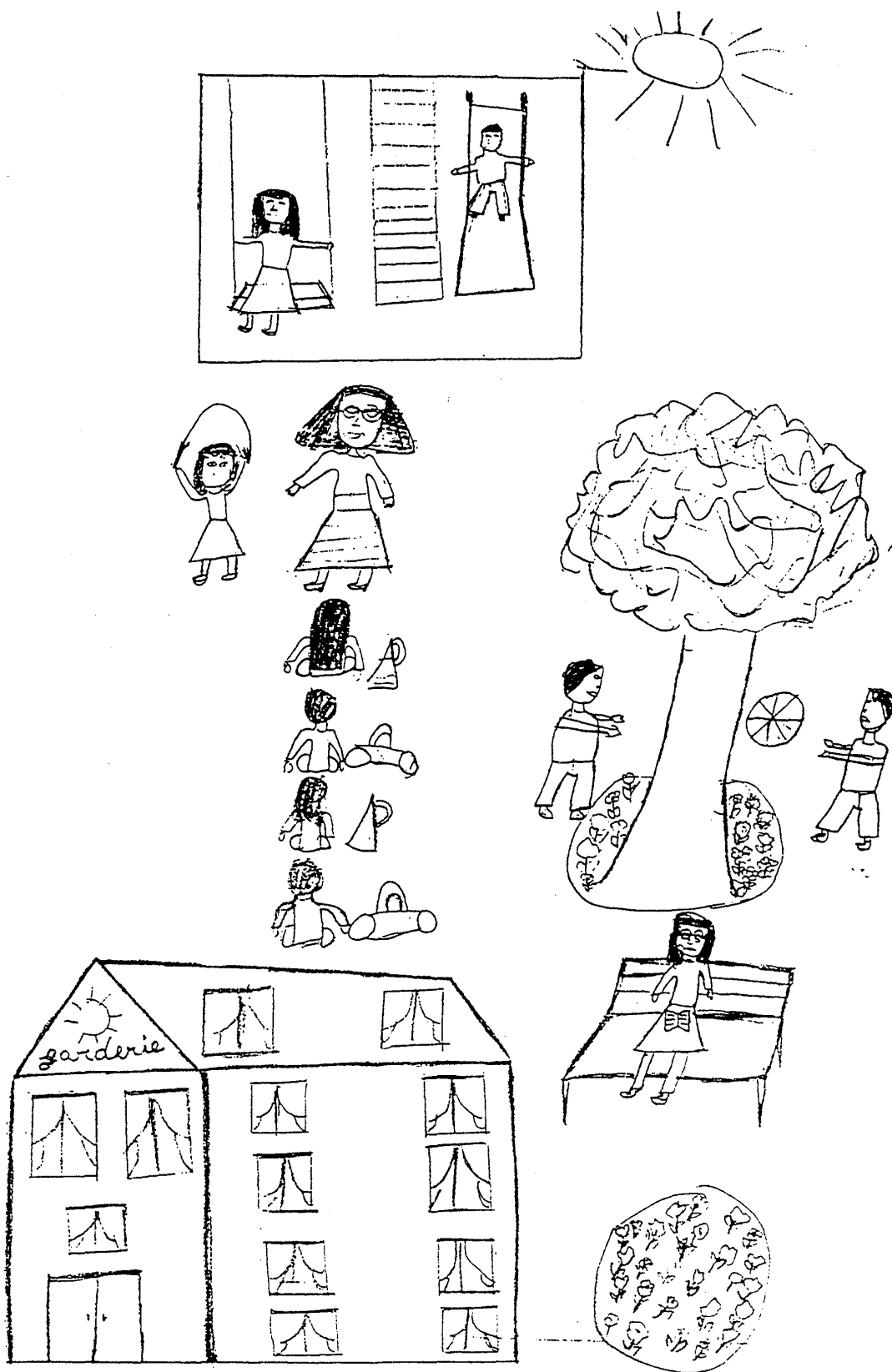




# Childcare in the European Communities 1985-1990



---

Cover page drawing by KATHLEEN LAISSY (7)

EUROPEAN COMMISSION CHILDCARE NETWORK

AUGUST 1990

CHILDCARE

IN THE

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

1985-1990

Report coordinated by Peter MOSS

## CONTENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION  | 1  |
| THE NETWORK PERSPECTIVE ON CHILDCARE  | 2  |
| Childcare is an equality issue-2; Childcare is important for other reasons - 2; The need for a broad approach - 2; Equal access to good quality childcare services - 3; The importance of childcare workers - 4; Partnership is essential - 4                               |    |
| A EUROPEAN OVERVIEW   | 5  |
| Parental employment-5; Employment rights for parents-7; Tax relief and other direct subsidies to parents for childcare costs - 9; Publicly funded childcare services-9; Privately funded childcare services-11; The demographic factor-12; Growing interest in childcare-12 |    |
| NATIONAL REPORTS  | 12 |
| Definitions-12; Germany-13; France-17; Italy-21; Netherlands-24; Belgium-28; Luxembourg-31; United Kingdom-34; Ireland-38; Denmark-40; Greece-44; Portugal-46; Spain-50   |    |
| CONCLUSIONS   | 53 |
| THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION  | 58 |
| Harmonising objectives-58; Structural Funds-59; Exchanging information, experience and ideas-60; Collaborative work-60; Monitoring-60; Social Partners-61   |    |
| MEMBERS OF THE EC CHILDCARE NETWORK   | 62 |
| *****   |    |
| Table 1 Parental Employment   | 6  |
| Table 2 Maternity and Parental Leave  | 8  |
| Table 3 Places in publicly funded childcare services as % of total population in the age group  | 10 |

## INTRODUCTION

The reconciliation of employment, family responsibilities and equality of opportunity is one of the most important and complex challenges facing Europe in the 1990s. A European Community which seeks economic and social progress and equality of opportunity for all its citizens - women and men, children and adults - must recognise the centrality of this issue and take the necessary action. The effectiveness of that action will have profound consequences for the economic prosperity, the social well-being and the cohesion of the Community as a whole, and for the opportunities and quality of life of all the families and individuals living in the Community.

This report deals with one essential part of the issue - reconciling employment and training, equality and children. It analyses some of the main developments in this area in the European Community between 1985 and 1990, which covers the period of the Community's Second Equal Opportunities Programme. In that Programme, the Commission called on Member States to take action in various areas, including Parental Leave, childcare services, the reorganisation of working time, harmonizing hours of employment and the opening hours of services and meeting the needs of specific groups such as single parents. For its part, the Commission committed itself to propose recommendations for action in the area of childcare services - and to establish an expert network on childcare.

The European Commission Childcare Network began work at the end of 1986 and consists of an expert from each Member State and a Co-ordinator. In 1988, it produced a major report - Childcare and Equality of Opportunity - which reviewed childcare services and policies throughout the Community and made recommendations for action by the Commission. In 1989, the Network prepared another report - Structural Funding and Childcare: Current Funding Application and Policy Implications - which identified and discussed the role of the Structural Funds in the development of childcare services. In 1990, the Network organised 4 technical seminars on issues identified as priorities in the 1988 Report - the childcare needs of rural families, childcare workers with young children, quality in childcare services and men as carers for children: reports on each of these seminars have been prepared, which include specific recommendations for action by the Commission, Member States and social partners.

Many important subjects which receive limited or no attention in this short report, and the evidence for many of our conclusions, are presented in detail in these other reports - all of which are available, in English and French, from the European Commission, DGV/B/4, 200 rue de la loi, B-1049 Brussels.

This present report has also been prepared by the Childcare Network. Its central part consists of national reports covering parental employment, employment rights for parents, childcare services and developments in these areas between 1985 and 1990, preceded by a 'European Overview' for the whole Community. The report ends with conclusions and a discussion of the future role of the European Community in this area. First, however, the report discusses the Network's perspective on 'childcare'.

## THE NETWORK'S PERSPECTIVE ON CHILDCARE

Childcare is an equality issue. When we talk about 'childcare', we mean the work and responsibility involved in caring for children and meeting their full range of needs, and how that work and responsibility is organised and divided. Our starting point is that this work and responsibility are, at present, unequally divided. Women carry too great a share - men, employers and society too little. This inequality is one of the fundamental causes of women's unequal position in the labour market and consequent inequalities in employment and income.

"The essential point to be re-stated and emphasised is that the conditions under which men and women supply their labour to the labour market are not equal; and that this inequality is neither inherent or inevitable but socially determined... wage rates and occupational position - central criteria for assessing equality of opportunity - are not determined purely by market forces but by the social costs of reproduction which are unequally distributed" (1988 Network report, Childcare and Equality of Opportunity).

Childcare does not only affect women's opportunities for participation in the labour market. It affects their participation in many other activities and the well-being of all women, whether or not they are employed. It is an 'equal opportunities' issue in the broadest sense.

Childcare is important for other reasons. Childcare affects other vital interests:

\*\*Inadequate organisation of 'childcare' prevents women participating fully in the labour market, leading to a waste of economic resources and an inefficient use of the labour force.

\*\*Inadequate organisation of childcare has an adverse effect on the well-being and functioning of families.

\*\*Childcare affects children's quality of life, well-being and development. We cannot discuss the issue without considering the needs and position of children - all children, not just children who, at a particular time, have employed parents (and it should be remembered that many parents, especially mothers, move in and out of the labour market while they have children). There are two points here, both fundamental. The Network believes that any policies on 'childcare' must start from the basis of the needs of children. One of these needs is safe and secure care while parents are at work - but there are many other needs, all of which must be taken into account and integrated in services and policies. Following from this, services for children with employed parents should be seen and developed in the context of services for all children, rather than planning services for this group of children in isolation and providing for them in separate and segregated services.

The need for a broad approach. Childcare is an issue of the labour force, of family policy, of children's and women's welfare - as well as being an issue of equality. Solutions need to be based on the recognition and reconciliation of all these issues and of the needs of all the various groups involved - women, children, families, employers and society. We believe that reconciliation is possible and reject the view that there is

an inherent conflict of interest between women's employment and the needs of children. Not only do we consider children to be a shared responsibility - not just women's responsibility - but the research evidence is clear. Maternal employment is not inherently harmful to children, even those under 3; the important issue is to develop the right conditions - in childcare services, in employment, in families - which not only avoid harm to children but enhance their experience and development.

Solutions also need to integrate a variety of policy areas - each of which is necessary, but not sufficient by itself. These policy areas include taxation, benefits and social security, transport and planning. To keep its task manageable, the Network has concentrated on three policy areas (for a discussion of some of the other policy areas concerned with reconciling employment and family responsibilities, see the report on Infra-structures and Women's Employment, also available from the European Commission). The first area, 'childcare services', we discuss below. The second area is employment and training and the need to reshape the culture and structure of employment and training to make these activities responsive to the needs of workers and trainees with family responsibilities: this is clearly a major challenge since most workers, women and men, have family responsibilities for most of their working lives - it is not just a question of making some limited adjustments for women workers for a few years when they have very young children.

The third area is the more equal sharing of all aspects of childcare between men and women. Childcare is a 'men's issue' as much as a 'women's issue'. No formula can be applied uniformly in all families - how responsibilities are shared may vary between families and, within the same family, may vary over time with one parent doing more at one stage and less at another. Having acknowledged this, there is still plenty of scope, and an urgent need, for greater involvement by men in childcare (particularly in families but also as workers in services), and for policies to encourage and support this process.

Equal access to good quality childcare services. Under the heading of 'childcare services', we include all individuals (excluding parents, but including relatives) and institutions which provide care for children. These institutions may be provided by public authorities, private organisations or individual proprietors; they include schools and a range of other services outside the education system. Childcare services must supply sufficient quantity of places providing safe and secure care. But, services must be judged against additional criteria: quantity by itself is not sufficient.

**\*\*Services must be of high quality (for a further discussion of this issue, see the Network's 1988 report and the report of the technical seminar on 'Quality in Childcare Services');**

**\*\*All children must have equal access to high quality services, irrespective of where they live, their parents' income and other individual or family circumstances;**

**\*\*Services should be available locally, in the neighbourhoods where children live (workplace provision, where provided, should supplement community provision);**

**\*\*Services should not segregate different groups of children, for example children with employed parents, but provide flexible solutions to the needs of all children and parents;**

**\*\*Diversity in services should be supported, but there should be coherence across services on certain subjects (discussed further in the 'Conclusions' section).**

**\*\*Care and education (broadly defined) are inseparable; services should meet the**

full range of children's needs.

The importance of childcare workers. The pay, conditions, status and training of workers in childcare services is of fundamental importance. The Network's 1988 report recorded that these workers were overwhelmingly women and that their pay, conditions, training and status were usually poor, with "the worst circumstances and lowest status found among workers who mainly care for children under 3". We regard this situation as unacceptable, for two reasons.

First, the pay and conditions of most childcare workers bear no relationship to the importance, complexity and demands of their work; childcare work is devalued in our societies and treated, without justification, as unskilled. Revaluation of this work requires more than fine words; it requires tangible actions, including material improvements and better training. Only in this way can we ensure that the increased services needed to improve the employment opportunities for all women are not based on the exploitation of a predominantly female group of childcare workers. Second, poor pay, conditions, status and training have adverse effects on quality in services. Research shows that the relationship between how workers are treated and the quality of their work applies just as much to childcare services as to any other type of work (see the report of the technical seminar on 'childcare workers with young children').

Partnership is essential. We have emphasised that no one approach can resolve the childcare issue - it requires the integration of policies in different areas. Similarly, no one group can resolve the childcare issue. Women already do more than their fair share; the main need is to reduce the demands made on them. Women have already shown themselves to be adaptable and flexible; it is now for others to show the same qualities. In particular, the future we envisage is not one in which women have to choose between competing in employment on men's terms or accepting restricted employment opportunities with poor pay and prospects. What we envisage is a future in which men and employment need to change to produce a better balance between employment and family (and other activities) for everyone.

