

# *Women of Europe*

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Brussels, 15 July 1977

Dear Friends,

Information must be distributed throughout this large body we call the European Community.

The bulletin is intended, in a modest way, to help in this task. It is a trial issue, published only in English and French; this autumn we hope to begin publishing it regularly in all the Community languages.

The magazine, wanted by the women of Europe and written for them, publishes information collected by women about women; it is not only meant for reading but may be copied, duplicated, cut up, plagiarized, quoted, criticised, used, underlined, annotated, added to, embellished ... .

Your comments and news are essential if each issue of this magazine of yours is to be better than the previous one. We shall be interested to hear from you.

Fausta Deshormes

Information for women's organisations  
and press

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Editor: J. Pirlot

**PRESS AND INFORMATION OFFICES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

**GERMANY**

53 BONN  
Zitelmannstrasse 22  
Tél. 238041

1 BERLIN 31  
Kurfürstendamm 102  
Tél. 8 92 40 28

**BELGIUM**

1049 BRUXELLES  
Rue Archimède 73  
Tél. 735 00 40/735 80 40

**DENMARK**

1045 COPENHAGUE K  
4 Gammeltorv  
Postbox 144  
Tél. 14 41 40

**FRANCE**

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61, rue des Belles-Feuilles  
Tél. 553 53 26

**IRELAND**

DUBLIN 2  
29 Merrion Square  
Tél. 76 03 53

**ITALY**

00187 ROME  
Via Poli, 29  
Tél. 68 97 22 à 26

**LUXEMBOURG**

LUXEMBOURG  
Bâtiment Jean Monnet B/O  
Plateau du Kirchberg  
Tél. 430 11

**NETHERLANDS**

LA HAYE  
29, Lange Voorhout  
Tél. 070-46 93 26

**UNITED KINGDOM**

LONDRES W8 4QQ  
20, Kensington Palace Gardens  
Tél. 727 8090

CARDIFF CF1 1WF  
4 Cathedral Road  
P.O. Box 15  
Tél. 371 631

EDINBURGH EH2 4PH  
7, Alva Street  
Tél. (031) 225.2058

**CANADA**

OTTAWA, Ont. K1R 7S8  
350 Sparks St.  
Suite 1110  
Tél. 238 6464

**CHILE**

SANTIAGO 9  
Avda. R. Lyon 1177  
Casilla 10093  
Tél. 25 05 55

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20037  
2100 M Street, N.W.  
Suite 707  
Tél. (202) 872-8350

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017  
245 East 47th Street  
1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza  
Tel. (212) 3713804

**GREECE**

ATHENES 134  
Vassilisis Sofias 2  
Tél. 743 982/83/84

**JAPAN**

102 TOKYO  
Kowa 25 Bldg.  
8-7 Sanbancho  
Chiyoda-Ku  
Tél. 23 90 441

**SWITZERLAND**

1202 GENEVE  
37-39, rue de Vermont  
Tél. 34 97 50

**TURKEY**

ANKARA  
Kavaklıdere  
13. Beğaz Sokak  
Tél. 27 61 45 46

WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE

At the express request of 120 female delegates who met at a symposium in Brussels in March 1976, the European Commission set up the "Information service for women's organizations and press", attached to the Directorate-General for Information and headed by Mrs Fausta Deshormes.

The task of this service is to keep up a constant dialogue with the press and women's organizations, provide them with news and documentation on the various aspects of European integration and help organizations in different countries to exchange experience and information.

In addition to publishing the magazine "Women of Europe", the "Information service for women's organizations and press" has taken preliminary steps to interest female public opinion in the campaign for the direct election of the European Parliament. It has acted as a catalyst in each country of the Community and encouraged the setting up, by women's organizations themselves, of working parties devoted to the forthcoming European elections.

In November 1976 the European Commission also set up a Bureau for questions affecting women's employment, attached to the Directorate-General for Social Affairs and headed by Miss Jacqueline Nonon.

The aim of this office is not to solve individual problems but to work to achieve equal treatment for working men and women at Community level.

INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS, FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY

B E L G I U M

Women at work

A "Committee on Female Employment" was set up by Royal Decree at the Ministry of Employment and Labour. Its advisory status enables it to meet requests for opinions from the Minister and to give opinions on its own initiative on problems it considers important.

The recent activities of this Committee have included the organization of a seminar on all problems affecting "women in the working world" and a one-day symposium on "women's work and unemployment".

