

**EUROPEAN WOMEN
IN PAID
EMPLOYMENT**

THEIR PERCEPTION OF DISCRIMINATION AT WORK



Summary of Survey Report

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The survey whose findings are summarized here was conducted in the ten European Community Member States at the request of the Commission of the European Communities.

In January/February 1984, a standard questionnaire containing about forty questions was put to representative samples of the female population in paid employment aged 15 and over. All of the 5,447 women in the sample were interviewed personally in their own homes by professional men and women researchers.

The guideline was that the population from which the sample was drawn should be women who receive a pay slip, irrespective of who their employers may be. This means that the sample did not include unemployed or self-employed women.

The survey was carried out by ten specialist institutes, all of them members of "the European Omnibus Survey". The general coordinator was H el ene Riffault, general manager of "Faits et Opinions" in Paris.

The sampling methods, instructions to interviewers, criteria for the identification of interviewees and many of the questions included in the questionnaire were exactly the same as in a 1980 survey conducted by the same network of institutes. Because of this, many points covered in the 1980 and 1984 surveys can be compared. Those comparisons are discussed in the report that follows.

The survey report summarized here has been produced by H el ene Riffault and Jean-Fran ois Tcherina (of Faits et Opinions) and in no way incurs the liability of European Community institutions.

Note:

The full report is available in French and English from:

Bureau for employment and equal treatment for women,
Directorate-General V,
Employment, Social Affairs and Education,
200 Rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels.

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WHY THIS SURVEY?

In 1980, at the request of European Parliament's Ad Hoc Committee for Women's Rights, the Commission of the European Communities arranged for a sample survey on discrimination as perceived by women in paid employment in Europe (1).

The survey aroused a good deal of interest and was a preliminary contribution towards an assessment of the position of working women in Europe.

Since that time, the Commission has developed and broadened its policy on the advancement of women and on equal opportunities.

First of all, European directives on equal pay and equal treatment in access to employment, vocational training, advancement and working conditions were embodied into national law. A further directive was adopted: on equal treatment in matters of social security (legal systems). An overall programme of action (2) setting out both legal and practical measures ("positive action") was launched in an effort to remedy the inequalities that exist in practice. Various political decisions were reached, such as the resolution on measures designed to combat women's unemployment.

The Commission then decided to conduct a second survey along the same lines in 1984, to serve as a yardstick for comparisons and an evaluation of how the situation had changed. It felt that the survey should be broadened somewhat, increasing the size of the sample interviewed and, even more important, extending the field of investigation to cover two fundamental aspects of economic and social change: the risk of unemployment and the impact of technological change.

The findings of the survey, both Community-wide and broken down into a number of population groups (by nationality, for example), have provided useful guidance as to the measures that should be introduced or stepped up in order to promote equal opportunities for men and women in paid employment.

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(1) "European Women in Paid Employment: their perception of discrimination at work", Commission of the European Communities, 1980 (a summary was issued as Supplement n° 5 to "Women of Europe").

(2) A new community Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women (1982-1985), issued as Supplement n° 9 to "Women of Europe".

They reveal, for instance, that enacting laws and issuing regulations, however vital, are not enough; it is just as important to take simultaneous steps to make the public aware of the issues at stake and set up programmes of practical action in such matters as training, placement, recruitment, promotion and the working environment.

I. WOMEN IN PAID EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE: A FEW FACTS AND FIGURES

The 1980 survey provided a good deal of information not only on the personal particulars of women in paid employment but also on types of employers and employment (3).

When this information is compared with current data, it is apparent that in few of the fields surveyed have there been changes of note.

These are the main features of women in paid employment, as they emerge from the two surveys:

In some cases, women started work very young. In 1980, 40% of employed women had been working since the age of at least 16, and some had started even earlier. In 1984, the situation was more or less the same, with 39% of women coming into this category.

Length of service with present employer: in 1980, 50% of women had been working for their current employer for at least 5 years, in other words for a fairly long time. Here again, there has been little change: in 1984, the proportion of women in this group rose to 52%.

The percentage of working women who saw themselves as doing a routine job without much responsibility was low in 1980 and exactly the same four years later, with 26% saying that this was their case.

The proportion of women saying they had executive or managerial jobs was low in 1980 and fell even lower over the next four years, i.e. from 16% to 14% of the women interviewed.

Women working in national or local public administration accounted for a substantial minority: 33% in 1980 and 31% in 1984. In other words, the proportion declined slightly over the four-year period.

(3) "European Women in Paid Employment: their perception of discrimination at work", Commission of the European Communities, 1980, pp. 9-36.

Very many women feel that their abilities are put to good or fairly good use at work. This is the prevailing sentiment, expressed by 78% of the women interviewed both in 1980 and in 1984.

The number of women without certificates or diplomas is the only point in which there has been a marked change. The proportion was low even in 1980 (29% of all women in paid employment), but by 1984 it had fallen to 20%.

These figures, taken as a whole, reveal that the overall situation has remained stable over the past four years.

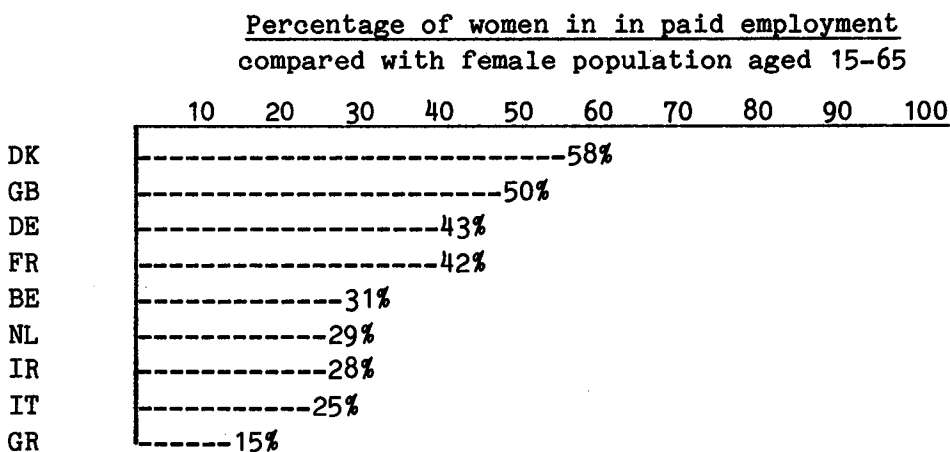
Since the sample used in the second survey was larger, however, additional points can now be analysed and further information is available for international comparisons.