From this perspective, there is an urgent need for men to take a greater part in childcare and to reduce their involvement in paid work. Employers and Trades Unions have a major contribution to make, especially through tackling workplace cultures and structures, to make them responsive to the needs of workers with family responsibilities. Government, at all levels, has a central role to play, in particular to guarantee certain basic employment rights to parents (paternity, maternity and parental leave and leave to care for sick children); and to ensure equal access for all children to good quality, locally-based care and education services, based on appropriate pay and conditions for childcare workers. This objective of equal access can be achieved in various ways; there are a range of options for the organisation and delivery of services. The one common requirement, without which the objective cannot be achieved, is the provision of public funding and ensuring these resources are used effectively to create not only more but better services.

Why does Government have such a major responsibility? Children are the future of any society. There is a major social interest in ensuring they grow up healthy and well developed, and in supporting all parents, whether or not they are employed, in their vital role of rearing the next generation; employed parents need certain kinds of support, non-employed parents require others while some types of support are required



by all parents. Society has the further responsibility to ensure that this work of rearing the next generation does not disadvantage parents. At present, it does; the way employment and childcare are organised is a major cause of inequality for women. Societies committed to protect parents from disadvantage and to the achievement of gender equality, have a duty to take action. Finally, young children are not only members of families; they are also citizens. As such, society has a responsibility to protect them against harm and distress, to ensure that their care does not depend on their parents' income or other factors irrelevant to their needs and to ensure them equality of opportunity.

### A EUROPEAN OVERVIEW

The next section reports the situation in each Member State for parental employment; employment rights for parents; publicly and privately funded childcare services; and developments in policy and provision between 1985 and 1990. Before attempting an overview of these national reports, two qualifications should be made. First, there are many gaps. Some (for example childcare workers and men's involvement in childcare) are discussed in other reports from the Network. These other reports do not fill one major gap; from the start, the Network has covered only children up to the age of 10 (approximately the end of primary school). Older children also have needs and make demands. These require recognition and attention in thinking about how to reconcile employment and family responsibilities: but as a small group with limited resources, the Network has reluctantly had to set priorities, which include concentrating on younger children.

Second, the national reports have only limited information about policies introduced by private employers or in collective agreements to make employment more responsive to the needs of workers with children. Unfortunately there is no single source of information which can provide a comprehensive account of the situation across the European Community, and information about the situation in individual Member States is often inadequate.

Inadequate information is a more general problem in reviewing the childcare situation in Europe. Some countries had no official statistics on publicly funded services more recent than 1986 or 1987; more had no information on the provision of privately funded services; and most could not provide recent national data on childcare arrangements used by employed parents or of parents' views about these arrangements. Only Denmark can provide 1989 data on the provision of services and about how children are cared for, as well as comparable past data which enable developments to be monitored over time.

Gaps in information are inconvenient for people writing reports. More seriously, they are symptomatic of attitudes and priorities. If something matters to Governments, they collect regular information on it, while one of the best ways to ignore a need or a problem is to keep it invisible.

Parental employment (see Table 1). Between 1985 and 1988 (the latest date for which information is available), employment rates for mothers increased in all countries. The largest increases occurred in the three countries which in 1985 had lowest employment

Table 1 : Parental Employment, 1988

|                    | % employed - women with child under 10 | % employed - men with child under 10 | % employed - women aged 20-39, without children | Change in % employed, 1985-88 - women with child under 10 | % unemployed - women with child under 10 | % unemployed - men with child under 10 |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Germany            | 38% (21%)                              | 94% (1%)                             | 75% (15%)                                       | +2.6% (+2.5%)   | 6%                                       | 3%                                     |
| France             | 56% (16%)                              | 93% (1%)                             | 75% (11%)                                       | +1.3% (+1.9%)   | 10%                                      | 5%                                     |
| Italy              | 42% (5%)                               | 95% (2%)                             | 55% (4%)  | +3.6% (+0.7%)   | 8%                                       | 3%                                     |
| Netherlands        | 32% (27%)                              | 91% (9%)                             | 68% (30%)                                       | +8.2% (+7.7%)   | 8%                                       | 5%                                     |
| Belgium            | 54% (16%)                              | 92% (1%)                             | 68% (13%)                                       | +2.8% (+2.4%)   | 12%                                      | 5%                                     |
| Luxembourg         | 38% (10%)                              | 98% (-)                              | 69% (5%)  | +3.7% (0.6%)  | 2%                                       | 1%                                     |
| United Kingdom     | 46% (32%)                              | 88% (1%)                             | 83% (20%)                                       | +7.5% (+6%)   | 8%                                       | 8%                                     |
| Ireland            | 23% (7%)                               | 79% (1%)                             | 67% (6%)  | +5.1% (+1.5%)   | 8%                                       | 17%                                    |
| Denmark            | 79% (32%)                              | 95% (2%)                             | 79% (6%)  | +2.6% (-1.5%)   | 8%                                       | 3%                                     |
| Greece             | 41% (5%)                               | 95% (1%)                             | 52% (3%)  | +3.8% (-0.2%)   | 6%                                       | 3%                                     |
| Portugal           | 62% (4%)                               | 95% (1%)                             | 69% (6%)  | No Information  | 6%                                       | 2%                                     |
| Spain              | 28% (4%)                               | 89% (1%)                             | 44% (5%)  | No Information  | 10%                                      | 8%                                     |
| European Community | 44% (17%)                              | 92% (2%)                             | 71% (13%)                                       | No Information  | 8%                                       | 5%                                     |

Key: Figures in brackets = % employed part-time

rates for women with children under 5 - the Netherlands, the UK and Ireland. Unemployment rates for mothers increased in 5 countries, most strongly in Italy and the Netherlands, but fell elsewhere.

Despite increases in employment, less than half (44%) of women with a child aged 0-9 were employed in 1988, compared to 92% of fathers - and 71% of childless women aged 20-39. Highest levels of employment among women were in Denmark (79%) and Portugal (62%), lowest levels in Spain (28%) and Ireland (23%).

Unemployment rates were lower for fathers (5%), than mothers overall, and in all countries except Ireland and the UK. Unemployment rates were highest for mothers in Belgium (12%) and France and Spain (10%), and for fathers in Ireland (17%) and the UK and Spain (8%).

Employment and unemployment rates also vary between regions within countries, with the largest regional differences in Italy.

Very few fathers (2% overall) have part-time jobs, compared to a third of all employed mothers. There are large national differences for part-time working; less than 20% of employed mothers work part-time in Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain compared to more than half in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK. Not only is part-time working very high in the Netherlands and the UK, but many of these part-time workers have very short hours - most work less than 20 hours a week compared to 20-29 hours, which is the average for part-time work elsewhere.

Overall, fathers work longer hours than mothers, even where comparison is made only for full-time workers: fathers in full-time jobs average 40-49 hours a week compared to 30-39 for mothers. Fathers' working hours vary between countries. They are shortest in France, Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, where under half work more than 40 hours a week; and longest in the UK and Ireland, where 34% and 25% work more than 50 hours a week.

Unfortunately, no data is available on the qualitative aspects of parents' employment - the type of occupation, pay, prospects and so on. The main exception concerns temporary jobs, which employed mothers are twice as likely to have as fathers (10% compared to 5%). Levels of temporary employment for mothers are particularly high in Spain (19% of all employed mothers), Portugal (16%) and the Netherlands (15%) - and in all three cases, a majority of mothers say they have temporary jobs because they cannot find permanent employment.

Employment rights for parents (see Table 2). With one exception, Maternity Leave is a universal right for employed women, with the full period of leave covered by earnings-related payments (between 70%-100% of earnings). The exception is the UK, where eligibility conditions exclude a large number of women, and only 6 weeks leave is covered by earnings related payments. In most countries, post-natal leave is for 12 weeks or less (although the exact length often depends on how much of their leave women take before birth); the main exception is the UK, which offers 29 weeks post-natal leave, though this is unpaid for most of the time. Two countries, Spain and the Netherlands, have increased the leave period between 1985 and 1988.

Parental Leave is offered in 7 countries; while Belgium offers a more general leave which can be used for childcare. Periods of leave vary from 10 weeks (Denmark) to nearly 3 years (France). Some payment is made to all parents on leave in Denmark, Italy and Germany, and to some parents in France; except in Denmark, this payment is low in relation to normal earnings. Between 1985 and 1990, Germany and Spain

Table 2: Maternity and Parental Leave

|                | Maternity Leave  | Parental Leave  |
|----------------|--|---|
| Germany        | 6 weeks before birth, 8 weeks after (12 for multiple births). 100% of earnings   | 18 months. Low flat-rate payment for 6 months; payment then depends on family income, so higher income family gets less |
| France         | 6 weeks before birth, 10 weeks after (longer for 3rd+ and multiple births). 84% of earnings  | Until child is 3. No payment unless 3 or more children; then low, flat-rate payment                                     |
| Italy          | 2 months before birth, 3 months after. 80% of earnings   | 6 months. 30% of earnings   |
| Belgium        | 14 weeks altogether; 8 weeks must be taken after birth, the other 6 weeks can be taken before or after. 75% of earnings (82% for first month)  | None, but workers can take leave for family or personal reasons (see national report)                                   |
| Netherlands    | 16 weeks altogether; 4-6 weeks can be taken before birth, 10-12 weeks after. 100% of earnings  | None, but Government proposal for part-time leave has been made   |
| Luxembourg     | 6 weeks before birth, 8 weeks after (12 for multiple births). 100% of earnings   | None  |
| United Kingdom | 11 weeks before birth, 29 weeks after. 90% of earnings for 6 weeks, low flat-rate payment for 12 weeks, no payment for remaining weeks   | None  |
| Ireland        | 14 weeks altogether; 4 weeks must be taken before birth, 4 weeks must be taken after and the other 6 weeks can be taken before or after. 70% of earnings (tax free). Mothers can request additional 4 weeks unpaid leave | None  |
| Denmark        | 4 weeks before birth, 14 weeks after. 90% of earnings (up to maximum level)  | 10 weeks. 90% of earnings (up to a maximum level)   |
| Greece         | 16 weeks, to be taken before or after birth. 100% of earnings  | 3 months per parent. Unpaid   |
| Portugal       | 90 days altogether; 60 days must be taken after birth and the other 30 days can be taken before or after. 100% of earnings   | 24 months. Unpaid   |
| Spain          | 16 weeks altogether; 10 weeks must be taken after birth and the other 6 weeks can be taken before or after. 75% of earnings  | 12 months. Unpaid   |

introduced Parental Leave and Germany and France further lengthened the leave period; during this period, the Dutch Government has proposed a Parental Leave scheme, which is not yet implemented.

Only one country - Denmark - has statutory paid Paternity Leave. Six countries - Germany, Italy, Denmark, Greece, Portugal and Spain - provide some leave to care for sick children - but this is only paid in Germany, Denmark and Portugal. While a large number of fathers take paid paternity leave in Denmark, very few seem to use other types of leave available to them.

As already noted, there is no comparable and comprehensive information on policies introduced by employers or through collective agreements, although in the cases where some information is available, there appears to have been limited progress during the last 5 years.

Tax relief and other direct subsidies to parents for childcare costs. Four countries - Luxembourg, Belgium, France and Portugal - provide some tax relief for childcare costs (tax relief is available in Germany, but for domestic help). In each case, however, there is also a policy of increasing publicly-funded services. The only condition attached is that parents provide some proof of payment - which may act as a disincentive for some private caregivers who may fear having to pay tax as a consequence of parents claiming tax relief. In general, tax relief benefits higher-income families more than other families.

Between 1985 and 1988, Belgium and Portugal introduced tax relief, while the Netherlands ended their system, switching the money saved to funding an increase in publicly-funded services. Spain is planning to introduce tax relief in 1991.

Publicly funded childcare services (see Table 3). Most publicly funded childcare for children under 3 is the responsibility of welfare authorities (though not always provided directly by these authorities), and is available mainly in nurseries, mixed age centres or organised family day care schemes (these terms are defined on page 13); in France and Belgium, however, substantial numbers of 2 year olds are admitted to pre-primary schooling provided by education authorities. Publicly funded provision for children under 3 is low - there are places for 5% or less of the age group, except in Denmark, France, Belgium and Portugal. For children between 3 and compulsory school age, most countries provide, or are in the process of providing, 2-3 years of pre-primary schooling, which is the responsibility of education authorities, or kindergartens, which are the responsibility of welfare authorities. Publicly funded childcare, mostly in these two types of service, is available to over 80% of children between 3 and compulsory school age in Denmark, France, Italy and Belgium; and to 60-80% in Spain, Greece and Germany. Children begin compulsory school at 6 except in Denmark (7), Greece (5½) and Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK (5). The primary school day varies in length from 4 hours (for example in Denmark and much of Germany and Italy), to 8 hours in France and Spain; in countries with afternoon school sessions, there is increasing provision of supervision and, in some cases, meals in the midday break. Outside school hours care, for children at pre-primary and primary schooling may be school based or in separate centres (which may also provide care for children under 3); levels of provision are generally low, covering less than 5% of children except in Denmark, Belgium, France and Portugal.