The Committee on Female Employment also prepared a brochure on the National Collective Agreement No 25, signed by employers and workers represented on the National Labour Council and dealing with the application of the principle of equal pay, in accordance with the European Community Directive on the subject. This brochure was sent to all members of works' councils in all the Member States in compliance with Article 7 of the Community Directive, which makes provision for informing female workers on the job.

Useful address: Commission du Travail des Femmes  
53 rue Belliard  
1040 Brussels Tel. 02 513 40 90

Equal treatment

The Committee on Female Employment has just forwarded to the Minister of Labour its opinion on the amendments to Belgian laws and regulations needed to make possible the application of the Community Directive on "equality between men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training, promotion and working conditions", adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Community on 12 February 1976 (Directive 76/207/EEC - Official Journal No L 39 of 14 February 1976).

An essay competition

400 essays were addressed to the National Committee on Female Employment as entries for the competition organized at the request of the Committee by the French language Minister of Education.

The theme of the competition, which was open to pupils in the last two years of higher secondary studies (young men and women aged 17 and 18), was "if men and women were really equal as regards all political and social, family and professional responsibilities, would society be better off?"

In June, the twenty male and female finalists received the prizes offered by various official bodies, including the European Commission and the organizations representing the two sides of industry.

D E N M A R K

Equality and education

The preliminary conclusions of the studies carried out by the Committee on "the role of men and women and training", set up by the Ministry of Education, are expected by the end of this year. The task of this Committee is to examine the way in which the Danish education system can help to promote equality of rights and opportunities for men and women.

The Committee, which is chaired by Lilian Vohn, an official at the Ministry of Education, includes Karen Ytting, who was President of the National Council of Danish Women, amongst its members.

Thirty women in the Folketing

Two more women entered the Folketing (the Danish Parliament) after the parliamentary elections last February. Even then, one of them had to ask her employer for sick leave!

Danish feminist associations deplore the slow progress made in increasing the number of women members of the Folketing: they still represent only 16.7% of the total.

Women recently elected to the Folketing include Eva Gredal, Minister of Social Affairs; Karen Dehlerup, President of the Committee for Equal Rights; Grethe Fenger Kjeller, President of the Association of Danish Women; Mette Groes, former Vice-President of the Association of Danish Women and Helle Bøgn, who represented the National Council of Danish Women at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

### Cohabitation

Mrs Inger Margrette Pedersen, Judge at the Court of Appeal and member of the National Council of Danish Women, has just published a book on the legal problems affecting couples living together out of wedlock. The number of such couples is constantly increasing and the Committee set up at the Ministry of Justice to study marital problems will be asked, in the near future, to give its opinion on the new legislation which could become necessary as a result of this trend.

## FRANCE

### French women and local elections

The fact that 30 000 French women have been elected to local councils is a great step forward: they numbered only 20 000 in 1971 and 11 000 in 1965. However, some disappointment was felt since women still represent only 8% of the total number of local representatives, whereas the target was 46 000, or 10%.

Moreover, the number of women mayors is still very low and only four of them are at the head of towns with more than 30 000 inhabitants.

### Female unemployment

Female unemployment has become a major concern of employment policy in France in recent years. On 1 March 1977, 560 368 women were registered job-seekers. The total number of unemployed now includes more women than men.

A study on their situation, recently completed by the Committee on Female Employment, has been published as a supplement to the magazine "Actualités (Current Affairs)

Useful address: Actualités du Travail féminin  
14, rue Eugène  
75700 Paris Tel. 567 55 44

Three opinions from the Committee on Female Employment

The Committee on Female Employment, set up by the Ministry of Labour, has just forwarded to the French Government three opinions dealing with maternity leave, a new "family supplement" benefit and new measures for pregnant manual workers.

Maternity leave will be for a six-month period renewable three times. The Committee on Female Employment regrets that the Government proposal does not include the introduction of "parental leave", to emphasize the role of the father in bringing up children. It also considers that the protective and discriminatory nature of this measure might be used against women and contribute to the marginalization of the female population.

As regards the "family supplement" benefit, the Committee on Female Employment welcomed the provision acknowledging the burden represented by the presence of children in a household, including the first child, but also in the case of large families. However, the Committee on Female Employment feels that this measure can not replace the necessary comprehensive reform of family benefits.

Lastly, as regards the situation of pregnant manual workers, which the draft law would improve by authorizing leave of absence, the Committee on Female Employment pointed out that some employees in the tertiary sector - card-punch girls or checkers, for instance - do jobs which are not far removed from manual work without being able to benefit from the provisions of the draft law.