1. Women in paid employment by comparison with the total female population aged 15 to 65.

According to Eurostat statistics, 32 million women are in paid employment in Europe, i.e. slightly over a third of the female population aged 15 to 65, numbering 88 million (4).

A more detailed study of the situation in each country in the Community, however, reveals marked differences from one country to another. The country with the highest proportion of women in paid employment is Denmark (58%), followed by Great Britain (50%). Greece, on the other hand, has the lowest proportion of women in paid jobs (15%). With 31%, Belgium represents more or less the average for Europe.

This is the situation in individual EC countries:



(4) Sample Survey on Workforces, Eurostat 1983, p. 88.

The marked differences found in individual countries cannot be explained away as arising from more or less deliberate decisions by women not to take up a job or career. On the contrary, a recent survey in all EC Member States (5) reveals that most women would, given the choice, enter the working world.

It is apparent however, that in some countries such as Ireland, Holland and Belgium, the working lives of many women end when they marry and have children, and later on very few manage to return to the labour market. This is not a universal trend: it is less striking in countries such as Denmark, Great Britain, France and Germany, where women seem to pursue their chosen careers for a longer period.

This is the reason for national differences not merely in the proportion of women in paid employment but also in the average ages of those women. In the former group of countries, working women are obviously younger on an average than those in countries where they go on working after marriage.

2. Part-time employment

A tendency which also varies considerably from one Member State to another is part-time working, as shown by the following table:

Percentage of women in part-time paid employment
(less than 30 hours a week)

Great Britain	46%	Belgium	29%	France	20%
Netherlands	44%	Germany	24%	Greece	18%
Denmark	42%	Ireland	24%	Italy	17%
				Luxembourg	17%

Part-time working is more prevalent among married women (36%) than among the unmarried (18%). This undeniable factor, however, is not enough on its own to account for national differences. It would seem that, by reason of national tradition or regulations, certain countries tend to resort to part-time employment more than others and in such cases unmarried women too are more likely to work part-time.

Not only do Denmark and Great Britain have the largest number of women in paid employment but it is also there that part-time working is most common.

(5) "Women and Men of Europe in 1983: the situation of women, work and participation in social and political affairs", Commission of the European Communities, 1984. (A summary was published as Supplement n° 16 to "Women of Europe".)

3. The respective contribution of husband and wife to family income

Among all women in paid employment in Europe, two out of three are married or live with a partner as man and wife. The others are unmarried, widowed or divorced. One point of interest is the relative amount contributed to the household resources by working women.

According to the data compiled, men contribute the larger share. The trend is to be found in every country and cannot be due solely to the fact that some women work part-time. Even in the group of women who work full-time they tend to contribute less than do men, as shown by the following table:

Out of 100 married women who work:

	<u>part-time</u>	<u>full-time</u>
The woman contributes more:	4	13
The man contributes more:	81	49
Both contribute equally:	<u>15</u>	<u>38</u>
TOTAL	100	100

It is in Greece that the gap between husbands and wives is most striking: 82% of married women in paid employment work full-time, but only 15% earn the same as their husbands. Even so, the general pattern is roughly the same in other countries as well.

Another question that arises is on the effects of the tax system in certain countries on women's work. In a household where the woman works, the couple often has to pay considerably more tax. If the extra burden of tax is too great, is it not a fact that women tend to give up work, since so much of what they earn goes to the taxman?

One working married woman out of five feels that taxation is a major obstacle to women working.

Differences in the pattern of replies depend mainly on the nationality of interviewees, whereas the family's income group, the type of working hours and the respective contribution of each spouse to the family income have little effect on their replies.

4. Type of employer

In the light of the information obtained from the survey, it is apparent that there are three types of employers: national or local authorities (31%), companies (47%) and individuals (20%) (2% of women were unable to define their employer).

Most of the women working for the first group, placed under the heading of "the public sector", are teachers, medical personnel and civil servants.

Companies offer a wide variety of jobs, mainly office work, manual jobs on the shop floor and retailing.

Women who work for individuals tend to be secretaries, shop assistants, the staff of hairdressing or beauty treatment shops, etc., employees in hotels and restaurants or in domestic service.

The level of education (gauged according to the age at which education ended) is the factor influencing the difference between these three groups. More than half of working women with a high standard of education (i.e. who were educated to an age of at least 20) work in the public sector.

5. Union involvement

The particulars on whether women are active in union affairs have changed little since 1980. At present, 28% of women in paid employment contribute to a union (although 21% do so without being actively involved); 17% do not pay dues but are sympathizers, while 38% neither pay dues nor sympathize; 7% did not answer.

It should be pointed out that the rate of unionization varies considerably depending on the type of employer and the country.

Type of employer: women employed in the public sector are more likely to pay union dues.

Country: while women in Denmark and Ireland are more active in union affairs, unionization is low in the Netherlands and France. In Greece and Germany, on the other hand, few women pay union dues but many are sympathizers.

The chapters that follow will cover such points as the opinions, experience, and attitudes of the working women whose socio-demographic particulars have been outlined in this chapter.

II. SUSCEPTIBILITY TO UNEMPLOYMENT

1. The experience of unemployment

Three women out of ten in paid employment have experienced unemployment, a percentage that has risen sharply over the four year period (from 21% to 29%). The duration of unemployment has also been lengthening.

This trend is to be found in all EC Member States except Luxembourg and the Netherlands, where the percentages of women who have experienced periods of unemployment are 7% and 18% respectively.

Unemployment affects all sections of the female population, but more particularly women working in industry (41%).

In 1980, those who suffered most from unemployment were women without certificates and diplomas; today, every age group is affected, but those who have both academic and vocational qualifications are mainly involved.