The main exceptions to this pattern are the Netherlands, Ireland and the UK. Pre-primary schooling is limited or not provided at all. Instead, children are admitted early to primary school or attend playgroups; playgroups offer short periods of provision (5-6

Table 3 : Places in publicly funded childcare services as % of all children in the age group

|                | Date to which data refer | For children under 3 | For children from 3 to compulsory school age | Age when compulsory schooling begins | Length of school day (including midday break) | Outside school hours care for primary school children |
|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Germany        | 1987                     | 3%                   | 65-70%                                       | 6-7 years                            | 4-5 hours (a)                                 | 4%  |
| France         | 1988                     | 20%                  | 95%+   | 6 years                              | 8 hours                                       | ?   |
| Italy          | 1986                     | 5%                   | 85%+   | 6 years                              | 4 hours                                       | ?   |
| Netherlands    | 1989                     | 2%                   | 50-55%                                       | 5 years                              | 6-7 hours                                     | 1%  |
| Belgium        | 1988                     | 20%                  | 95%+   | 6 years                              | 7 hours                                       | ?   |
| Luxembourg     | 1989                     | 2%                   | 55-60%                                       | 5 years                              | 4-8 hours (a)                                 | 1%  |
| United Kingdom | 1988                     | 2%                   | 35-40%                                       | 5 years                              | 6½ hours                                      | (-)   |
| Ireland        | 1988                     | 2%                   | 55%  | 6 years                              | 4½-6½ hours (b)                               | (-)   |
| Denmark        | 1989                     | 48%                  | 85%  | 7 years                              | 3-5½ hours (a,b)                              | 29%   |
| Greece         | 1988                     | 4%                   | 65-70%                                       | 5½ years                             | 4-5 hours (b)                                 | (-)   |
| Portugal       | 1988                     | 6%                   | 35%  | 6 years                              | 6½ hours                                      | 6%  |
| Spain          | 1988                     | ?                    | 65-70%                                       | 6 years                              | 8 hours                                       | (-)   |

**NB.** This Table should be read in conjunction with the national reports, which contain important qualifications and explanations. The Table shows the number of places in publicly funded services as a % of the child population; the % of children attending may be higher because some places are used on a part-time basis. Provision at playgroups in the Netherlands has not been included, although 10% of children under 3 and 25% of children aged 3-4 attend and most playgroups receive public funds. Average hours of attendance - 5-6 hours per week - are so much shorter than for other services, that it would be difficult and potentially misleading to include them on the same basis as other services; however playgroups should not be forgotten when considering publicly funded provision in the Netherlands.

**Key:** ? = no information; (-) = less than 0.5%; (a) = school hours vary from day to day; (b) = school hours increase as children get older.

hours a week on average), and are usually not publicly funded in the UK and Ireland. The UK and Ireland are also exceptional for not including children of employed parents as priority groups for admission to publicly funded child-care services (excluding schools); these services are used as a social work resource for 'at risk' children or troubled families.

Levels of provision vary substantially between countries. Denmark has, by far, the highest overall levels of provision, and has gone further than any other country (with the possible exception of East Germany) in developing a comprehensive system of services for children of all ages; the cost is 13 billion Dkr a year. Some way behind come France and Belgium. At the other extreme, lowest levels overall are in Ireland, the Netherlands and the UK. There are also marked variations between areas within countries, with provision generally lower in rural areas and smaller towns, and highest in some cities. While variations can partly be explained by different levels of need and national income, this is only a partial explanation for the unequal access to services that exists. Equally important are differences in political commitment and priority.

There is evidence of substantial unmet need for publicly funded services (see the Childcare Network's 1988 Report) throughout Europe, mainly for children under 3 and outside school hours care for over 3s.

Between 1985 and 1988/89, publicly funded services increased by more than 10% in Denmark, Luxembourg, France and Portugal. The Netherlands has begun a substantial expansion of services, due to a major Government initiative, but only from 1989. In the UK, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Belgium, growth has been slower or non-existent. There may have been some growth in Germany, at least in services for children over 3, but it is impossible to say how much because there are no recent statistics.

Two final themes should be mentioned. First, there is an increasing awareness of the need to develop an educational orientation in services for children under 3, which traditionally have emphasised physical care in a health and welfare context. This development has gone furthest in Denmark, Northern Italy and Spain, where all services for children from 0-5 will soon become the responsibility of education authorities. There is also increasing interest in developing more flexible services, which can meet a variety of local needs from employed and non-employed parents (and from other carers such as relatives) and their children, and which emphasise a close relationship between the service, parents and the local community.

Privately funded childcare services. It is difficult to get a clear idea of the contribution made by privately funded services, because in many countries important groups of carers are not registered with authorities, and when registration is required, many family day carers avoid registration. Official statistics for privately funded services are therefore either non-existent or incomplete. The most significant private carers (although not strictly 'privately funded', since they often receive no payment) are relatives, mainly grandmothers; they provide for more children under 3 than any other type of service (except in Denmark and France). Private family day carers are important in many countries, though not in Spain, Italy and Greece, where own home care is more significant. Nurseries and other centres provided for profit or by employers make only a small contribution (with places for less than 2% of children under 3 in all countries), though substantial increases have occurred recently in a few countries, especially the Netherlands and the UK. This expansion in the UK is part of a general, substantial growth in privately funded services between 1985 and 1990, due to increased

employment among mothers and UK Government policy to leave increased demand for childcare entirely to the private sector.

Surveys show relatives and privately funded services, especially family day care, provide childcare for most children under 3; the one exception is Denmark, where most children are cared for in publicly funded services, with relatives and private family day carers making a limited and decreasing contribution.

Private nurseries generally are regulated, family day care varies more and own home care and relatives are never regulated. Between 1985 and 1990, only the UK took steps to improve the regulation of private childcare services, although relevant laws are likely to be approved in Ireland and Spain before the end of 1990. Despite the number of children they care for, only a minority of private family day carers and no relatives receive support from public authorities.

The demographic factor. Growing interest in childcare is driven in some countries by labour shortages caused by an earlier decline in birth rate; in France, childcare is a central part of family policy, one of the main objectives being to increase the birth rate. The birth rate has a more direct impact on childcare services. In several countries, a recent fall in the birth rate means fewer children; consequently, the proportion of children attending services is increasing faster than the number of places available. In other countries, a recent upturn in the birth rate plus, in some cases, increased immigration means that there are more children; more services are needed just to keep the coverage rate at the same level. For example, the state of Bavaria in Germany will need 55,000 new kindergarten places over the next few years simply to maintain its present level of coverage; and in Denmark, places for children under 3 increased by 22% between 1985 and 1988, but the coverage rate only increased 13%.

Growing interest in childcare. Network members in several countries - Germany, Italy, Netherlands, UK, Ireland, Denmark - report growing interest in childcare and its increasing priority on the political agenda. In some cases, for example the Netherlands and the UK, this has taken the form of a relatively narrow debate in which childcare is primarily seen as a labour force issue. Elsewhere there has been a broader debate. In Denmark, childcare is part of a wide and growing debate about children and parents and the balance between employment and family life; and in Italy, there has been increasing discussion about childhood and the rights of children, the relationship between employment and family responsibilities, the role of men and the organisation of daily life and the use of time.

## NATIONAL REPORTS

The information about individual Member States comes from two sources. The employment background is based on a special analysis of the 1988 Labour Force Survey (LFS) undertaken for the Childcare Network by the Statistical Office of the European Communities. Fuller details of this analysis are provided in a Network report - Mothers, Fathers and Employment - which is also available from the Commission. It should be noted that 'employment' includes workers who are self-employed and unpaid family workers; that 'unemployment' includes anyone who is currently available for work and



has taken steps to seek work during the 4 weeks preceding the LFS interview (but does not include people who would like a job but have not taken recent active steps to find one, which would include many women with children); and that 'hours per week usually worked' covers basic hours and both paid and unpaid overtime.

The other source for information is national reports prepared by each member of the Network, to a common format, then edited and summarised by the Network Co-ordinator.

A problem in preparing European reports is to decide what to call services, since similar services have different names in different countries. This report follows the same approach as the 1988 Report. The names used for services in each country are given, in brackets, in the report for that country; but a set of Euro-terms has been developed to cover the main types of services and is used throughout this report:

NURSERY. Group care for children under the age of 2 years, and usually under 12 months, until the age of 3 or 4.

MIXED AGE CENTRE. Group care which takes children under 3 and from 3 to compulsory school age; or provides for children under school age as well as outside school hours care for children at pre-primary or primary school.

FAMILY DAY CARE. Care provided for a single child or a small group of children in the carer's own home. The carer may be part of an organised scheme or operate independently.

ORGANISED FAMILY DAY CARE. A service where family day care is provided by carers who are recruited, paid and supported by a publicly funded organisation.

OWN HOME CARE. Care provided in a child's home by a paid carer, who may live in the child's home or come daily.

PLAYGROUPS. Group care for children from 2 to compulsory school age, outside the education system, where children generally attend for less than 10 hours a week.

KINDERGARTEN. Group care for children between 2 and compulsory school age, outside the education system. Children usually attend for more than 20 hours a week, and parents usually contribute to the cost.

PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLING. Schooling specifically organised for children from 3 to compulsory school age, though in some cases 2 year olds are admitted. Part of the education system and free to parents.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE. Care provided before or after school or in the school holidays for children attending pre-primary or primary schooling. The service can be based in schools or in centres separate from schools.

## GERMANY

### Employment background

In 1988, 38% of women with a child under 10 were employed, and 5% were unemployed; women with a child aged 5-9 had rather higher employment rates than women with a child aged 0-4 - 39% compared to 34% - but unemployment rates were similar. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 76%, substantially above the level for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 2% increase in the employment rate for women with a child under 10, due to increased

part-time employment. Overall, just over half (55%) the employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work were 20-29 for mothers employed part-time, 40-49 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with a child under 10 were highest in Berlin (57%) and Bayern (47%), lowest in Bremen (30%) and Nordrhein-Westfalen (29%).

Nearly all men with a child under 10 were employed (94%); average hours of work were 40-49. Unemployment was 3%, but varied from 2% in Bayern and Baden-Wurttemberg to 7% in Hamburg and 10% in Bremen.

The proportion of one parent households was 9% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 11% for households with a child aged 5-9, one of the highest levels in the Community. Lone mothers were more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 41% (7% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and 52% (13% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9; this difference was due entirely to higher levels of full-time employment. Unemployment was nearly twice as high among lone mothers as among all mothers - 12% for those with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9 (compared to 7%).

#### Employment rights for parents

There is 8 weeks post-natal maternity leave (12 weeks for multiple births); during this period women receive full earnings, with employers required to supplement state benefit. Women are entitled to take time off work to breastfeed their child.

Either parent may take 18 months parental leave. This actually consists of a period of leave for parents who were previously employed, and a cash allowance for all parents who are not employed for more than 18 hours a week (in other words, a parent can work up to 18 hours and still get benefit). During the first six months, all parents receive the same benefit - DM 600 a month - but subsequently payment depends on income, with the benefit level reduced when annual income exceeds DM 29,400 for a married couple with 1 child or DM 23,700 for a single parent; about 40% of families continue to get the full benefit.

Benefit is claimed by 97% of those who are eligible; 46% of claimants were employed before birth. The benefit is claimed in 98.5% of cases by women. Most of the fathers (70%) receiving benefit were unemployed prior to claiming.

It is planned to extend the leave to 2 years, and eventually 3 years, reflecting a widespread view that children should be in full-time parental care up to age 3. Some lander (for example, Berlin, Bayern and Baden-Wurttemberg) already offer longer periods of benefit, although without job protection.

Each parent is also entitled to take 5 days paid leave to care for a sick child under 8.

In the public sector, parents may claim reduced working hours because of children or other dependants, although requests may be refused; this has resulted in a reduction in the numbers of women who leave public services because of marriage or child care. A number of large private employers also operate policies for workers with children, in particular 'career breaks' (a period of full-time leave, usually unpaid, with a job guarantee) and more opportunities for part-time and flexible working (though usually not as an entitlement).

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

Tax relief is available on the costs of a domestic help, up to DM 12,000, provided

the domestic help has full employee status, including social protection and insurance rights.

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Germany has a federal constitution, and main responsibility for policy and development of services is with individual state ('land') governments. Children start primary school between age 6 and 7. Childcare services (excluding schools) are the responsibility of social welfare departments, with a few exceptions (in Bayern, kindergartens are the responsibility of education departments).

In 1986/87, the latest date for which information is available, there were places for around 3% of children under 3, mostly (2%) in nurseries ('krippen') or mixed age centres (taking children from 0-6), but with some admitted to kindergarten at age 2 (although this is against regulations) or whose fees at private family day carers ('tagesmutter') were subsidised from public funds. Most provision in nurseries or mixed age centres is provided by local authorities, but some is provided by private organisations, mainly large national organisations but a small amount by parent groups.

The predominant form of publicly funded provision for children from 3 to primary school is kindergarten; most is provided by national private organisations. In 1987, 68% of children in this age group attended - 33% of 3 year olds, 70% of 4 year olds and over 80% of 5 and 6 year olds. A minority of kindergartens (providing for about 12% of all children in kindergarten in 1986) are full-time (open for at least 8 hours a day). The general pattern, however, is for kindergartens to open 4 hours in the morning and, in some cases, for 2 hours in the afternoon; children attending morning and afternoon sessions have to go home for the 2 hour break between sessions. In addition, a few 5 and 6 year olds (around 6%) attend pre-primary schooling; this provision is only found in some lander.

A few primary schools (covering 4% of children) are open for a full day, but most are only open for 4 or 5 hours in the morning and hours can vary from day to day; no meals are provided. Short and irregular school hours (plus the expectation that parents, in practice mothers, will devote considerable time to helping children with homework) make it difficult for mothers with children at primary school to be employed, even on a part-time basis. Centres providing outside school hours care ('horte') are available for 4% of children aged 6-10. Most centres are provided by local authorities.

Some services for different age groups are linked, with increasing provision in these mixed age centres. This development has gone furthest in Nordrhein Westfalen, where the policy is to support centres for children from 0-6. 'Horte' are often linked with 'kindergartens'; there are also some examples of centres taking children from 0-15.