Information is being circulated

Last year the Documentation Centre of the Committee on Female Employment answered 650 letters and 400 telephone calls, and received 500 visits. Moreover, four reports and eight memoranda were sent to 8 000 people directly involved in female employment.

Useful address: Centre de documentation  
du Comité du Travail féminin  
14, rue Duquesne  
75700 - Paris

Tel. 567 55 44

**ITALY**

Equality acknowledged by the law

The Italian Parliament has just adopted, by 287 votes in favour and 56 votes against, a law on equality of treatment between men and women as regards employment, in accordance with the Directive adopted by the European Community.

Commenting on this event, Mrs Tina Anselmi, the Minister of Labour, said, "you can't expect habits to change overnight, but this law will undoubtedly have positive effects".

This law, as adopted by the Chamber of Deputies, contains certain provisions which set it in the forefront of European legislation on the subject. Article 4, for instance, grants female workers who reach pensionable age the right to continue working until the retirement age for men.

Article 6 grants mothers who adopt a child aged under six the same advantages as regards leave and social security benefits as young women giving birth. Under the provisions of Article 7 the father, even in the event of adoption, may benefit from the same advantages as a working mother, alternately with his wife.

Women in the Regions

Italian women are already playing a role in the life of the Regions. Women's Regional Councils (Consulte femminili Regionali) have been set up officially in Piedmont and the Trentino region, and others are being set up in Umbria, Lombardy, Campania, Calabria, Latium and elsewhere.

This action, which was instigated by the National Advisory Council for the Participation of Women in Public Life, has been warmly welcomed by the regional authorities.

The aim of the Women's Regional Councils is to promote a much broader participation by women in the life of the Region, to help solve problems specific to women in connection with the economic, social, political and cultural development of the regional communities.



The activities of the Women's Regional Councils are directed towards the regional institutions in their capacity of advisory bodies and towards the female population with a view to obtaining a greater understanding of their problems and needs and being able to help them to a greater extent.

Furthermore, the Women's Regional Councils intend to establish the necessary contacts with each other for circulating information and exchanging valuable experience.

Wherever Women's Regional Councils are set up they attempt to group together all organized women's movements, so long as they have a democratic status and are really representative. The major concerns of the Women's Regional Councils are female employment and working conditions, vocational training, social services, protection of the habitat, etc.

It will soon be possible to measure the importance of the Women's Regional Councils and their acceptance by the public authorities in numerical terms: the Region of Umbria has already voted an appropriation of Lit 30 million for the Women's Regional Council in its 1976 budget.

## IRELAND

### Votes for women

The last parliamentary elections in Ireland showed a spectacular increase in first preference votes for women candidates. The political parties which failed to give prominence to women paid for it dearly. From one election to the next, the number of first preference votes for women candidates increased from 8 811 to 37 547 for Fianna Fail, whereas it held steady at around 19 000 for the Fine Gael. The Labour Party, which led an active campaign for women's rights, saw its first preference vote rise from 8 396 to 14 753. Women who stood as independent candidates, mostly on a strictly feminist platform, increased their votes from 243 to 10 144. There were even cases of seats which parties lost because the candidate was a man, whereas a woman would have obtained the preference votes needed to hold it.

### The Women's Representative Committee

The Women's Representative Committee, which was set up in 1974 by the Ministry of Labour, is responsible for establishing permanent links between women's organizations and the Ministries, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Women's Representative Committee consists of 14 members, four of whom are appointed by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, four by the Federated Union of Employers, three by the Commission on the Status of Women, one by the Economic and Social Research Institute and one legal adviser. The President of the Committee is a Member of Parliament and it should also be noted that four of the members are men.

The main tasks of the Committee are to supervise the gradual implementation of regulations, make proposals for legislative and administrative reforms to achieve equality between men and women and, lastly, to draw up reports on the spheres in which discrimination still exists, of which it is informed by women themselves. Three subcommittees are at work on employment, the reform of family law and the media.

### The fight against discrimination

A draft law designed to make any form of discrimination as regards employment (other than pay) illegal is currently being studied by the Irish Parliament. As a result of pressure brought to bear by women's organizations and the trade unions, the amended provisions are much stricter than those of the original version announced in November 1975. Most of the amendments recommended by the Women's Representative Committee have been adopted in this draft law, although it does not mention the date of its entry into force and still fails to cover certain trade organizations which should benefit from its provisions.

