

Brussels, February 1967
P-11INFORMATION MEMOTOWARDS MORE EFFECTIVE PROTECTION OF YOUNG WORKERS

The EEC Commission has issued a recommendation to the Member States on the protection of young workers. The recommendation, which is one of various measures to improve living and working conditions and align them in an upward direction, is the outcome of studies begun in 1961.

The recommendation, the first draft of which appeared in 1964, was prepared by the Commission in co-operation with government experts and representatives of workers' and employers' organizations. Before adopting the final text the Commission sought the opinion of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, whose suggestions were for the most part incorporated.

The recommendation has two aims: to generalize the application of certain protective measures and to enhance the welfare of young workers. The main points concern:

- (i) Minimum working age: the minimum age should be brought up to fifteen, with a view to its being raised later in accordance with the school-leaving age;
- (ii) Working hours: limited to eight hours a day and eventually to forty hours a week. Annual paid holidays should be extended by law to a minimum of twenty-four days, excluding Sundays and public holidays. There should not be more than 4 1/2 hours of work without a break;
- (iii) Prohibition of work in certain conditions: night work, work on Sundays and public holidays, and dangerous and unhealthy work should be forbidden;
- (iv) Medical checks and accident prevention: a medical examination on taking up employment and a medical check at least once a year should be made compulsory. Before young people begin their first job, and at regular intervals thereafter, they should be fully informed of accident risks and dangers to their health;
- (v) Release from work for training purposes: young people should be able to take training and upgrading courses, being granted leave which is not deducted from their annual holidays.

The recommendation closes with provisions urging observance of the rules concerning the protection of young workers, such as compulsory written contract and registration of adolescents with notification of number of working hours. The Member States are asked to report to the EEC Commission every two years on developments in the protection of young workers.