Parents contribute to the cost of services (excluding schools), the amount they pay depending on income, numbers of children and the land in which they live (for kindergartens, usually all parents pay the same, leaving it for parents with lower incomes to claim back part of the fees). Levels of provision for all ages vary widely between lander and local authorities. For example, nearly half of all places in nurseries are in Berlin and Hamburg, which provide for 10% or more of under 3s, compared to less than 2% in other lander.

#### Privately funded childcare services

Some services are provided by employers; there is no information on how much,

but it accounts for a small proportion of children. The main form of privately funded provision is in family day care; family day carers are supposed to register with local authorities, but most do not do so. There is no information on the number of places in privately funded services.

### Developments 1985-1990

1. The parental leave system was introduced in 1986, starting with 10 months and extending to 18 months in July 1990.

2. Childcare, and more broadly work-family issues, have received increasing attention from employers, in response to an anticipated shortage of qualified workers in the 1990s. As well as career breaks, part-time work options and other employment adaptations, employers are increasingly looking at the possibility of supporting childcare services, either on-site or in the local community. Trade unions are also taking up work-family issues, though rather hesitantly and not as priorities.

3. More generally, childcare has returned to the political agenda during this period - because of labour force concerns, the impact of women's equality offices created throughout Germany in recent years and public pressure (including from families who have moved from East Germany where they have been used to a higher level of provision). All parties agree that the childcare situation must be improved.

4. For various reasons, including concerns about public expenditure, the actual development of services is slow and uneven between lander. However, after a relatively stagnant period in the early 1980s, some progress is being made, especially in services for children over 3, with particular attention being paid to longer opening hours for kindergartens and primary schools and more outside school hours care: for example, some kindergartens have introduced a 5-6 hour morning session sometimes including lunch; in Hessen an extra DM 40 million has been agreed to increase the opening hours of childcare services; while in Nordrhein Westfalen the provision of full-day schools (open to 16.00) is being extended. In some cases, increased demand has been met by spreading resources more thinly, for example creating morning and afternoon shifts in kindergartens or by increasing the number of children in groups.

5. As well as more provision, offering longer and more flexible hours, a number of other trends are apparent. Mixed-age services are increasing, and the Federal Government is funding an evaluation project of this model. Increasing attention is being given to the relationship between services and the local community. This involves institutions, such as nurseries and kindergartens, co-operating with and involving local initiatives, by parents and other groups, and offering a wider range of services, including support to other caregivers such as family day carers and grandmothers; and community initiatives, such as the network of 'mothers centres', extending their services, for example to provide childcare for employed parents. The concept that is emerging is of neighbourhood institutions which can react flexibly to the needs of their local communities, are open to all children regardless of age or time of attendance and provide a meeting place and resource for parents and other caregivers.

6. These and other developments are creating a number of problems. Integrating services for different age groups can run into difficulties when different authorities have responsibility for different age groups. There are also a number of problems concerning childcare workers. Low wages have caused acute recruitment difficulties in large cities. Pressure for longer and more flexible hours also creates tensions; some workers are concerned that innovations will be at their expense and the shortening of the working

week in the public sector (from 40 to 38,5 hours) has already created some problems. Finally, innovations in childcare services, for example involving more work with parents and communities, require accompanying innovations in training and job descriptions; these are only happening slowly.

#### A footnote on East Germany; the situation in 1989

Employment rates among women with children, around 90%, were amongst the highest in the world. Twelve months Parental Leave (full earnings for 5 months, 80% of earnings for 7 months) was provided, and widely taken, almost entirely by women. For children over 12 months, an extensive system of publicly funded services has been developed, providing in 1987 for 81% of children aged 1-2 in nurseries and 94% of over 3s in kinder-gartens. A further 45,600 nursery places were planned for 1987-90, adding to the 348,000 places already open, with the objective of providing a place for every child. Services were free, but parents were expected to contribute towards the cost of food. Most children not in nurseries were cared for by their mothers; under 2% of children under 3 received private family day care.

## FRANCE

### Employment background

In 1988, 56% of women with a child under 10 were employed, and 10% were unemployed; there was little difference in employment or unemployment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 75%. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 1% increase in employment rates for women with a child under 10, due to increased part-time employment. Overall, just over a quarter (27%) of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work were 20-29 for mothers employed part-time, 30-39 for mothers employed full-time and also 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with a child under 10 were highest in Ile de France (64%), lowest in Nord/Pas de Calais and Mediterranee (both 45%).

Nearly all men with a child under 10 were employed (93%); average hours of work were 30-39. Unemployment was 5%, but varied from 10% in Nord/Pas de Calais to 4% in Est, Ouest and Centre-Est.

The proportion of one parent households was 7% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 11% with households with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers were more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 54% (1% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and 66% (12% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9; this difference was due entirely to higher levels of full-time employment. Unemployment was more than twice as high among lone mothers as among all mothers - 23% for those with a child aged 0-4 (compared to 10%) and 18% for those with a child aged 5-9 (compared to 8%).

### Employment rights for parents

There is 10 weeks post-natal maternity leave (with an extra 2 weeks for multiple births and 8 weeks for a third or later birth); during this period women receive benefit equivalent to 84% of earnings. Women are entitled to take one hour a day off work to

breast-feed until their child is 12 months. Parental Leave is available until a child reaches 3 and may be taken full-time or part-time (so that it could be shared between parents, with both mother and father working part-time); companies with less than 100 employees can refuse to grant leave. Leave is unpaid unless there are three or more children, when a flat rate benefit ('Allocation Parentale d'Education') is paid (FF 2,578 a month in 1989, rather more than half the 'SMIC', or guaranteed minimum wage). The main condition for payment is that one parent is not employed; however in the year preceding the child's third birthday, the benefit can be paid at half rate where the parent takes a part-time job or a course of paid vocational training.

There is no statutory right to take leave to care for a sick child. In the private sector, a substantial number of collective agreements (44% in 1984) include this type of leave, though in some cases it is only available to women. A Government circular allows 12 days leave to women in the public sector (men are only eligible if they are widowed or divorced).

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

Employed parents using own home care for a child under 3 can claim a monthly allowance of 2,200 FF ('Allocation de Garde à Domicile' - AGED) to cover social insurance contributions (both employer's and employee's) for the carer. In 1988, 6,000 parents claimed this benefit. Parents using a private but approved family day carer ('assistante maternelle agréée') for a child under 3 may claim an allowance of approximately 450 FF a month ('Prestation Spéciale Assistante Maternelle' - PSAM), to cover their social security contribution as an employer. Like AGED, PSAM was intended to provide financial support to parents and improve the position of the family day carers. When introduced in 1980, it was expected that PSAM would be claimed by 275,000 parents; in 1987, it was claimed by 45,000, despite 128,000 children under 3 being looked after by 'assistante maternelle agréée'. Most parents appear to be ill informed about the benefit, while many family day carers are not interested in social security cover and are more worried about tax implications. Changes to be introduced in January 1991 will widen the benefit to cover children up to age 6, increase the amount and improve medical and retirement benefits for 'assistantes maternelles'.

Finally, parents who are both employed may claim a tax reduction on the cost of childcare for children under 6. This is calculated as a reduction in tax equal to 25% of actual costs, up to a limit of 15,000 FF a year per child (so that the maximum allowable tax reduction is 3,750 FF per child).

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 6. Provision for children under 3 (excluding pre-primary schooling) is the responsibility of local authority welfare departments and the Ministry of Solidarity, Health and Social Protection. In 1988, there was provision for approximately 20% of this age group in publicly-funded services. About 40% of 2 year olds (equivalent to 13% of all children under 3) attended pre-primary schooling; this provision accounted for rather more than half of all publicly funded places for children under 3. The rest were divided between places for 5% of the age group in nurseries ('crèche collectif') and kindergartens; for 2% in organised family day care ('crèche familiale'); and for 1.5% in part-time centres ('haltes garderies') originally intended for children with non-employed mothers, but now used increasingly by parents in part-time and full-time employment. Most provision is made by local authorities, the rest by

private organisations. Parent groups running nurseries receive public funds; these 'creches parentales' provided 3,500 places out of 95,700 places in nurseries in 1988. Some publicly funded nurseries are attached to particular workplaces, mainly hospitals, and adapt their opening hours to suit the workplace.

About 95% of children aged 3-5 attend pre-primary schooling ('écoles maternelles'). These schools are open from 8.30-16.30. Most provide meals and supervision during the 2 hour lunch break. For most children, outside school hours care ('service periscolaires') is available, starting at 7.30 and ending at 18.30 and also providing a service all day on Wednesday, when schools are closed, and during holidays; this 'service periscolaire' is provided in recreation centres (CLAE) which are usually, but not always, attached to schools. About 260,000 children aged 3-5 use these centres - 10-15% of the age group. Primary schools are open for similar hours and many have similar outside school hours care arrangements. Education policy, curriculum and teachers in pre-primary and primary schooling are the responsibility of the Ministry of National Education. Local authorities are responsible for buildings, furnishings, and staff who assist teachers, and also provide outside school hours care.

Parents pay for publicly funded services for children under 3 according to income and numbers of children; fees are set at about 14% of income for one child (and at a lower rate for further children). In 1987, parents paid on average 38% of the costs of 'crèche familiale' and 26% of the costs of 'crèche collectif' (in both cases, parents paid the same amount, but a place in a 'crèche collectif' cost 40% more than a place in a 'crèche familiale'). The remaining costs are divided between local authorities, who paid 42% of costs for 'crèches familiales' and 54% for 'crèches collectives'; and the Caisses des Allocations Familiales (CAFs) which pay 20%. CAFs are regional funds financed by employer contributions; originally intended to provide cash benefits to families with children, these funds began to subsidise the costs of childcare services in the 1970s.

Pre-primary schooling is widely available, but there are large local variations in other services, especially for children under 3. Large towns have the best supply, rural areas least; for example, nearly half the nursery places are in the Ile-de-France area, in and around Paris.

#### Privately funded childcare services

Some services are provided by employers; there is no information on how much, but it accounts for a very small proportion of children. There is also very little private (for profit) nursery care. The main form of privately funded provision is in family day care. Family day carers ('assistante maternelles' or 'nourrices') are supposed to be registered and approved by the authorities; just under half, however, are not registered. A 1977 Law gave approved family day carers a special status and certain legal entitlements: these include a minimum wage (at least 2 hours of the SMIC hourly rate per child per day), social insurance and paid holidays.

Private family day care provides childcare for more children under 3 with employed parents than any other type of service (including relatives), accounting for 40-45% of this group of children; just over half of these children are with approved private carers, the remainder attending unregistered family day carers. By contrast, 4-5% of children under 3 with employed parents receive own home care.

Family day carers also provide some outside school hours care for children over 3.

## Developments 1985-90

1. Parental leave was lengthened to its present period in 1986, while the benefit paid to parents on leave was introduced in 1985. Tax reductions on childcare costs have been improved on several occasions since 1985.

2. The objective of Government policy has been to increase publicly funded provision, and there has been a steady increase in provision throughout the 1980s. The number of places in nurseries increased from 72,065 in 1981 to 84,300 in 1986 and 95,700 in 1988 (an increase of 14% between 1986 and 1988); places in organised family day care schemes increased from 38,900 in 1981 to 46,400 in 1986 and 53,200 in 1988 (an increase of 15% between 1986 and 1988). CAFs have played a central role in increasing provision, through the support they have given to local authorities. In 1983, the *contrats crèches* was introduced, agreements made between CAFs and local authorities, in which a local authority agreed to expand services for children under 3 by a specified amount in return for a specified level of funding from its CAF. Excluding the 5,000 places created in Paris, agreements have mainly been made with smaller local authorities (10-20,000 population) around large cities. By the end of 1988, 49 CAFs had signed 215 agreements, to create 20,127 places, both in nurseries and organised family day care.

3. The *contrat crèche* scheme has been replaced by the *contrat enfance*, which began in 1988. This new type of agreement is more comprehensive and flexible, covering a wide range of services for children under primary school age (for example, centres providing outside school hours care) and is intended to improve quantity and quality of services. Agreements are between CAFs and local authorities, but can also include other local partners such as voluntary associations and employers. Objectives are set out and local authorities undertake to increase their expenditure on children under 6; in return CAFs agree to make a contribution (ranging between 30-50%) based on the expenditure of the other contracting parties - the more local authorities pay, the more they get from their CAFs. By April 1989, 99 contracts had been signed (more than half with local authorities with a population of under 10,000), with a further 200 under negotiation.

CAFs continue to make a regular contribution of 20% to all nurseries and organised family day care schemes. Overall, CAF expenditure on childcare increased by 41% between 1984 and 1987 and has risen since, to a current level of over 2 billion FF.

4. In addition to increasing the quantity of services, there has been an increasing emphasis on improving quality, an objective of the *contrat enfance* and of a joint policy initiative in 1989 between the Ministry of Culture and the Secretary of State for the Family. The policy aims to develop cultural and artistic activities in services (music, theatre etc) and improve staff training; priority will be given to projects set up by local authorities which have signed agreements with CAFs.

5. The current trend, encouraged in official policy, is towards greater diversity of childcare services; a reduction in the size of nurseries; and the creation of multi-functional services, where a centre may be used for several purposes, for example to provide full-time childcare, a part-time play centre, a place for parents to meet and a base for various community services such as support for family day carers.

6. The 1977 Law created a special status for 'assistantes maternelles'. In 1977, a quarter of family day carers were not approved; since then the proportion has increased. The proposed changes in PSAM in 1991 are intended to improve their status,



particularly in terms of social security, but the problems are wider. In 1990, the Government set up a working group to review the 1977 law; the objective is to improve the position of approved family day carers and increase their numbers.

7. There is a growing movement in favour of childcare services within companies, though there is also some resistance to this development.