In 1976, the women's organizations had already joined forces to compel the Government to apply the law on equal pay. The Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women even went to Strasbourg to plead the cause of women before the Community authorities, when the Irish Government requested a deferment in the application of the principle of equal pay.

N E T H E R L A N D S

Instituut Ombudsvrouwen

An "Instituut Ombudsvrouwen", along the lines of the Swedish Ombudsman, may be introduced in the Netherlands. It will be responsible for helping and advising women, who, as individuals, encounter specifically feminine problems.

The idea has just been warmly recommended by the Emancipatiekommissie, an advisory body to the Netherlands Government. Several Ministries are involved in this project: Culture, Social Affairs, Justice, and Health.

According to the Emancipatiekommissie, the related budgetary allowance should be Fl 990 000 for 1978, rising by stages to 1 600 000 in 1982. With this sum of money it would be possible to begin with a team of nine persons, to be enlarged later; it would include two legal experts, a psychiatrist, a doctor, a specialist in educational problems, a specialist in employment problems, and three administrative assistants.

By way of example, during the experiment carried out over a ten-month period in 1975, 229 written queries were dealt with.

Useful address: Emancipatiekommissie  
J.C. van Markenlize 3  
Rijswijk

Tel. (070) 94 92 95

UNITED KINGDOM

Cutbacks

To save public funds, the Women's National Commission decided to hold three instead of four meetings per year and only to publish its Information Bulletin after these occasions rather than every quarter. This policy has just been announced by the Co-Presidents, Lady Llewelyn-Davies of Hastoe and Mrs Jane Finlay.

This public-spirited gesture, fully in keeping with the British tradition, will in no way diminish the activities or responsibilities of the Women's National Commission.

The Family and the Law

The evolution of the family structure in the United Kingdom is of great concern to the Women's National Commission; several working parties are studying the various aspects of this problem, especially from the legal point of view.

The need is beginning to be felt for a "family code" comprising all the related legislative provisions and regulations in a form which is clear and comprehensible to the layman.

The Women's National Commission is also concerned with matters in which the law has not yet formally intervened: for example, too many children suffer because of the chaotic situation created by parents who are de facto, but not legally, separated. One of the major problems seems to be the lack of communication between the various public services involved when the children, and one of the quasi ex-spouses, moves to a different district and school. A solution should be found at local level through improved cooperation between the schools and social services of both places of residence.

THE MILITANT LIFE

EUROPE

European Trade Union Confederation

The European Trade Union Confederation holds regular meetings of its Working Party of Trade Union leaders, which consists of representatives of the affiliated National Confederations. At the moment, discussions are being held on problems of equal treatment and equality as regards social security.

The European Trade Union Confederation has sent each National Confederation a questionnaire on the extent to which the Community Directive on Equal Pay is being applied. The ETUC's chief concern is to measure progress made and evaluate the remaining obstacles.

Useful address:           Confédération européenne des syndicats  
                              37 rue Montagne aux Herbes potagères  
                              1000 Brussels       Tel: (02) 217 91 42

Christian women and Europe

An "Open letter to the Christian Women of Europe" has just been published by women of various countries of Europe, Churches and Christian communities who recently met in Geneva. The signatories of this appeal ask their fellow believers if they consider it necessary to call a meeting of European Christian women and, if so, the questions which should be discussed.

At the Geneva meeting, the desire was expressed to draw up a list of all initiatives taken by women in Europe in respect of the feminine approach to theology and the position of women in the Church.

Useful address:           Denise Peeters  
                              16 avenue Jules César - boîte no 9  
                              1150 Brussels.

BELGIUM

Two centres

Belgium has two new Maisons des Femmes (Women's Centres), one in Bruges and the other in Malines.

Useful addresses:           Vrouwenhuis  
                                  Korte Vuldersstraat 19  
Bruges           Tel: (050) 33 35 64  
  
                                  Vrouwenhuis  
                                  Kathelijnestraat 109  
Mechelen       Tel: (015) 41 38 87

GERMANY

"Courage"

"Courage" is the title of a militant women's magazine published monthly in Berlin. It is edited, made up and printed entirely by women. "Courage" publishes writings by women and women's organizations on their experiences and analyses of the position of women in the working world and the spheres of culture, medicine, politics, etc.