In the under-25 age group, 36% of women have been unemployed.

2. The risk of unemployment: women's anxieties

In the female population as a whole, 44% feel themselves to be at risk of unemployment.

It is the youngest women who feel at greatest risk, as well as women working in industry, in a shop or for individuals. More than half are apprehensive of losing their job within the next two years.

Most of the female population in employment see this as a serious problem, but especially unmarried women, widows and divorcees.

Among married women, the level of anxiety is related to the amount they contribute to the family income, although everyone regards unemployment as a traumatic experience.

Women who have already experienced unemployment are more anxious than others about losing their jobs and more conscious of the precarious nature of their working status.

The following table illustrates some of the findings:

Married women, grouped according to their contribution to family income	Level of anxiety regarding unemployment	Number
M1 - Man contributes more to income	5.53	12,480,000
M2 - Man and woman contribute the same	6.97	5,760,000
M3 - Woman contributes more to income	7.64	2,240,000
Unmarried women	7.72	7,680,000
Widows and divorced women	8.14	3,840,000

		32,000,000

3. The presumed causes of female employment

A European survey carried out in 1978 on attitudes to and opinions of unemployment (6) can be used to compare what women as a whole were thinking about the subject in 1978 and the feelings of women in paid employment in 1984.

Although the 1978 sample was based on all women, not just those in employment, 41% of those interviewed at the time felt that women's unemployment was due to the discriminatory attitude adopted by employers when making people redundant. This feeling has lessened today, although it is still expressed by 32% of working women.

We should point out that the replies vary little according to type of employment, age, level of training or degree of unionization. The only factor influencing them is nationality:

German and Italian women complain most of injustice from their employers, whereas Belgian, Irish and British women complain least;

In France, Ireland and the Netherlands, women often blame unemployment on inadequate vocational training;

In Italy, the reason most often cited is the decline in industries that have traditionally employed a female workforce;

In the countries where redundancy compensation is most favourable (Belgium, Ireland and Greece), women see this as the main cause of female unemployment.

(6) "Unemployment and the Search for a Job: the attitudes and opinions of the European public", Commission of the European Communities, 1978, Study 28/31.

4. A comparison of men's and women's vulnerability to unemployment

Women who work alongside men in their workplace (65% of women in paid employment) were asked whether women are more at risk of redundancy than men.

The feeling that they are under greater threat of redundancy than their male counterparts is far more common among women doing routine jobs without responsibility (36%), those working in industry (42%) and those with a low standard of education (31%).

Married and co-habiting women (63% of women in paid employment) were asked to compare their own susceptibility to unemployment with their partner's. It should be borne in mind that the question related solely to a woman's perception of her own and her husband's vulnerability.

Disregarding the 6% of women whose husbands are out of work, women's estimates of their own and their husbands' risk of unemployment are very similar: 45% feel they are at equal risk, 30% that they themselves are at greater risk and 25% that their husbands are at greater risk.

Perceptions of the gravity of male and female unemployment do not depend solely on the respective contributions to the household income made by husband and wife, since many women think it would be more serious if their husband were to be made redundant. This feeling is found to an extent even among women whose earnings are equal to or greater than their husband's.

The following table summarizes the replies given by married women, grouped according to their respective contributions to household income:

<u>Married women, grouped by the partner contributing the larger share to household income</u>			
<u>Women who feel that their partner's unemployment would be:</u>	<u>THE MAN</u>	<u>EQUAL</u>	<u>THE WOMAN</u>
	61%	29%	10%
more serious than their own	72	34	19
equally serious	25	60	58
less serious	3	6	23
	---	---	---
	100	100	100

From these replies it is apparent that the reason for the fear of unemployment is not solely financial: 34% of women earning the same as their husbands feel it would be more serious for their menfolk to be unemployed than for themselves, and this is also true of 19% of those who earn more than their husband.

This finding is linked with a prejudice widespread in the Community: that men have a priority right to work in times of crisis, a finding that also emerged from the 1983 European survey on women and men as a whole (7).

A comparison of the replies to this question given by all women in 1983 and by women in paid employment in 1984 reveals a clear divergence in opinions in this respect. The idea that men have more right to a job in periods of crisis is far less acceptable to working women than to women as a whole, even though half accept the principle.

Nevertheless, views depend on many other factors, such as level of education and age, with a majority of the younger and better educated women rejecting this prejudice.

III. DISCRIMINATION IN WORKING LIFE

1. Advantages and disadvantages perceived by women in paid employment in the course of their work

According to the 1980 survey, 68% of women worked side by side with men. The survey went on to enquire whether they perceived any difference in their status and prospects from those of their male counterparts.

The questions related to their personal experience, not their opinions. Eight points were covered:

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(7) "Women and Men of Europe in 1983: the situation of women, work and participation in social and political affairs", Commission of the European Communities, 1984, p. 96. (A summary was published as Supplement n° 16 to "Women of Europe".)

	At an advantage	At a dis- advantage	No dif- ference	No reply	TOTAL
<u>With regard to:</u>					
Hours of work	8	5	84	3	100
Retirement age	23	5	57	15	100
Promotion prospects	3	30	59	8	100
Pay	2	25	65	8	100
Bonuses and perks	2	14	72	12	100
Training opportunities	2	15	72	11	100
Working environment (space, comfort, etc.)	4	4	88	4	100
Hierarchical relations	5	8	83	4	100

Six to eight women out of ten do not feel discriminated against in any of these respects.

The others tend to feel that they are at an advantage in their hours of work and above all in the age of retirement but at a disadvantage in respect of promotion prospects, pay and access to in-service training. They also say they have fewer advantages in matters of bonuses and perks.