## ITALY

### Employment background

In 1988, 42% of women with a child aged 10 were employed, and 8% were unemployed; there was little difference in employment or unemployment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 55%, one of the lowest levels in the Community. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 4% increase in the employment rate for women with a child under 10, due mainly to increased full-time employment. Overall, just over one in ten (11%) of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work were 20-29 for mothers employed part-time, 30-39 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with a child under 10 varied widely between regions; they were highest in Emilia-Romagna (64%), Nord-Ovest (55%) and Lombardia (54%), lowest in Sardegna (28%) and Sicilia (24%).

Nearly all men with a child under 10 were employed (95%); average hours of work were 40-49. Unemployment was 3%, but varied from 6% in Sicilia, Sud and Campania to 1% in Lombardia, Nord-Est, Emilia-Romagna and Centro.

Levels of self-employment were high both for mothers and fathers (15% of all employed mothers and 28% of all employed fathers, compared to 10% and 19% in the Community).

The proportion of one parent households was 4% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 5% for households with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers were much more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 58% (18% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and 64% (23% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9; this difference was due entirely to higher levels of full-time employment among lone mothers. Unemployment was only slightly higher among lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 (11% compared to 10% for all mothers), but nearly twice as high among lone mothers with a child aged 5-9 (13% compared to 7%).

### Employment rights for parents

There is 3 months post-natal Maternity Leave; during this period women receive benefit equivalent to 80% of earnings, though many women now receive full earnings due to collective agreements. Employed women are entitled to two hours of rest a day during the first year after birth. There is a period of 6 months Parental Leave, to be taken during a child's first year; (leave is granted to the mother, but she may cede this right to the father). During this period, parents receive state benefit equivalent to 30% of earnings, though some women in the public sector get higher payments due to collective agreements.

Women workers (but not men) may take unpaid leave to care for a sick child under 3.

### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none.

### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start school at 6. Provision for children under 3 is the responsibility of local authority and regional education or welfare departments (the responsible department varies) and the Ministry of Health. In 1986, the latest date for which information is available, there was provision for just over 5% of this age group in publicly funded services; the amount of provision is unlikely to have increased significantly since then. All provision is made in nurseries ('asilo nido'), and nearly all is provided by local authorities; there are a few publicly-funded private nurseries and recently, so far in only a small number of cases, local authorities have signed agreements with co-operative associations to provide nursery services.

Over 85% of children aged 3-5 (87% in 1987-88) attend pre-primary schooling ('scuola materna'). This may be provided by Central Government, whose schools accounted for 49% of children in 1985/86; local authorities (15%); or private organisations, both religious (21%) and lay (16%), which receive public funding. State-run schools are required by law to be open at least 8 hours a day, and may be open for as long as 10 hours a day (for example, from 7.30 to 17.30); other schools are less likely to be open so long, though some are. Overall, nearly 70% of children attend pre-primary schooling for more than 7 hours a day.

Most primary schools are open from 8.30 to 12.30, for six days a week, although just under a fifth of children attend full-time schools open 8 hours a day. Primary schools are provided by the Ministry of Education; unlike pre-primary schooling, there is no local authority provision. But outside school hours care, which is available in some schools, is provided by local authorities; there are no statistics on the extent of this provision, but it is not very widespread.

Parents pay for publicly-funded services for children under 3 according to income. Central government guidelines say that parents should pay, on average, 36% of the cost, but parents pay less in some areas where local authorities contribute more.

There are large regional variations in services. In 1986, there were places in public nursery provision for 19% of children in Emilia-Romagna, 11% in Piemonte and 9% in Lombardia compared to less than 2% in Molise, Campania, Calabria and Sicilia. Attendance at pre-primary education is 92% in the North and 94% in the Centre, but 85% in the South and 75% in the Islands; regional differences also affect quality, hours of opening, whether meals are offered and the training of staff. For example, children in the North are more likely to have access to a pre-primary school open for more than 7 hours a day. Finally, the proportion of pupils attending full-time primary school varies considerably, from over 30% in Molise, Basilicata and Sardegna to under 10% in Veneto, Campania and Sicilia.

### Privately funded childcare services

There are few places - less than 3,000 - in private nurseries, and no information on childcare services provided by employers. There are no statistics on private family day carers, who do not need to be registered, though this type of care is probably not common except perhaps in some larger cities. The most common private service is own

home care, which is entirely unregulated and for which there are no statistics.

### Developments 1985-90

1. Since 1989, benefit is paid to self-employed women on maternity leave at 80% of minimum daily pay. A 1987 court case gives fathers the right to the maternity leave period, and also to the daily rest periods at work in a child's first year, in the case of a mother's death or severe disability.

2. There has been little or no growth in publicly funded services in this period. The number of places in pre-primary schooling has actually decreased, and although the number of children in the 3-5 age group has also fallen, the proportion of children in pre-primary education actually decreased between 1986-87 and 1987-88 (from 88% to 87%) after years of increase.

3. Public nurseries have also been under pressure, especially from central government. Public expenditure on this service has decreased, and parents are having to pay an increasing proportion of the costs; nurseries are classified as discretionary services (together with car parking, markets, swimming baths) by central government, which expects users of these services to pay an increasing proportion of the costs - 25% in 1983, 35% in 1989.

At the same time, central government has altered the system of employer contributions for childcare services. Since 1971, employers have paid 0.1% of payroll to the Government, which re-distributed this money to regions for the specific purpose of developing nurseries; since 1989, these funds are no longer earmarked, and may be spent by regions in whatever way they choose. These measures are widening regional differences - in areas with no nurseries, there is no development; in areas with limited provision, services face cuts; while those areas with well-developed services, and high commitment to their value, struggle to retain and develop provision. The original goal of the 1971 Law, 3,800 nurseries by 1976, is still far from being achieved; in 1986, there were 1,900 nurseries with 90,000 places.

4. The need of parents for longer opening hours and reduction in the hours of workers in childcare services has created problems. The working hours of teachers in State-run pre-primary schooling have been reduced from 30 to 25 (from September 1990). In a school open for 10 hours, each class has two teachers; under a 30 hour week, each teacher worked 6 hours a day with a two hour period when they worked together; with hours reduced to 25, each teacher works a 5 hour day, with no overlapping period, which may affect the quality of service.

Changes in teachers hours in State schools have also created other problems. During this period, parity of conditions was established between workers in all local authority services, including teachers in pre-primary schools and workers in nurseries, with each group working 30 hours a week with children, and having a further 6 hours for other activities. As a result of the reduction of hours in State-run pre-primary schools, teachers in local authority schools have been granted an extra allowance to compensate for working longer hours - this allowance, however, does not go to workers in nurseries although they continue to work the same hours as teachers. In this way, parity has been undermined.

The basic problem is that longer opening hours require more workers (especially if the hours of existing workers are also being reduced) - and this is incompatible with a policy of reduced public expenditure.

Finally, on the subject of extending hours, a bill currently before Parliament

proposes increased hours for primary schools.

5. There have also been positive developments in the period. A Government Commission has produced a report on pre-primary education, with particular attention to objectives and methods of work; this report is currently being revised after extensive public consultation. The 'educational' function and orientation of nurseries has been consolidated and developed in many areas. Areas with better developed nursery services have also begun to establish new types of more flexible provision, intended to meet a wider range of local needs amongst children and their caregivers. These services, often based in nurseries, provide a range of functions - part-time childcare; play and socialisation opportunities for children attending with a parent or other caregiver; a place for mothers or other caregivers to meet; information and education centres for parents. Overall, there are about 50 of these new services, mostly in Emilia-Romagna, but also in Lombardia, Toscana and Umbria - though again a gap is developing between these regions and others which have little or no provision of this type.

6. As well as service developments, the period has seen an increasing amount of debate, especially among Italian women, on important issues, for example children's rights and policies for children; and motherhood and fatherhood and the organisation of daily life. Discussions on equality have paid more attention in the last 2-3 years to the relationship between employment and family responsibilities; this raises issues about the redistribution of the work of caring, the role of men and the social system in providing care and the use of time. For example, a bill has been prepared by the Communist Party which proposes a 35 hour week; paid parental leave, as well as leave for other purposes; and the right to "care" for all citizens, not just those who are employed. It also introduces the concept of family work being shared between men and women. The proposal emphasises the importance of real choice in life, and of not being forced to choose between motherhood, children, love and paid work. Other bills have also been presented to Parliament by members of other parties proposing improved leave provisions.

## NETHERLANDS

### Employment background

In 1988, 32% of women with a child under 10 were employed and 8% were unemployed; women with a child aged 5-9 had rather higher employment rates than women with a child aged 0-4 - 33% compared to 29% - but unemployment rates were similar. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 68%, substantially above the level for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988 there was a substantial increase of 8% in the employment rate for women with a child under 10, the largest increase in the Community, almost entirely due to increased part-time employment. Overall, the Netherlands has very high levels of part-time employment among women with children - 84% of employed women with a child under 10 have a part-time job - and short hours of work among part-time workers, who average 10-19 hours a week; average hours of work for mothers employed full-time are 40-49 and 10-19 for all employed mothers.

Regional variations in employment rates for women with children are small. Temporary employment is high by European standards, accounting for 15% of employed

mothers (compared to 10% in the Community); most(9%/15%) have temporary jobs because they cannot find permanent jobs.

Nearly all men with a child under 10 are employed (91%). The Netherlands has the highest level of part-time employment among fathers in the Community(9%); average hours of work for all employed fathers were 30-39. Unemployment was 5%, with little regional variation.

The proportion of one parent households was 9% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 10% for households with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers are less likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 18% (11% lower) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and 19% (14% lower) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9. This difference is entirely due to lower levels of part-time employment among lone mothers. However, unemployment is twice as high among lone mothers as among all mothers - 12% for those with a child aged 0-4 (compared to 6%) and 17% for those with a child aged 5-9 (compared to 9%).

### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave has recently been extended to 16 weeks; between 4 and 6 weeks can be taken before birth, so that post-natal leave can be between 10 and 12 weeks. During this period, women receive state benefit equivalent to 100% of earnings (up to a maximum level).

There is no Parental Leave; a scheme has been approved by Parliament, but has not yet been introduced. This scheme would give each parent the right to 6 months of reduced hours (20 hours a week) which could be claimed at any time until a child was 4; this individual right to part-time leave could not be transferred from one parent to another. The leave would be unpaid.

Various leave entitlements have been included in collective agreements, including extended paid maternity leave (an extra 1-4 weeks), parental leave (6-8 months, mostly part-time and unpaid), paternity leave (2-5 days) and leave for family reasons (1-10 days a year). These entitlements are most common in agreements involving workers in government, health services, universities and the Postbank. A recent agreement covering local and central government allows workers with young children to work reduced hours, with payment for 75% of hours not worked.

### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs.

Tax relief on childcare costs has recently been withdrawn (see Developments 1985-90). Parents using childcare services subsidised by their employer pay tax on the subsidy.

### Publicly funded childcare services

Compulsory primary schooling begins at 5, but nearly all children start primary schooling a year earlier, at 4, attending on a voluntary basis. There is no pre-primary schooling.

The most recent official statistics on provision for children under 4 (that is under primary school age) are for 1986. A more recent Trade Union study estimates that in 1989 there were 302 publicly-funded nurseries and mixed age centres (providing for children under 4 and outside school hours care for children over 4). There is little publicly-funded family day care, although there are about 100 schemes, an unknown proportion of which receive some public funds. These schemes act as an agency linking

parents and family day carers and provide some support for family day carers; in general, they do not pay any of the parents' costs, although some do provide some financial support.

The main form of provision for this under 4 age group is playgroups, which provide for a quarter of 2 year olds and half of 3 year olds; however, children only attend on average for 5-6 hours a week. Nearly all playgroups receive some public funds, which cover about half their costs.

On this sketchy basis, the best estimate is that there are places in publicly-funded nurseries and mixed age centres for 1.5% of children under 3; as many places are used on a part-time basis, 2-3% of children under 3 may attend these services. A further 10% attend playgroups, but for very short hours.

For children from 3 to compulsory school age at 5, there are places for 1.5% in publicly funded nurseries and mixed age centres, while 50% go early to primary school; a further 25% are in playgroups, attending on average for very short hours.

The basic primary school day is 9.00 to 16.00, with a two hour lunch break; schools are closed on Wednesday afternoons. However, an increasing number of schools have adopted a 'continuous timetable', which involves a shorter school-day with a shorter midday break; this system operates in all Amsterdam schools, where school hours are 8.30 to 15.00 with a one hour lunch break. Schools must offer children the opportunity to stay during the lunch break - if parents ask for this and are prepared to organise and pay for supervision. Schools do not provide lunches, so children who stay must bring their own food. It has been estimated that two-thirds of schools provide some lunchtime care, and that about 30% of children aged 4-12 use this provision. In addition, a small number of children (less than 1%) go to lunchtime centres, most of which are purely used for this purpose, although some also provide outside school hours care.

Schools do not provide outside school hours care. Such publicly-funded provision as exists is provided in separate centres, most of which are mixed age centres, which also provide for children under 4. Some only take children up to age 6, others take children up to 9 or even older. There are no recent statistics on this type of provision; the best estimate is that there are places for 1% of children aged 5-10.

Parents pay for publicly funded childcare services (excluding schools) according to income, with the levels of payment set by local authorities. Highest levels of provision are in the four main cities in the western part of the country, and especially in Amsterdam.

#### Privately funded childcare services

The 1989 Trade Union survey estimates that there are 160 nurseries supported by employers, either based in workplaces or where employers sponsor places for workers' children; these provide almost 3,000 full-time places, mostly for workers in public and non-profit organisations. The survey also identified a further 173 private nurseries which are not publicly funded. This suggests that there are nearly as many of these two types of nursery as there are publicly-funded nurseries; and that they provide places equivalent to 1-2% of the under 4 population, with employer provision accounting for well under 1% of all children in the age group.