Useful address:           Courage  
                                  Bleibtreustrasse, 48  
                                  1000 Berlin 12

"Emancipation"

The Working Party on emancipation (AKE) was founded three years ago by a group of women members of the FDP in Berlin. The group's objective is to increase the active participation of women in the life of the Liberal Party and cooperate with other women's organizations in Berlin in every sphere.

With this in mind, the "emancipation" group helped to set up a reception centre for women in difficulty, which was opened in Berlin in November 1976.

FRANCE

Women's Decade

The "Courrier français de la Décennie de la Femme" (French journal of the Women's Decade) is the title of a periodical, number 2 of which describes the major international activities (United Nations, UNESCO, European Community, etc.) and gives a bibliography of French works on the future of women.

Useful address:           Le Courrier français de la Décennie  
                              J.H. Chaton  
                              43 avenue Ernest Reyer  
                              75014 Paris

5 000 women at Vincennes

A few militants, for whom "women's struggle is an integral part of the class struggle", organized an international meeting at the University of Vincennes, its success was far greater than they had hoped. More than 5 000 feminists came from twenty countries to discuss their similarities and differences at Vincennes on 30 May 1977.

Broadly speaking, opinions were polarized around two main trends: those who linked their struggle to the more general one of the workers' movement and those who preferred to dissociate themselves from the world of men. At Vincennes it became clear that women did not wish to perpetuate the myth of out and out feminine solidarity; they were no longer afraid to acknowledge their differences.

ITALY

Women journalists

300 women journalists attended the first national meeting on the subject of "women and the news" in Milan at the end of April. The most varied subjects were dealt with, including trade union problems and job protection for women journalists.

The ambiguity perpetrated by the various statutes applicable to journalists in Italy was discussed at length.

Women voters

The National Association of Women Voters (ANDE) amended its statute at its national conference in Pisa in February 1977; the building and consolidation of a united Europe is now included in its aims.

The ANDE is conducting an active campaign to give Italians living in another country of the European Community the right to vote in European elections. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs assured the ANDE that he shared this concern.

Useful address: ANDE c/o Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli  
via Borgognona, 47  
Rome Tel: 68 88 03

"Europe 78"

On the initiative of the National Council of Italian Women (CNDI) a "Europe 78" Committee was set up in Rome in April 1976; this example has been followed in many other places throughout Italy.

To support these activities, the CNDI drafted and distributed an "E 78" questionnaire, which will provide greater knowledge of the penetration of the European idea amongst the female electorate. This action will be supplemented by conferences, discussions and training courses.

Useful address: CNDI  
via Ennio Quirino Visconti, 55  
00193 Rome Tel: 31 42 93

200 organizers

Women are particularly active in the Italian Council of the European Movement (CIME): three inter-regional study sessions will be organized this autumn to provide training for 200 female organizers in connection with the European elections.

Furthermore, twenty regional women delegates will coordinate the activities of the European Movement aimed at both men and women voters.

Useful address: CIME  
10 viale Baccelli  
Rome Tel: 574 22 29



I R E L A N D

Thirty organizations, 250 000 women

The Council for the Status of Women is a body which groups together thirty organizations with a total of 250 000 members. When it was set up in 1968 to study and investigate cases of discrimination against women, the Council for the Status of Women had no more than ten member organizations. However, their insistence led the Government to set up the National Commission on the Status of Women in March 1970.

U N I T E D K I N G D O M

Sex stereotypes

The Welsh Section of the British Psychological Society is organizing an international conference on stereotypes of sexual behaviour in mid July. Women's identity, psychic celibacy, professional and family life are just a few of the subjects on the programme of this meeting.

Useful address: Oonagh Hartnett & Gill Boden  
Department of Applied Psychology  
Llyn-y Grant Road  
Cardiff CF3 7UX

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE

Nuclear energy: cards on the table

Questions involving nuclear energy affect each and every one of us. This is why the European Commission intends to organize public discussions on the subject before the end of the year.

The Commission's objectives are:

- to help to inform public opinion on nuclear energy problems, taking into account the energy requirements of the Community;
- to ensure Community participation in public discussions on nuclear energy;
- to help the European Commission to define priority sectors of nuclear energy research policy, i.e., sectors where new undertakings or measures on a larger scale might prove necessary.

Public discussions organized by the European Commission could cover a series of varied but related topics: economic policy and growth rate, energy policy, social changes, democratic control, security problems, environment, etc.