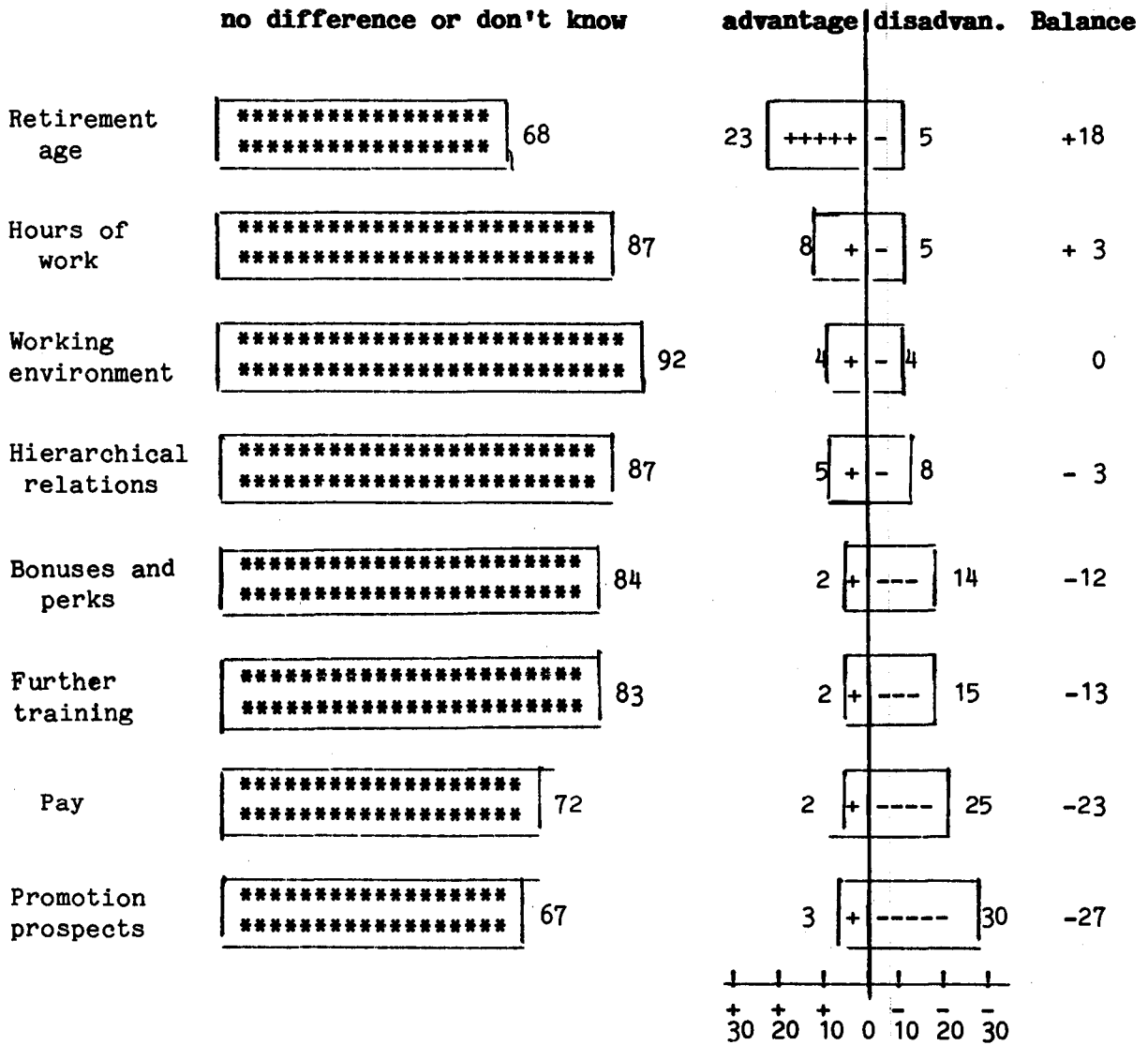
The diagram on the following page shows the advantages and disadvantages in these fields as perceived by women (only those working alongside men, i.e. 68% of the total).

Looking at each point in greater detail, we find the following:

Age of retirement: the feeling of being at an advantage increases up to the age of 54 and according to the size of employer, and is prevalent among women working in industry. The reason for the differences is the extent to which women are informed and the degree of interest they display. Young women and women working for an individual are less well informed and less interested in the matter.

Hours of work: it is mainly women who benefit from part-time working and who mention this as an advantage.

Women are at:



Bonuses and perks: women working in industrial jobs and those with a lower level of formal education tend to be particularly concerned because their pay is more likely to consist in part of bonuses.

Access to training: older women and those with a lower level of education form the group that feels most discriminated against in this respect.

Pay: One in every four working women says she is at a disadvantage by comparison with her male counterparts. Except in the civil service, education and health care, where a balance seems to have been achieved, a substantial percentage of women complain of being paid less. Whereas 2% see themselves as at an advantage in this respect, 25% think the contrary, leading to a negative balance of -23%. The sense of injustice is particularly acute among those working on the shop floor in industry (balance of -38%).

Promotion prospects: this is the field in which the female working population feels most clearly discriminated against (balance of -27%). Here again, it is mainly women working in the private sector who are the most affected.

One observation is that the level of a woman's responsibility in her job influences the way she replies to these questions. Women engaged on routine jobs entailing no responsibility are more blatantly discriminated against, whereas other women find their job more fulfilling since responsibility adds satisfaction to their work.

<u>Sense of being discriminated against, based on type of job</u>			
<u>Positive or negative balance with respect to:</u>	<u>routine job</u>		<u>executive/managerial</u>
	<u>with responsibility</u>	<u>without responsibility</u>	
Hours of work	+ 4	+ 3	+ 5
Retirement	+ 17	+ 17	+ 29
Promotion	- 38	- 24	- 24
Bonuses and perks	- 21	- 9	- 10
Pay	- 29	- 21	- 21
Further training	- 18	- 11	- 10
Working environment	- 3	+ 1	+ 1
Hierarchical relations	- 7	- 2	+ 4

How have things changed since 1980?

In 1980, the questions were a little different in that they dealt more with a woman's individual situation. In the recent survey, the aim was to find out about women's situation in general.

The findings were almost identical. The three fields in which the largest number of women still feel subjected to discrimination are the same: access to training, pay and promotion. Slightly more working women felt that women and men earn the same and have equal access to in-service training, but on the other hand the differences are described in rather more negative terms than four years ago.