Private family day carers do not have to be approved and registered. There are therefore no statistics for this kind of care nor for own home care, although these types of childcare are used widely by employed parents.

### Developments 1985-90

1. Maternity leave was extended in 1990 from 12 to 16 weeks, and a proposal for statutory parental leave has been approved but not introduced. Substantial progress in introducing leave entitlements into collective agreements has been made, with most of these entitlements introduced since 1985.

2. There has been a substantial increase in employer-provided childcare - with this benefit included in an increasing number of collective agreements - and in private, for profit nurseries, although in both cases the total number of places provided still covers only a very small proportion of children.

3. An increasing number of schools have introduced 'continuous timetables' since 1985 and the number of schools providing lunchtime care has increased. Growth in outside school hours care however seems to have stagnated, especially as more schools have operated 'continuous timetables'.

4. There have been major changes in the funding of services. Since 1987, all policy and expenditure on childcare services has been decentralised; local authorities are entirely responsible for deciding how much to spend on these services and what policies to implement.

Tax relief on parents' childcare costs (or part of those costs) was abolished in 1989, having been introduced in 1984. The amount saved - 125 million guilders a year - has been transferred to the Department of Welfare to spend on providing more childcare services for employed parents. In addition to these transferred funds, extra funds are being allocated for this purpose, the amount building up from an extra 20 million guilders in 1990 to 160 million in 1993. By 1993, total public funding for childcare services (excluding schools) will have increased from 60 million guilders in 1989 to 350 million guilders.

More specifically, this money will be used to develop nurseries - providing either full-time or part-time care - and family day care services in organised schemes. Most new nursery provision will be in the form of partnerships, with the participation of employers and private organisations; the central government will provide 5,000 guilders for running costs and 10,000 guilders for capital costs for each full-time place created, with additional costs being provided by local authorities, employers or other partners. For organised family day care, the new funding can only be used to pay for staff to run schemes and for equipment and play materials for family day carers. A number of conditions are attached to funding. Local authorities must draft regulations and include a copy in their application; and each year, local authorities should assess the number of places provided and provide plans for the next year. The Government is drafting guidance on parental payments, though local authorities are not bound by these.

The future of this funding is uncertain. The original proposal was for 1990 to 1994; what would happen then was left open. But, at least in the short-term, a major boost has been given to the development of publicly funded services; 640 out of 672 local authorities have applied for funds.

5. During this period, childcare has entered the political agenda. It is widely discussed, but the discussion is very narrow. Childcare is seen mainly as an economic and labour force issue - as a means to reduce the number of women, especially lone mothers, receiving social security and get more women into employment. It is not seen as something of value in its own right, making a contribution to a policy for children. Children continue to be seen mainly as a private responsibility for parents, rather than a shared responsibility between mothers and fathers and between parents and society.

Related issues, such as men's participation in childcare, have received little attention.

7. The national childcare organisation - WKN - was closed down as part of a major reform of private organisations. Its various functions have been divided between different organisations, leaving no central body to research and lobby about child care issues.

## BELGIUM

### Employment background

In 1988, 54% of women with a child under 10 were employed, and 12% were unemployed, the highest level in the Community; there was little difference in employment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9, but unemployment was higher for women with a child aged 0-4 (14% compared to 11%). The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 68%. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 3% increase in the employment rate for women with a child under 10, mainly due to increased part-time employment. Overall, 30% of women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work were 20-29 for part-time employed mothers, 30-39 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with a child under 10 were highest in West-Vlaanderen (63%) and Oost-Vlaanderen (61%), lowest in Namur (44%) and Limburg (42%). Unemployment was particularly high in these last two regions (26% and 16% respectively) and in Liege (17%) and Hainault (16%).

Nearly all men with a child under 10 were employed (92%); average hours of work were 30-39. Unemployment was 5%, but varied from 9% in Brabant and Hainault and 8% in Limburg to 2% or less in Antwerpen and West-Vlaanderen.

The proportion of one parent households was 6% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 8% with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 were less likely than all mothers to be employed (42%, 11% lower), but there was little difference for mothers with a child aged 5-9 (54%, 2% higher). Unemployment was very high among lone mothers, at least twice as high as for all mothers - 33% for those with a child aged 0-4 and 22% (compared to 14%) and 22% for those with a child aged 5-9 (compared to 11%).

### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave lasts 14 weeks; 8 weeks must be taken after the birth, with a further 6 weeks which may be taken before or after the birth, so that post-natal leave can be between 8 and 14 weeks. During this period women receive benefit equivalent to 82% of earnings for the first month and 75% of earnings for the remaining weeks (up to a maximum level).

There is no statutory Parental Leave. However, workers can take 6-12 months leave from employment ('interruption de la carrière professionnelle') for family or personal reasons, and this leave can be taken 5 times before retirement; a low flat-rate benefit (10,504 BF a month) is paid, provided the worker on leave is replaced by a previously unemployed worker. All public sector workers are entitled to this leave, but availability depends on collective or employer agreements in the private sector. The measure was introduced to provide opportunities to do a wide variety of activities (for



example to study or to travel); benefit payment, however, is higher (at 12,504 BF a month) where a worker takes leave in the 12 months following the birth of a child. It seems likely that this leave is mostly taken for childcare purposes - 86% of leave is taken by women, most of whom are between 25 and 35. Workers in the public sector can also take 3 months unpaid leave in the year after birth; the availability of such leave in the private sector depends on collective or individual agreements.

Public sector workers are entitled to 8 days paid leave a year for special reasons, including 4 days paid paternity leave, and a further 4 days in the case of the illness of a family member; a further 2 months of unpaid leave can be claimed for family reasons. Finally, public sector workers may work part-time for a maximum of 5 years for family or social reasons. The availability of these types of leave in the private sector depends on collective or individual agreements; men are generally entitled to 2 days paternity leave.

### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

Tax relief is available on 80% of the costs of care for children under 3, up to a maximum level of 345 BF a day per child. Parents must provide proof of payment and use a publicly funded or approved service. A tax reduction of 10,000 BF a year is given to all other parents with a child under 3, including those who are not employed.

### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 6. Provision for children under 3 (excluding pre-primary schooling) is the responsibility of welfare agencies in each of the three communities in Belgium - Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance(ONE) in the French community, Kind en Gezin(K&G) in the Flemish community and Dienst fur Kind und Families (DKG) in the German community. These agencies do not initiate services but subsidise local initiatives by local authorities or private organisations, and regulate and supervise all services whether publicly or privately funded.

In 1988, there was provision for approximately 20% of this age group in publicly funded services. Half of this provision (equivalent to 10-11% of all under 3s) was for 2½ year olds in pre-primary schooling; about 70% of the 2½-3 year age group attended this service. The rest was divided between 5% in nurseries, most of which take children from 0-3 ('creche'/'kribbe'), but with some taking children from 18 months to 3 ('pregardiennats'/'peutertuin', often attached to pre-primary schools); and 4% in organised family day care schemes ('service de gardiennes'/'dienst voor opvanggezinnen'). Some places are used on a part-time basis, because parents have part-time jobs or 'mixed' childcare arrangements, so that more than 20% of children under 3 attend a publicly funded service.

Nursery provision may be provide by local authorities or private organisations. Family day carers in organised schemes ('gardienne encadre'/'opvanggezin hangescoten bis ein dienst') may be attached to a nursery; these schemes may be organised by local authorities or private organisations.

About 95% of children aged 3-5 attend pre-primary schooling ('ecoles maternelles'/'kleuterschool'). These schools are usually open from 8.30-15.30, with a one hour lunch break, and are closed on Wednesday afternoons; most children attend full-time. Most provision is part of primary schools, which are open for the same hours. Outside school hours care during term-time (before and after school and at lunch time) is mainly school based ('garderie'/'de voor en na schoolse opvang'); schools providing

'garderies' may be open from 7.30 to 18.00 and on Wednesday afternoons. This service is not, however, the responsibility of the education authorities and depends on local initiative. Consequently, it is not universal; for example, a 1986 study in Liege found that a third of 'ecole maternelle' provided no 'garderie' and a similar proportion provided no hot meals. Standards of accommodation and staffing vary and are often unsatisfactory.

In the Flemish community, children aged 3-6 can go to nurseries or family day carers in organised schemes; priority is given to children under 3, and only 3,640 children in this older age group attended these types of provision in 1988.

Some 'garderies' are open in school holidays. There are also holiday play schemes ('plaine de jeux'/'speelpleinen') which are subsidised by ONE in the French Community (25 BF per child per day) and by the Youth Service in the Flemish community. In 1988, ONE funded 288 'plaines de jeux' providing for 55,000 children in the French Community, and a study in the same year estimated that 70,000 children between 3 and 14 (11% of the population) spent all or part of the school holidays at this service. In addition to this day service, holiday camps and colonies ('camp de vacance' and 'colonie de vacances') also receive public funding.

Finally, there are numerous workshops and clubs for school-age children, offering a wide range of recreational, play and artistic activities - they are not however organised to provide care and are more likely to be available to children with parents who have more time or money to spare.

Parents pay for publicly funded services (excluding schools) according to income. While pre-primary schooling is widely available, there are large local variations in the availability of other services, especially for children under 3.

Finally, there are a number of services which provide care for sick children at home, most run by workers hired as part of projects to provide work for unemployed people.

#### Privately funded childcare services

Some services are provided by employers; there is no information on how much, but it accounts for a small proportion of children. The main form of privately funded provision is in family day care; private family day carers ('gardienne independante'/'zelfstandige opvanggezin') are supposed to register with, and be supervised by, ONE or G&Z, but an unknown proportion do not do so ('gardienne clandestine'/'clandestine opvanggezin'). In 1988, there were 5729 registered family day carers, most (75%) in the Flemish community. There were a further 431 private nurseries ('maison d'enfants'), which are defined as private homes taking more than 6 children.

A study by K&G in 1989 reported that 54% of children under 3 received regular childcare, half from relatives. Of the remainder, 28% received care in publicly funded services and 19% (11% of all children under 3) in private services, mainly family day care.

#### Developments 1985-90

1. There have been several adjustments to employment rights. Payment for the first period of maternity leave is now made from public funds, rather than by individual employers; and leave for family and personal reasons has been extended, with an

additional payment made for workers taking full-time leave in the first year after the birth of a child.

2. Tax relief on childcare costs was introduced in 1989. A number of problems have emerged. Some parents cannot claim full relief because they use non-registered caregivers, who are not prepared to give proof of payment. Some registered family day carers have stopped providing care rather than declare their income and pay taxes, while others have increased their fees.

3. From 1987, ONE and K&G have gained total autonomy, operating in their respective communities and replacing the former national organisation Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance. This will increasingly lead to divergence in policies and practice in the two main communities.

4. Due to budgetary constraints, there has been little growth in publicly funded services for children under 3 - only 2% between 1985-88 in the Flemish community and 9% in the French community. This limited growth has been concentrated on the least costly type of provision, organised family day care; an increase in 'creche' places in the French community has been offset by a reduction in places at 'pregardiennats'. Local authorities seeking to cut their costs have threatened nurseries and services for sick children with closure and, in some cases, nurseries have closed (including a nursery providing 24 hour care in Liege).

In some cases, working conditions have deteriorated, for example with cuts in staffing and more children to be cared for.

5. Despite the fact that most services have a medical and social orientation, some centres have been evolving a more educational orientation to their work, attempting to meet the full range of children's needs.

6. Since September 1986, children have to be 2½ before they can start pre-primary schooling. Between 1985 and 1988, the number of publicly funded places in holiday play schemes in the French community increased by a third - but economic constraints have forced ONE in 1989 to limit its subsidies to children under 8, so putting at risk provision for older children.

7. A number of 'multi-functional' and mixed age centres - more than 20 - have been established. These provide a variety of services for children from 0-12 and their parents - care, libraries, workshops, homework centres etc.; however these centres have not yet received official recognition. In recent years, there has also been an increase in services offering part-time provision ('lieux d'accueil occasionnel'). Some are places for mothers and children to meet, and mothers are expected to stay. Others provide part-time care for children. These services are neither regulated nor subsidised.

## LUXEMBOURG

### Employment background

In 1988, 38% of women with a child under 10 were employed, and 2% were unemployed, the lowest level in the Community; there was little difference in employment or unemployment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 69%. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 4% increase in the employment rate for women with children. Overall, just over a quarter (26%) of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs;

average hours of work were 20-29 for mothers employed part-time, 40-49 for mothers employed full-time, and 40-49 for all employed mothers.

Virtually all men with children under 10 were employed (98%): average hours of work were 40-49. Unemployment was just 1%, again the lowest rate in the Community.

The proportion of one parent households was 5% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 7% for households with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers were much more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 75% (39% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and 63% (27% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9. Unemployment was low among lone mothers, less than 3%, and similar to the level for all mothers.

#### Employment rights for parents

There is 8 weeks post-natal Maternity Leave (12 weeks for multiple births); during this period, women receive benefit equivalent to 100% of earnings. Fathers are entitled to 2 days paid Paternity Leave, as part of a law providing an entitlement to paid leave for specific family reasons.

There is no statutory Parental Leave. Public sector workers have the right to one years unpaid leave or to work part-time until a child reaches the age of 4.

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

A tax reduction of 18,000 LF is available for care costs for children under 14. Parents must provide proof of payment.

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Primary schooling starts at 6, but compulsory schooling begins at 5, in the second year of pre-primary schooling.

Provision for children under 3 is made in mixed age centres ('foyers de jour'). These centres provide care for children under 4 (the age at which children start pre-primary schooling) as well as outside school hours care for children over 4; the upper age limit varies - it may be 5, 6, 8 or 9, but most often the limit is 12. Most centres (24 in 1989) are provided by private organisations, which receive a grant from the Ministry of the Family which has responsibility for these services, but some centres (10 in 1989) are provided by local authorities. In 1990, publicly funded mixed age centres provided about 220 places for children under 3 (mostly for 2 year olds).

