community instrument for an employment policy. The Social Fund could usefully extend its aid to Assertiveness Training/Personal Development Courses for women who need to regain their confidence to get back into the work force. Such courses are particularly valuable for women who have met a crisis in their lives, i.e. widowhood or separation.
8. The rapporteur also believes that Social Fund aid should be extended to courses for women related to women in management. There is a considerable block for women at a certain level, possibly due to their own sense of worth, or lack of skills needed to progress, and this needs to be tackled if women are to achieve equality at higher levels.
9. It has also come to the attention of the rapporteur that women are not being given equal opportunities in the operating of the Social Fund when applying for assistance in the setting up of cooperatives. Such discrimination in the use of Social Fund aid should not be allowed to continue.
10. The rapporteur recognises the vital importance to the Community of the whole field of high technology and feels that the Social Fund must provide the necessary funds for training women in this area.
11. The statistics presented make no distinction between grants from the European Social Fund in favour of women and those benefiting men, this should be done, if only because of the different rates of unemployment in the two categories.



12. It appears therefore clearly that it is necessary to reiterate yet again (see paragraph 5) that we must be vigilant with regard to a balanced distribution of Social Fund monies between men and women, both for actions for people under 25 and those for people over 25. Consequently, in accordance with the recommendation on positive action in favour of women, there should be additional projects in the following fields:

- a. management courses for women and for the management of cooperatives and small businesses;
- b. courses on the new technologies for girls and young women;
- c. courses for women going back to work;
- d. training courses for women in sectors in which women are under-represented.

The following amendments, adopted by the committee, should therefore be tabled to the motion for a resolution contained in the report by Mr Bachy on this subject:

Amendment No. 1

After the last citation in the motion for a resolution drawn up by Mr Bachy on the Commission guidelines for the management of the European Social Fund for the years 1986 to 1988, add the following:

'- having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights'

Amendment No. 2

After paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution, insert the following new paragraph 6a:

'Notes that on the basis of the figures for the 1984 financial year, women do not generally benefit in due proportion from actions financed by the European Social Fund either in measures for persons under 25 years of age or measures for those over 25 years of age.'

Amendment No. 3

After paragraph 6 of the motion for a resolution drawn up by Mr Bachy, insert a new paragraph 6b worded as follows:

'Notes that in the statistics presented, no distinction is made between grants made by the European Social Fund in favour of men or women and believes that such a measure is necessary given the different rates of unemployment in these two categories.'

Amendment No. 4

After paragraph 20 of the motion for a resolution drawn up by Mr Bachy, insert a new paragraph 20a worded as follows:

'Requests that, in accordance with the recommendation on positive action in favour of women, there should be additional projects in the following fields:

- a. management courses for women and for the management of cooperatives and small businesses;
- b. courses on the new technologies for girls and young women;
- c. courses for women going back to work;
- d. training courses for women in sectors in which women are under-represented;

Amendment No. 5

After paragraph 25 of the resolution drawn up by Mr Bachy, insert a new paragraph 25a worded as follows:

'Requests that the annual report on the European Social Fund should provide statistics and other information on:

- a. actions in favour of women compared with those in favour of men;
- b. the types of projects in favour of women, compared with those in favour of men;
- c. the age of the women involved, compared with that of the men.'