The 1980 survey revealed that women felt at a greater disadvantage when their immediate superior was a man. The same finding emerged in 1984, although there are rather fewer differences with regard to promotion.

Aggregate figures

In conclusion, 43% of women in paid employment working alongside men do not feel that they are being discriminated against, whereas 57% consider themselves to be subject to discrimination in at least some respects. In this group, 8% harbour a profound sense of injustice.

The socio-demographic factors promoting a sense of fulfilment for a woman in her work are linked neither with her age nor her family's financial status. A high standard of education, employment in the public sector and doing a responsible job, on the other hand, help to promote a positive view of life.

The use made of a woman's skills is a vital factor in the view she takes of advantages and disadvantages, although it is virtually impossible to measure how much of this view is objective and how much subjective. Accurate, clear-cut information would be needed on women's actual situation so that a comparison can be made with their own perception of their position. Even among those who say their job matches up to their skills, there is a substantial minority (44%) who feel at a disadvantage to men.

There are considerable differences between Community countries. Germany, Ireland and Great Britain are those in which the largest proportion of women mention the disadvantages from which they suffer. Italy and Belgium stand out as having the highest number of women who make no mention of segregation, except in that it works to their advantage. The other countries come between these two extremes.

2. The experience of discrimination on recruitment

In 1980, 8% of women in paid employment declared that they had been refused a job on the grounds of their sex. The trend seems to be growing, since 11% of the interviewees in 1984 make the same claim.

Those most concerned about the problem are women with a high level of education (16%), the youngest group (14%) and office workers.

An increase in segregation over the past four years has been due to the growing number of women jobseekers. Furthermore, since the duration of unemployment is lengthening the risk of injustice may be greater.

Experience of discrimination is correlated with the idea that women are more susceptible to the risk of unemployment and more likely to reject the idea that men are more entitled to a job than women in times of crisis.

3. Experience of sexual blackmail

In the group as a whole, 11% say they have been at the receiving end of more or less overt sexual harassment.

This proportion is fairly constant in every segment of the female population, although the experience is less often mentioned by those over the age of 55 and more often by women living on their own.

The women who feel they are at greater risk of losing their jobs also tend to say they have been subjected to sexual blackmail. Is this in fact true, or might it not be a reflection of the difficulties some women experience in adapting to working life?

If one refers to the data, it does seem to be an objective fact; if it were not so, more of the women claiming to have suffered from sexual blackmail should also state they were discriminated against on recruitment, but in fact only 3% complain of both types of discrimination.

Experience of sexual blackmail, however, is undeniably linked with a sense of psychological vulnerability and vulnerability to unemployment. Women whose jobs do not match up to their abilities are more inclined to declare themselves to be the victims of this practice.

IV. EXPECTATIONS AS TO THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

How do women in paid employment visualize the impact of technological developments on their working lives? How well prepared for change do they feel? What are their chances of adjusting compared with men's?

1. The impact on work and careers

According to 41% of all the women interviewed, technological advances are likely to affect their work; their expectations tend to be negative rather than positive. They are concerned about the interest of work, standards of qualifications and the need for retraining and further training. One woman out of three is afraid of being made redundant.

2. The likelihood of coping with change

When asked whether they could meet the challenge of technological change, 43% say they are equipped to do so while 22% are reluctant to give their views. Even so, those most aware of their careers being affected by new technology are also the most anxious.

3. A comparison between men's and women's chances of adjustment to change

The replies to the interviewers were solely the opinions held by women of their personal prospects by comparison with men's.

Two women out of three feel they are as well equipped as men to cope with change. Those who feel less well equipped fear it will be harder for them to obtain access to further training.

Working women's level of education, type of employment, employer and degree of responsibility are all factors clearly influencing their degree of concern at changing technology.

The group most aware of the technological revolution (5 or 6 women out of 10) consists of office workers, women working in industry or in large concerns, those employed in the public sector, executives and women with a high level of education.

Executives and office workers in both the public and private sector are aware of the need for retraining, seeing it as an opportunity for improving their skills and adding to the interest of their work. In other words, they tend to take a more optimistic view. Even though substantial minorities feel ill prepared for change, they believe that they could adapt given additional training and look on themselves as being on an equal footing with men in this respect.

Manual workers, on the other hand, especially in industry, feel seriously at risk of growing unemployment. They do not regard themselves as being adequately prepared for any changes. A large minority also feel at a disadvantage by comparison with men regarding access to further training.

The reason for this contrast in attitudes is twofold: women manual workers have had the painful experience of mass redundancy in industry; and the cultural phenomenon that educated women have greater self-confidence.

In the face of technological change and its consequences, the private sector appears to expect a greater impact and to be more in fear of losing jobs.

In the same way, the larger an employer's work force the greater the expectation that change will have a marked impact. In medium-sized concerns (employing 50 to 500 people), on the other hand, unemployment is the greatest fear and there is rather more scepticism as to equal opportunities for women and men than in any large concern.

Finally, a net correlation is observed between union involvement and belief in the impact of the technological revolution. The more actively involved a woman is in union affairs, the better informed she is likely to be.