The Community and vocational training for women

The 1977 programme of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) includes the study of vocational training as a means of increasing equality of opportunity for women. In this connection the emphasis is placed on the special position of married or elderly women who wish to return to the working world.

A preliminary report drawn up by an expert, Mrs Pierret, after contact with representatives of workers, employers and public authorities in the nine countries of the Community, confirmed that while vocational training is still largely conditioned by the specific needs of the labour market, it is also influenced by the education provided for girls and by the attitude of society in general.

Useful address:           CEDEFOP  
                              22 Bundesallee  
                              1000 Berlin 31

A new regional policy

The current economic crisis has widened the gap, already large, between the rich and poor regions of the Community - and in the poorer regions, women and young persons are the worst hit by unemployment or the first to lose the job they have.

Since an improved balance of resources between the regions is a basic condition for building Europe, the Commission has recently proposed various ways of making aid from the European Regional Fund more flexible, effective and dynamic.

To be fully effective, the Regional Fund should have a budget of 750 million u.a. (1 u.a. = 1.12 US \$ approximately) for 1978, compared with 400 million u.a. in 1977.

From the Luxembourg Tripartite Conference to the London Summit

The economic crisis and unemployment were on the agenda of the Tripartite Conference in Luxembourg, attended by representatives of the workers, the employers and the Governments of the Community countries, and of the Summit meeting in London at the beginning of July, attended by the Heads of State and Government of the Community.

In Luxembourg, as in London, it was noted with regret that the economic situation in no way fulfilled the hopes expressed a year ago.

Amongst the instruments available to the Community, the European Social Fund can play a particularly effective role. This is why, in accordance with the London Summit declarations on a proposal from the Commission, the Council of Ministers of the Community amended the rules governing the Fund's operation.

The Ministers thus decided to concentrate the resources of the Social Fund in the light of regional priorities, so as to reduce disequilibria between rich and poor regions of the Community. In addition, the Commission has been asked to study ways in which Social Fund action could be extended to women, as is already the case for young persons.

STUDIES, MEETINGS, BOOKS

Attitudes towards the status of women: implications for equal employment opportunities is the title of a study by Margret Fine-Davis devoted to changes in attitudes towards the status of women and the implications of these changes for Irish society, particularly as regards employment. This work may be obtained from the Department of Labour - Mespil Road - Dublin 4.

"Leur crise, nos luttes" (Their crisis - our struggle) is the very explicit title given to number 16, April 77, of the GRIF Notebooks. The crisis increases inequalities of which women are victims. But at the same time it may increase their solidarity. French distribution: "Alternative", 51 rue Saint Honoré - 75001 Paris (FF 20); Belgian distribution: Vander-Oyer, avenue des Volontaires 321 - 1150 Brussels (Bfrs 140).

"Is this your life?" asks a book recently published in Great Britain by "Virago", the only publishing house operated solely by women. The work examines the image of women currently projected in Great Britain by radio, television, the advertising world, the written press, pop music, etc.

"Handbook of international data on women" cannot be read as light entertainment: it contains statistics, for example, on the proportion of mothers amongst women aged 20-24 or the extent of segregation in higher education in all the countries for which figures are available. More than a hundred data series are reviewed and dedicated by the authors "to the women who are behind the statistics and all those who use this almanac to improve the human condition". The almanac, which is published by Sage Publications, is distributed by Halsted Press (John Wiley & Sons) - New York, London, Sydney, Toronto.

A "Study and documentation centre for female anthropology and cultural history" has just been set up by the University of Rome, under the Chair of Cultural Anthropology. The Centre, which is directed by Ida Magli, will carry out its own research and publish a quarterly review on "Anthropology and the cultural history of women".

- NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION (OR OF THE FEMALE SECTION WHICH DEPENDS ON IT) .....  
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- ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER .....  
.....  
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- PRESIDENT .....

- GENERAL SECRETARY .....

- NUMBER OF MEMBERS .....

- DATE OF FORMATION .....

- AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION .....  
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- ACTIVITIES .....  
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- DIFFERENT SECTIONS (INDICATING PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR EACH SECTION) .....  
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- ORGANISATION OF THE ASSOCIATION ON A LOCAL BASIS .....  
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- REGULAR PUBLICATIONS AND OTHERS .....  
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- IS YOUR ASSOCIATION A MEMBER OF AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION ? .....  
IF YES, WHICH ONE ? .....  
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OF AN EUROPEAN ORGANISATION ? .....  
IF YES, WHICH ONE ? .....  
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