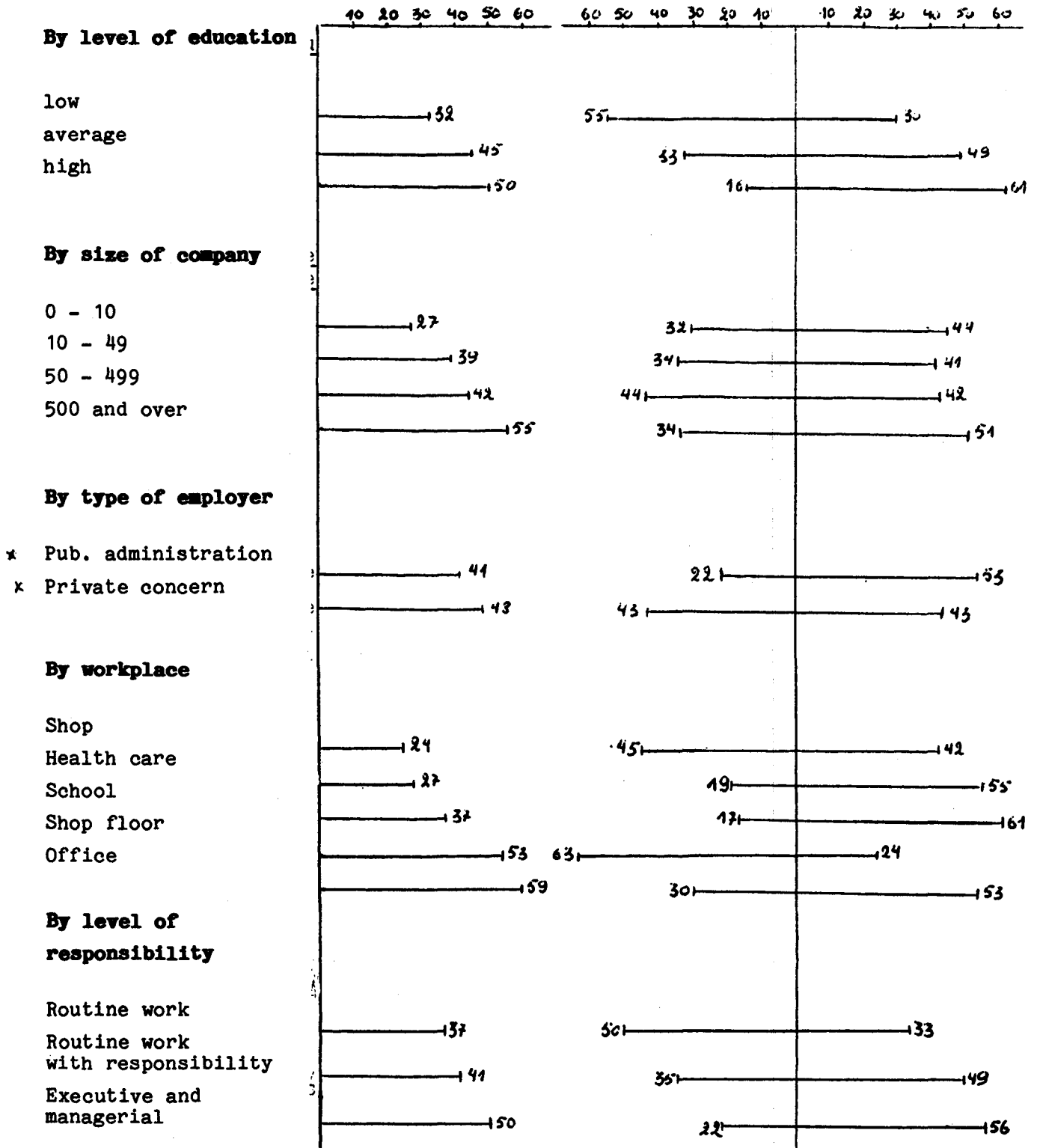
The table on the following page sets out in detail women's expectations of the effects of technological change according to their level of education, the size of the concern by which they are employed, type of employer, workplace and level of responsibility in their work:

Expected effects of technological change

Proportion of women
who feel concerned

Among those who feel concerned:

Risk of unemployment Need for retraining



4. Prospect of working from home

The prospect of working from home opened out by new technology is far from enthusiastically greeted by working women as a whole.

Three quarters do not believe it would suit them personally and, even if there were an opportunity to do so, seven women out of ten say they would not want to take it up. Only 9% of the interviewees, however, were really concerned about this prospect.

5. Summary of attitudes to technological development: a typological analysis

A typological analysis helps to structure the replies. This consists of grouping the 5,447 women interviewed according to the replies they give to the seven points covered in this chapter (called "active variables") and defining them as certain "types". The groups are designed to include individuals who are as "alike" as possible, while each type should be as different as possible from the other types.

The analysis shows there are five separate groups, classified in order by the impact they expect from technological change.

**Type one: working women who are not very concerned (11%)
(Type A)**

In this group, fewer than three women out of ten believe that technological advances will affect their careers. Those that do are uncertain as to whether they will be adequately prepared. They feel that working from home is not feasible, although one out of five would be in favour. These women are older than the average and are less well educated, often working for a small employer and in most cases working in isolation.

**Type two: the optimists (27%)
(Type B)**

In this group, 44% are aware of technological change. They are not very afraid of losing their jobs but expect to have to retrain. They feel well prepared and see themselves as equally capable of reacting to change as men. Working from home is seen as quite out of the question and of no personal interest. They tend to be fairly young and to be qualified. Many work as civil servants, in health care or in shops.

**Type three: the anxious (24%)
(Type C)**

Half of this group fear that they will be affected by the technological revolution and three quarters do not feel they are adequately prepared for it. The process of change is seen as placing both men and women at risk. They see no prospect of working from home and are not attracted by this form of work. They are better educated than the average and most are teachers.

**Type four: those who believe in working from home (17%)
(Type D)**

In this group, 53% expect their careers to be affected by change and are afraid of losing their jobs. Its members are divided as to their prospects of coping with change. Most do not feel at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts at work. The factor that differentiates this group from others is that its members are attracted to the idea of working from home (more than 50%). Furthermore, 95% think that this will be feasible one day. Very few of these women work in public administration; they tend to be employed in industrial or office jobs.

**Type five: the victims of discrimination. (13%)
(Type E)**

The prevailing feeling in this group is a deep fear of unemployment. The women feel ill prepared and above all at a disadvantage by comparison with men in terms of access to further vocational training. Working at home is seen as impossible, even though three out of ten would like this to happen. They are older and less well educated than the average, tending to work in industry, the retailing trade or medium-sized concerns.

Typology of attitudes towards technological change

Type membership as % of total	TYPE A	TYPE B	TYPE C	TYPE D	TYPE E	TOTAL
	%	%	%	%	%	%
	19	27	24	17	13	100
<hr/>						
Believe in technological impact:						
yes	29	44	49	53	54	41
no	71	56	51	47	46	59
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Expect:						
redundancy	6	9	15	18	24	15
to have to retrain	8	19	20	18	17	19
Feel:						
well prepared	31	100	-	42	17	43
ill prepared	8	-	76	38	67	35
no reply	61	-	24	20	16	22
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100
By comparison with men, feel:						
better prepared	30	-	1	11	3	9
worse prepared	6	1	8	12	36	11
equally prepared	6	98	88	64	51	66
no reply	58	1	3	13	10	14
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100
By comparison with men, access to further training is felt to be:						
easier	11	2	2	7	1	5
less easy	3	4	-	16	96	17
equally easy	43	91	95	66	-	65
no reply	43	3	3	11	3	13
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Believe that working from home would, in their own case, be:						
possible	-	-	-	95	-	16
impossible	89	98	97	-	94	78
no reply	11	2	3	5	6	6
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100
Would be interested in working from home:						
very	11	8	9	33	14	13
fairly	12	11	14	25	17	15
not very much or not at all	67	78	72	41	64	68
no reply	10	3	5	1	5	4
	---	---	---	---	---	---
	100	100	100	100	100	100

V. AWARENESS AND EVALUATION OF EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT
EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN AT WORK

The 1980 survey showed that women were ill informed as to the efforts being made at national and Community level to promote absolute equality between men and women in their working lives. In the same way, women in paid employment who said that they were informed reserved judgement as to the effectiveness of the steps taken.

A superficial analysis of the situation four years later shows that women's opinions on this subject have evolved very little. When we look a little closer, however, we find more encouraging factors: the number of working women who are informed as to the existence of national legislation and Community measures has increased slightly in each segment of the target group.

	1980	1984
Women who say they are informed as to:		
the existence of national laws	58	63
Community action	34	38
union action	62	63

Slow progress is being made (except in the case of union action, where the figure has remained almost the same) but it is in the right direction.

The next question is whether women are in favour of the action that has been taken up to this time and whether they feel it has had a positive effect.

Here again there has been progress, since the number of working women who have noted the beneficial effects of national and Community efforts on their behalf has risen slightly in every segment. Attitudes towards union action have remained very much the same as before, although it was action taken by unions which met with most approval in 1980, and this has remained true in 1984.

The women who are most enthusiastic about European Community action are, in 1980 as in 1984, the more highly educated, whereas those who are most dubious as to the effectiveness of the Community are women without academic diplomas and those working in industry.

Opinions have progressed most among young women (25 to 34) and among civil servants.

Knowing more about institutional machinery does not necessarily mean that one is optimistic as to the effectiveness of the steps taken, but it does mark some progress.

Involvement in union affairs helps women to be better informed but has little influence on their judgment as to the effectiveness of measures in their own fields.

The following are national differences in levels of awareness and opinions of effectiveness:

In Belgium and Denmark, there has been little change since 1980;

In Germany, there has been marked progress in information but little change in feelings as to effectiveness;

In France, women are better informed only about national legislation, and their judgment as to its effectiveness has improved;

In Ireland, there is a clear-cut improvement, especially in the appreciation of effectiveness of action;

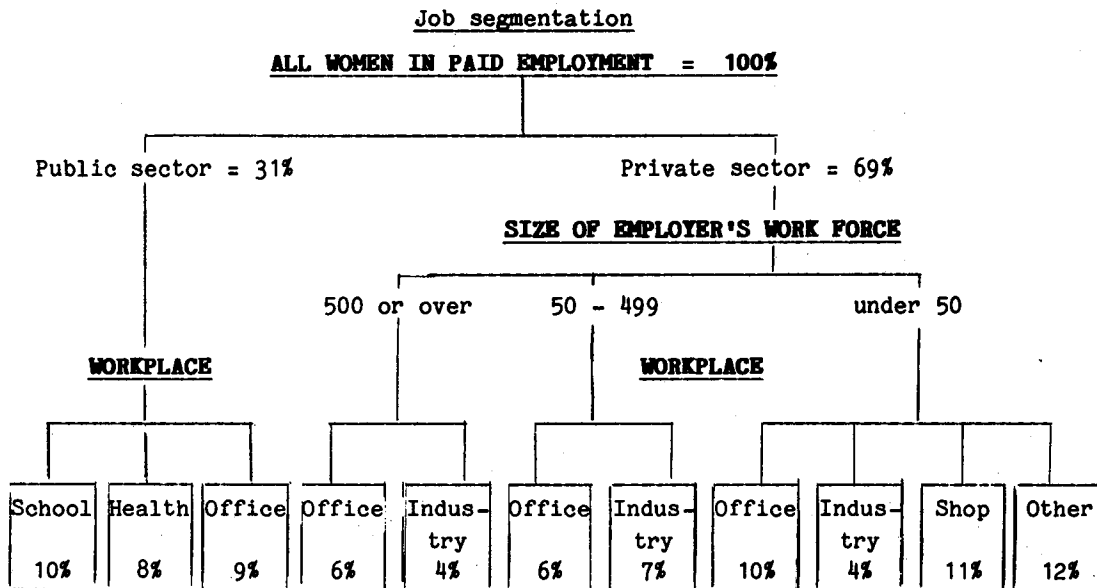
In Italy, national legislation and Community action are considered more effective than four years ago;

In the Netherlands and Great Britain, awareness of Community action has increased significantly.

VI. SUMMARY OF VULNERABLE POINTS OF WOMEN IN PAID EMPLOYMENT

A summary of the information compiled helps to identify the groups of working women most susceptible to unemployment, sexual discrimination and the prospect of technological change. Two criteria have been taken: type of employer and type of job.

The following are the eleven segments identified, covering 87% of the female population:



Note: Segments that are too varied have not been included: for example, 4% of women working in the public sector, 3% working in a large concern and 6% in a medium-sized company.

Let us now see how these eleven segments are affected by the risk of unemployment, discrimination by comparison with male counterparts and the prospect of technological change.

First of all, it seems that in general women working in the public sector feel far less vulnerable than other women in paid employment. Two points should be made, however: most of those engaged on an administrative type of job (office work) expect their work to be affected by technological change; and members of the teaching body often feel ill prepared for such change.

In the private sector, women working in industry feel far more vulnerable than the rest in all respects: they are at greater risk of unemployment and more discriminated against in matters of pay, whatever the size of the company in which they work. In large and medium-sized concerns, access to vocational training and above all to promotion is seen as difficult. Finally, in large concerns, women are very aware of the probable impact of technological change (65%), feel ill prepared and fear that their jobs are under threat.

In the private sector, women working in offices are less likely than the average to feel at risk of unemployment. They feel discriminated against in matters of pay (especially in medium-sized concerns) and promotion (above all in large concerns). They believe that new technology will have an impact but rarely express a fear of being ill prepared or losing their jobs, although they consider they need retraining.

In small firms in the private sector, women working in small retail shops and those engaged in other activities such as in hairdressing and beauty shops, catering, domestic service, etc., are mainly concerned with the risk of unemployment.

The table on the following page sets out all the figures that have been summarized in this chapter.

COMPARISON OF VULNERABILITY OF DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE FEMALE WORKING POPULATION

	ALL WORKING WOMEN	PUBLIC SECTOR			PRIVATE SECTOR								
		School	Medical	Office	>500 employees		50-500 employees		<50 employees				
					Office	Industry	Office	Industry	Office	Industry	Shop	Others	
<u>UNEMPLOYMENT</u>													
have experience of unemployment	29	23	19	23	17	29	26	44	29	48	32	35	
might be unemployed in 2 years' time	44	40	30	32	43	57	40	55	41	52	51	51	
<u>DISCRIMINATION</u>													
if workforce is cut, women would:													
• be more affected	26	12	21	22	26	41	28	44	17	43	32	22	
• feel at a disadvantage to men in:													
- training	15	7	8	13	19	28	19	28	16	18	12	15	
- pay	25	10	12	12	35	43	27	43	26	37	30	25	
- promotion	30	22	18	27	50	45	46	41	25	26	26	23	
<u>TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE</u>													
think it will affect their work	41	38	29	58	73	65	54	55	55	46	18	22	
feel ill prepared	35	44	29	34	22	46	20	33	15	25	7	8	
are afraid of losing their job	15	6	4	17	22	46	20	33	15	25	7	8	
believe in the need for retraining	19	23	16	28	44	16	23	13	31	11	5	8	

Note: in this table, figures in bold type are far higher than the average for replies as a whole

CONCLUSIONS

There are 32 million women in paid employment in the ten European Community Member States.

What is their experience in their current situation? How susceptible do they feel to unemployment? What effects do they think that technological change will have on their jobs and careers? These are the main themes of the survey conducted early in 1984.

1. A large majority of working women are satisfied with their present jobs. Three out of four feel that their work entails some responsibility and that very good, or at least good, use is made of their skills - two factors which reveal a real attachment to the work they do.

Nevertheless, when they compare their own position within the workplace with that of their male colleagues (if they have male colleagues, since only two out of three of them do), 57% of them feel at a disadvantage in at least in some fields. The most sensitive area is that of promotion prospects, followed by pay and then, although to a lesser degree, access to additional vocational training and material benefits other than pay, in other words bonuses and perks.

Women employed in the public sector feel less discriminated against in all these respects than do those working for private sector employers.

2. The efforts being made to promote equality for women and men at work, whether through national legislation or union action, are known to six working women out of ten and considered to be effective by three out of ten.

Community action as such is less apparent to women in paid employment, but this is hardly surprising in view of the fact that Community measures are relayed through national bodies in individual countries. Even so, here again some progress is being made in that women are slightly better informed.

3. The major concern of women in paid employment is the threat of unemployment. (It should be borne in mind that, at the time of the survey, there were five million women registered unemployed in the Community.) Excluding women civil servants - and not even all of them feel themselves to be protected from the risk - one out of two women employed in the private sector believes that she might be unemployed within the next two years.

One working woman out of four considers that, if manpower in their work unit is being cut, women would be more likely to be made redundant than men.

It is a belief held by many working women that the high rate of female employment is often due to the lack of vocational training, something that restricts the opportunities open to women, and to the fact that the industries whose labour force has traditionally been female are on the decline. This highlights the problem of women's access to further training and, as we have already seen, it is one of the respects in which they regard themselves at a disadvantage by comparison with men.

Unemployment is feared by working women in general, but it is an eventuality that is feared even more by women who do not have a husband, numbering 11½ million of the total European womanpower of 32 million.

4. How do women perceive the effects on their jobs and careers of the technological change that can be expected over the next few years?

The level of awareness is high in general: four working women out of ten expect the change to have an impact on their work. In large concerns, this feeling is shared by seven women out of ten. Modernization of machines and the spread of the computer are signs with which they are familiar.

The feelings that accompany this perception of technological change are many and varied. There is a reasonably optimistic view of the impact in terms of job interest and levels of skill. The real problems are seen as the risk of redundancy and the need for retraining. The points that worry women most depend on their age, level of education and the type of work they do.

In the case of women holding executive/managerial and office jobs in both the public and the private sector, the prevailing feeling is that they will have to retrain, and once they have done so their work will be reasonably interesting and they will tend to be better qualified. They approach the possibility of technological change in reasonably good heart. They do not all feel prepared but they are confident of being just as capable of adapting to changing circumstances as men.

In the case of manual workers, especially those working in industry, the prevailing sentiment is that change will increase the risk of unemployment. On the whole they feel ill prepared for any changes and many of them, although not a majority, say that they are less prepared than men and will find it harder than men to obtain access to the additional training they need.

The prospect that new technology might lead to working at home arouses no great interest. Most women in paid employment feel that it would not be feasible in their present jobs, and even if it were to become possible few would be interested. A small minority thinks that working from home is feasible, while 9% of working women would be interested in this opportunity.

5. In the light of this survey, it is evident that women in paid employment are highly lucid. Those who are most vulnerably placed are the women working in industry in the private sector. They are the ones who have had most experience of unemployment and who are most conscious of their jobs being at threat; they are more often at the receiving end of discrimination and they are the most anxious about the foreseeable effects of technological change. There are more than five million such women in the Community, and it is in their support that the bulk of the effort should be directed.

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