In addition to places in 'foyers de jour', there are 673 places in publicly funded centres which provide part-time care for children under 4 ('garderies').

Altogether, there are places for 1-2% of children under 3 in 'foyers de jour'; there is no information on the number of places in 'garderies' for children under 3.

Among children aged 3 to compulsory school age at 5, nearly all 4 year olds attend the first year of pre-primary schooling on a voluntary basis. Both pre-primary and primary schooling are generally in the same school and follow the same hours - 8.00-11.30 or 12.00 and 14.00-16.30 three days a week, and 8-11.30 or 12.00 on three other days including Saturday. In addition, 'foyers de jour' provide full-time care for 3 year olds and outside school hours care for 4 year olds at pre-primary schooling. In 1989, there were about 600 places for the 3-4 age group in private centres funded by the Ministry of the Family and in centres provided by local authorities. This suggests that around 7% of children aged 3 or 4 have a place in one of these publicly funded

centres and that, together with pre-primary schooling, there is provision for 55-60% of 3 and 4 year olds in publicly funded services; in addition there is further provision for 3 year olds in 'garderies'.

In 1989, there were around 300 places providing outside school hours care for children aged 5-9 in private but publicly funded 'foyers de jour', plus an unspecified number in local authority centres - provision for 1-2% of the age group.

Until recently, the only provision for school children during the lunchtime break was a small number of places at one of the mixed age centres, but recently some schools have begun to provide meals and supervision. Some local authorities also provide play schemes for children during school holidays.

Parents pay for publicly funded services (excluding schools) according to income and number of children. Services are concentrated in and around Luxembourg city; this area accounts for 75% of places. By comparison, only 8% of places are in the eastern and northern parts of the country which are mainly rural.

Finally, there is a service which provides care for sick children at home ('krank kanner doheim').

#### Privately funded childcare services

There are a number of mixed age centres (22 in 1989, with about 900 places) provided by non-profit private organisations, private entrepreneurs and employers (including hospitals and the European Community); many only take children over the age of 2 and up to 5 or 6. These centres do not need to be registered with or approved by welfare or education authorities; the only requirement is that they are authorized to conduct business by the Chamber of Commerce. Private family day care is also available, but carers do not need to be registered and approved; there is therefore no information on how many places are available in this type of provision.

#### Developments 1985-90

1. Following the 1989 election, the new Government has put Parental Leave on its short-term agenda. The proposed legislation would give all workers in the private sector up to 2 years unpaid leave. Workers would have preferential, but not guaranteed, access to their former jobs (or similar ones).

2. Since 1979, there has been consistent Government support for the development of childcare services; the main emphasis has been on increasing the number of centres provided by non-profit private organisations and subsidised from public funds by the Ministry of the Family. The number of places in 'foyers de jour' funded by the Ministry has grown from 478 in 1985 to 704 in 1990, an increase of 47%. The Ministry's overall expenditure on childcare services has increased from 10 million LF in 1979 (when only 5 centres were subsidised) to 74 million LF in 1985 and 174 million in 1990 (when more than 25 centres were subsidised).

The Ministry is also concentrating on developing services in areas with less provision and improving quality, with a large part of the increase in expenditure going on training and consultation services by specialists.

3. Attention has been given to providing more flexible opening hours. Some centres are studying the feasibility of opening beyond the usual hours (7.30-18.30); while during this period, 4 centres providing a 24 hours a day service have been opened with Government support. These services take children from 0-12, and are especially intended to provide care for urgent cases, including parents who work at times when

traditional centres are closed, or parents who are ill. In addition, a service to provide care for sick children at home opened in 1988, and has been extended since with Government support.

4. Mutual assistance associations ('associations d'assistances mutuelles') have been started in the last few years by mothers who do not want their children to be cared for in a mixed age centre. These associations are intended to bring together women who go out to work and women who want to provide family day care. Although the Ministry of the Family provides some financial support to these associations, parents pay for the family day care service.

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Employment background

In 1988, 46% of women with a child under 10 were employed, and 8% were unemployed; women with a child aged 5-9 had a substantially higher employment rate (53%) compared to women with children aged 0-4 (37%), the largest difference in the Community - while women with a child aged 0-4 were more likely to be unemployed (9% compared to 7%). The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 83%, the highest level in the Community and substantially above the level for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988 there was a substantial increase of 8% in the employment rate for women with children under 10, the second highest increase in the Community during this period, and which was due to increases in both full-time and part-time employment. Overall, the UK has very high levels of part-time employment among women with children - 70% of employed mothers had a part-time job - and short hours of work among part-time workers, who average 10-19 hours of work a week, compared to 30-39 for mothers in full-time employment and 20-29 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with children were highest in East Anglia (51%), lowest in Wales and Scotland (40%). Unemployment was particularly high in Scotland and the North-West (11%).

Most men with children under 10 (88%) were employed; average hours of work were 40-49, with fathers working longer hours than in any other part of the Community (34% worked more than 50 hours a week). Unemployment (8%) was the second highest in the Community, but varied from 15% in the North and 14% in Northern Ireland, to 2% in East Anglia.

The proportion of one parent households was 12% for households with a child aged 0-4 and a child aged 5-9, the highest level in the Community (excluding Denmark). Lone mothers were substantially less likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 18% (19% lower) for lone mothers with children aged 0-4 and 37% (16% lower) for lone mothers with children aged 5-9; this difference was mainly due to lower levels of part-time employment among lone mothers. Lone mothers had higher unemployment rates than all mothers - 10% for lone mothers with children aged 0-4 (compared to 9% for all mothers) and 11% for lone mothers with children aged 5-9 (compared to 7%).

### Employment rights for parents

There is 29 weeks post-natal Maternity Leave. While the UK has the longest period of leave in the Community - 40 weeks, including 11 weeks before birth - it is

also the only country which applies a 'length of service' condition to maternity leave. To be eligible for leave, women must have worked with the same employer for at least 2 years full-time or 5 years part-time; this condition excludes a large number of women. Women only receive benefit for part of the leave period - 6 weeks on an earnings-related basis (at 90% of earnings), the shortest period in the Community, and a further 12 weeks at a low flat-rate.

There is no Paternity Leave, Parental Leave or leave to care for sick children.

Various leave entitlements are included in collective or individual employer agreements. A recent survey of nearly 1100 employers found that 23% offered improvements on statutory maternity leave and 4% offered career breaks (unpaid leave after maternity leave); 26% offered optional part-time working (where workers could choose to work part-time), 24% flexitime and 18% job-sharing. Even where these measures were available, they were not always open to all workers; for example career breaks were more often available to managers, while this group were less likely to be allowed to work flexible hours. The survey was limited to employers with a workforce of over 100; for this and other reasons it probably over-represents the extent of these employment benefits. A second survey found a similar level for career breaks - 5% of employers; and paternity leave available in a third of organisations.

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Compulsory primary schooling begins at 5, but many 4 year olds attend primary school on a voluntary basis. Services for children (excluding schools) are the responsibility of local authority welfare departments and the Department of Health.

In 1988, there were publicly funded places for 2% of children under 3, mostly in mixed age centres ('day nurseries' and 'family centres') which take children from 0 to 4, but with some children admitted at 2 to pre-primary schooling and a few whose fees at private family day care were subsidised from public funds. Mixed age centres are mainly provided by local authorities, though some are run by private organisations, and (with a few exceptions) are not available for children with employed parents; they are essentially a 'social work' service for children who are severely disadvantaged or 'at risk'.

There were publicly funded places for about 2% of children aged 3-4, either in mixed age centres or having their fees at private family day care subsidised from public funds. In addition, approximately 45% of children were in school - 25% in pre-primary schooling and 20% admitted early to primary school. However most children in pre-primary schooling attend on a shift system, going 2½ hours a day, either in the morning or afternoon. This means that there were full-time places in schools and other publicly funded services for about 37% of this age group.

Primary schooling is generally from 9.00 to 15.30, though a number of education authorities are reducing the school day. The lunchtime break is supervised, and most schools provide meals. It is estimated that outside school hours care, either in schools or separate centres, is available for less than 0.5% of children aged 5-10.

By far the greater part of provision is in schools, which are free; for the other services, parents mainly contribute to costs. Levels of all types of provision vary substantially between different areas, with highest levels in large cities and especially

Inner London. For example, a third of all outside school hours care centres are in London.

### Privately funded childcare services

The main form of private service offering full-time provision is family day care; family day carers have to be approved and registered, and most are thought to be registered. In 1988, registered family day carers provided places equivalent to 5% of children aged 0-4. By contrast, own home care is not registered and there are no statistics on its extent; it probably accounts for 1-2% of children under 5.

There is provision for just over 1% of children under 5 in private 'day nurseries', though there are relatively few places for children under 18-24 months. Most of this provision is made by private proprietors, but some is provided by employers; alternatively, some employers subsidise places for employees' children in private 'day nurseries'. There is no information about how many places are funded in these ways by employers. Other employers provide financial assistance to workers' childcare costs, either through cash allowances or using a voucher scheme. The employer survey referred to above found that 3% provided childcare places, 2% a playscheme during school holidays and 1% some form of financial assistance for childcare; smaller employers probably provide less assistance.

The privately funded service which provides for most children (indeed, provides for more children under 5 than any other service, private or publicly funded) is playgroups. Playgroups take children aged 2½ to 4, and children attend on average for 5 hours a week. Only a third of playgroups receive any public funds, and the average grant covers less than 10% of running costs. Most are run by parent groups, though a substantial minority are run by individual proprietors. In 1988, they provided places equivalent to 34% of children aged 3-4, but because many of the places were used on a shift basis, around 50% of this age group attended playgroups.

### Developments 1985-90

1. Interest in childcare has increased greatly over the period, mainly due to a developing labour shortage, arising from falling numbers of school leavers, and the perceived need to employ more women with children. Childcare has gained priority on the political and economic agenda.

2. The Government's main response has been to encourage employers to make employment measures (such as 'career breaks' and more flexible hours) and childcare provisions if their labour needs require it, and otherwise to look to the private market to provide childcare services. In March 1989, the Ministerial Group on Women's Issues announced a 5 point programme for developing childcare services, including improved regulation of private services, encouraging schools to provide outside school hours care, encouraging the development of a voluntary accreditation scheme for private services and encouraging partnership between employers and the private sector. This programme specifically excludes any significant public involvement in childcare services for employed parents, except for regulation of private provision; for example, although the Government has written to all schools drawing their attention to the possible use of school premises to provide outside school hours care, any initiatives taken by schools must be self-financing. The only funding for services in the programme has been £2 million to encourage projects in the private, non-profit sector.



The other response, made in 1990, has been to remove a measure introduced in 1984 which required employees who used workplace childcare services to pay tax on the value of any subsidy provided by the employer.

The development of policy reflects an official view that childcare provision is a private matter for parents and employers, with Government responsibility limited to encouragement and regulation.

3. Some employers have begun to respond to the needs of women workers with children (and the issue is still seen very much as a 'women's issue', with little attention given to fathers). As already noted, however, the results are limited and uneven, with some notable individual initiatives. A growing number of trades unions have been including assistance with childcare and related measures in their negotiations with employers, and there have been a few examples of agreements including workplace nurseries. The Trades Union Congress, and a number of individual unions, have emphasised that publicly funded childcare services and statutory employment rights are needed, rather than reliance on collective and individual agreements. The Labour Party, in its new programme, has also emphasised the need for a mixed approach, including public funding and legal rights.

4. There has been little growth in publicly-funded services. In the 3 years between 1985 and 1988, the number of places in publicly-funded mixed age centres increased by 4%, while places for children under 5 in pre-primary schooling increased by 5%.

5. By contrast, there has been a large rise in private services. The number of places for children under 5 in private mixed age centres increased by 47% between 1985 and 1988; there are now more places in these services than in publicly-funded mixed age centres - although in 1988 there were still only places for 1% of all children under 5 in private centres. The number of places with registered private family day carers increased by 33% and while there is no information on own home care, this type of care is thought to have increased substantially.

6. A new Children's Act was approved in 1989. This covers many aspects of the law affecting children, including childcare services. It improves the regulation of private services for children up to the age of 8, and requires local authorities to review the whole range of childcare services in their area every 3 years. However, although it permits local authorities to provide services for any child, it only requires them to provide services for children 'in need', excluding any statutory role in provision of services for children with employed parents.

7. A growing number of local authorities are working with local employers and other agencies (for example employment training schemes) to examine the potential for partnership in developing childcare services; economic and social concerns have been combined with the objective of benefitting more disadvantaged groups and areas as well as particular groups of workers. For example, a project in Glasgow, which is jointly sponsored by the Scottish Development Agency and the local authority, involves a proposal for the initial development of 10 mixed age centres; the project will contribute to both economic and social strategies in the area.

## IRELAND

### Employment background

In 1988, 23% of women with a child under 10 were employed, the lowest level in the Community, and 8% were unemployed; women with children aged 0-4 had rather higher employment rates than women with children aged 5-9 - 25% compared to 20% - but unemployment rates were similar. The employment rate among childless women aged 20-39 was 67%, substantially above the level for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988 there was a substantial increase of 5% in employment rates for women with children, mainly due to increased full-time employment. Overall, 30% of employed women with a child under 10 have part-time jobs; average hours of work were 10-19 for mothers employed part-time, 40-49 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Only 79% of men with children under 10 were employed, the lowest level in the Community; average hours of work were 40-49. The low employment rate was due to a very high level of unemployment - 17%

The proportion of one parent households was 6% for households with a child aged 0-4 and a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers with children aged 0-4 were less likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 17% (8% lower), while lone mothers with a child aged 5-9 were rather more likely to be employed, with an employment rate of 23% (4% higher). Unemployment was considerably higher among lone mothers than for all mothers - 14% for those with a child aged 0-4 (compared to 8%) and 12% for those with a child aged 5-9 (compared to 7%).

### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave lasts 10 weeks in the first place; 4 weeks must be taken after the birth, with a further 6 weeks which may be taken before or after, so that post-natal leave can be between 4 and 10 weeks; a further 4 weeks post-natal leave can be taken if the mother requests. This last 4 weeks is unpaid, but during the remaining period of leave, women receive benefit equivalent to 70% of earnings; as this is tax free, the benefit is equivalent to full net earnings. Women in the public sector receive full pay as a result of collective agreements.

There is no Paternity Leave, Parental Leave or leave to care for sick children. Many employers however grant 2 days discretionary leave to fathers at the birth of a child.

### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none.

### Publicly funded childcare services

Compulsory schooling begins at 6, but many 4 and 5 year olds attend primary schooling on a voluntary basis. There is no pre-primary schooling, except for one pre-primary schooling centre in Dublin and approximately 40 centres for Traveller children.

Less than 2% of children under 3 attend publicly-funded services, going to mixed age centres ('day nurseries') which take children up to 6. These services are provided entirely by private organisations, and are not available for children with employed parents; they are essentially a 'social work' service for children who are severely

disadvantaged or 'at risk'.

Between 2-3% of children aged 3-5 go to mixed age centres. In addition, in 1987 55% of 4 year olds were in primary school and virtually 100% of 5 year olds, though the proportion may currently be higher as the number of children is decreasing each year due to a falling birth rate. Overall, there may be provision for about 55% of this age group in publicly funded services.

Primary schooling for children up to the age of 7 lasts for 4 hours and 40 minutes a day; the school day for this age group is usually from 9.00 to 13.30. For older children, the school day increases to 5 hours and 40 minutes and generally finishes between 15.00 and 15.30. The lunchtime break, which can vary in length, is supervised and children generally bring their own food, although schools provide cold meals in some disadvantaged areas.

There are now several projects providing outside school hours care, some of which have been established as part of a programme to provide work for unemployed young people. Altogether these projects provide for only around 200 children, less than 0.1% of the 6-10 age group.

There is a heavy concentration of services in the Dublin area; for example, 85% of publicly-funded mixed age centres are in and around the city.

#### Privately funded childcare services

Several 'day nurseries' (5 or 6) are provided by public sector employers for their workers. Private services do not, as yet, have to be approved and registered; there are therefore no statistics for private nurseries and mixed age centres, family day care and own home care. Private family day care, however, is quite widespread.

The main form of privately funded provision is playgroups. These provide for children aged 2½ to 4 (nearly all 5 years being at primary school), and children only attend on average for 5-6 hours a week. Most playgroups receive no public funds and those that do mainly receive only a small amount of money. Although some are run by parent groups, most are privately run by the playgroup leader. Because, as yet, they do not have to be registered, there is no information on the numbers of playgroups or the numbers of children attending them. An estimate in 1987 suggested that 22,500 children - about 12% of children aged 3-5 age group - attended this type of provision.

#### Developments 1985-90

1. There has been no significant increase in the provision of publicly funded childcare in the period; the limited provision (excluding schools) continues to be for disadvantaged and at risk children. Although there are no statistics on for-profit private services, it is estimated that this provision has increased substantially, possibly doubling, since 1987.

2. There has been greatly increased public interest in childcare, with a lot of media attention; there is growing support for increased provision of quality services.

3. In 1990, there has been some political response to this changing climate of opinion. The Minister for Labour has set up a working group to look at how the private and public sectors might take initiatives to provide childcare services for employed parents. The Government has recommended that childcare services be provided for workers in the public sector, with the Government providing physical facilities and staff paying running costs. A Second Commission on the Status of Women has been established.

4. There has been a developing Trade Union interest in childcare, with demands for employers to provide assistance to workers increasingly common in negotiations. Trade Unions were partly responsible for decisions by two local authorities to open workplace nurseries.

5. For the reasons outlined above, the number of workplace nurseries are growing. The first workplace nursery for workers in the private sector is being opened in Autumn 1990 by a bank.

6. A proposed Childcare Law has been introduced by the Government and is being discussed in Parliament; it is expected to be approved by the end of 1990. Among other measures, this legislation will introduce the registration and regulation of private childcare services.

7. There were three significant developments in 1989 affecting the position of childcare workers: the first national wage scale for childcare workers was negotiated; the first training course for family day carers began in Dublin; and the an association of managers, owners and workers in childcare services was established.

## DENMARK

### Employment background

In 1988, 79% of women with a child under 10 were employed, the highest level in the Community, and 8% were unemployed; women with children aged 5-9 had rather higher employment rates than women with children aged 0-4 - 80% compared to 76% - and rather lower unemployment rates - 7% compared to 9%. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 79%, the same as for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988, employment rates for mothers increased by 3%, entirely due to increased full-time employment. Overall, 40% of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work were 20-29 for mothers employed part-time, 30-39 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Nearly all men with children under 10 (95%) were employed; average hours of work were 30-39. Unemployment was 3%.

There are no comparable statistics for one parent households as a proportion of all households with children; other EC sources however suggest that levels are similar to those in the UK and among the highest in the Community. Lone mothers were rather less likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 69% (7% lower) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4, and 74% (6% lower) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9. Unemployment was slightly higher for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 than for all mothers (11% compared to 9%), but similar for lone mothers and all mothers with a child aged 5-9 (8%).

### Employment rights for parents

There is 14 weeks post-natal Maternity Leave and 2 weeks of Paternity Leave. In addition, parents may take up to 10 weeks Parental Leave. During all of these periods of leave, parents receive benefit equivalent to 90% of earnings (up to a maximum level). As a result of collective agreements, all workers in the public sector get full pay during leave and most workers in the private sector get full pay for 14

weeks. Half of all fathers take Paternity Leave, but only 3% took Parental Leave in 1989. In practice, a third of fathers are not eligible to take Parental Leave (because one or other parent is studying or self-employed). The main reasons given by fathers for not taking leave are: the mother wants to breast feed for the first 6 months, the father does not think he can take the time away from work; and it will be too expensive for the family (because benefit is only paid up to a maximum of 10,000 Dkr a month).

There is no legal entitlement to leave to care for a sick child, but all workers in the public sector and most in the private sector have the right to stay at home, on full pay, for the first day of the child's illness.

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none.

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 7. All services for children under this age and all outside school hours care are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and local authority social welfare departments, with two exceptions - pre-primary schooling and school-based outside school hours care, which are the responsibility of education departments in most local authorities. Services have a dual care and education function; the educational function is seen in broad terms of enhancing the child's overall development.

In 1989, there were places for nearly half of all children under 3 (48%) in publicly-funded services, the highest level in the Community. Most provision (60%) was in organised family day care schemes ('formidlet dagpleje'); other places were in nurseries ('vuggestuer')(28%), mixed age centre('integrerede institutioner') (8%) which mostly take children from 0-6 though some also provide outside school hours care for older children, and kindergartens taking some 2 year olds.

In the 3-6 age group, all 6 year and some 5 year olds go to pre-primary schooling, which is available for 3 hours a day in primary schools. In addition, 70% of children attended some other type of service; if pre-primary schooling is included, then around 85% of the age group attend some type of publicly-funded service. Most of the children attending non-school provision go to kindergartens (61%); the rest go to mixed age centres (17%), organised family day care (12%) and outside school hours care either in centres ('fritidshjem')(4%) or in schools ('skolefritids-ordninger') (5%).

Children going to pre-primary schooling often use these other services for outside school hours care, for example 44% of 6 year olds; and as pre-primary schooling is only for 3 hours a day, children may attend outside school hours care for long periods of the day. Kindergartens, mixed age centres, nurseries and organised family day care are generally open 10 hours a day, and children attend on average for 7 hours a day.

Primary school hours increase as children get older, from 15-22 hours a week for 7 year olds, to 20-27 hours for 10 year olds. School hours are decided by local authorities and may start as early as 8.00 and finish as late as 15.00; as well as varying between local authorities, school hours often vary from day to day. In parts of Copenhagen, schools provide meals, but generally they do not. There are places for 29% of 7-10 year olds in outside school hours care, 70% of which is not school-based and mostly either in mixed age centres or centres specifically for primary school children; the remaining 30% is school-based.

Services are provided by local authorities and private organisations (although

ownership makes little difference in practice, as all publicly funded services meet the same conditions and standards irrespective of who provides them); overall, the mix is about 60/40, but it varies between areas. Parents contribute to the costs of services (excluding schools) according to income, and on average pay a third of the costs; this can be lower in local authorities which provide an extra subsidy to reduce parental contributions. Nationally, public expenditure on childcare services (excluding schools) is 13 billion Dkr. Levels of all types of provision vary between different areas; they are highest in the largest cities - Copenhagen and Arhus - and lowest in rural areas and smaller towns. These less populated areas also have a higher proportion of provision in organised family day care, and less in nurseries and other types of centres.

#### Privately funded childcare services

There are very few, if any services, provided by employers. Private services must be registered if they care for more than 2 children, but there is no information about how many places are available. Overall, private services play a secondary and decreasing role, as do relatives. Denmark is the only country in the Community where private services and relatives provide for fewer children under 3 than publicly funded services - in 1989, 47% of children under 3 attended publicly funded services compared to 8% cared for by relatives and 15% by private childcare services. The same survey shows that in 1989, just under a quarter of children aged 0-6 received no childcare services; 60% attended publicly funded services, compared to 12% using private services and just 5% at relatives. Between 1985 and 1988, the proportion of children cared for by relatives fell from 8% to 5% and by privately funded services from 14% to 12%. These figures exclude attendance at pre-primary schooling.

Family day care is the most common form of privately funded service, providing for 8% of children aged 0-6 in 1989, followed by own home care (2%). There are virtually no private nurseries.

#### Developments 1985-90

1. The number of places in publicly funded services (excluding pre-primary and primary schooling) has grown by 14% between 1985 and 1989, from 260,900 to 298,450. Within this overall total, there has been marked growth in mixed age centres and organised family day care, but a fall in provision in kindergartens reflecting the conversion of increasing numbers of this type of service into mixed age centres. There has also been a 12% drop in places in centre-based outside school hours care, but a large growth in school-based care, from 1223 to 26,521 places with an estimated further growth of 15-20,000 places between 1989-90. Another trend has been a reduction in half day places both in centres and family day care due to falling demand.

The proportion of children receiving services has also increased - from 42% to 48% for children under 3, from 60% to 70% for children aged 3-6 (excluding pre-primary schooling) and from 21% to 29% for children aged 7-10. This increase has been lower than the increase in places because the birth rate has increased since 1983.

2. Growth of services has been particularly marked in some areas. In Arhus, the second largest city, a decision has been made to end the waiting list for services by 1991, leading to a major expansion of all types of publicly-funded service.

3. What parents have to pay for services has been increasing faster than general inflation and wages.

4. The Ministry of Social Affairs has funded a programme of innovations in a

variety of services, including childcare where many projects have been implemented. Main areas of work have included the quality of children's daily life (for example, the development of music, culture, drama, games and the environment); closer relationships between services, parents and communities (for example, using centres for family parties at the weekend, parents preparing a family meal, playgrounds opened for other children); and preventative social work. This programme of work is part of a process of new thinking about social policy which emphasises the need to strengthen local communities and social networks and greater involvement by parents in services.

5. This initiative has produced many interesting projects, and stimulated new thinking. But at the same time the Government has tried to reduce local authority expenditure. So while new services have been established, there has been pressure on existing services; for example, some local authorities have reduced staffing levels and other running costs. There are some doubts about how projects established under the programme of innovations can continue after funding from the programme ends.

6. A number of local authorities have moved to decentralise childcare services, for example delegating the management of budgets to individual services. In another case, a large local authority has set up a department for children, bringing together all services and policies for children including schools and other types of childcare provision.

7. There has been growing interest and debate about the position of children and their parents; this is an increasingly important political issue, and families with young children have become almost as important a political group as pensioners. In 1988, a Government Committee on the Daily Life of Children reported, and in the same year the Government established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Children in which 15 Government Departments are represented; the Government wants to emphasise that children are affected by a wide range of policies and to give a higher priority to children across all areas.

Initiatives of the Committee include a big conference and report on children under 3; an initiative to increase children's participation in Danish society; the publication of a magazine; and funding research.

8. There has been increasing discussion about reducing the working hours of parents, reflecting a preference among parents to spend more time with their children without having to give up their jobs. In May 1990, the Inter-Ministerial Committee held a hearing on how to improve parents' working hours; every Government Department has been asked what steps they are taking to make working hours more flexible for their employees; and guidance on flexible hours has been prepared by the Government.

There has been a significant change in the position taken by Trade Unions concerning working hours for parents. For many years there have been discussions about introducing the right to part-time work for parents with young children; but many Unions have been opposed because they were concerned that this measure would increase inequality in employment. Recently, LO, the organisation of Trades Unions in the private sector, agreed to accept the concept of part-time work for parents with young children if there are guarantees about (i) equality between the sexes, (ii) resuming full-time employment and (iii) compensation for loss of earnings at least for lower paid workers. The Minister for Social Affairs has suggested a 2½ year period of reduced working hours, with benefit payments.

8. The Minister for Social Affairs has urged local authorities to take various measures to reduce waiting lists, including more part-time places, parents paying only

for the hours their children attend and running cheaper services. The Minister also wants more flexible childcare services, with more private provision. It is been agreed that public funding can be paid to 2 family day carers living in the same household, caring for up to 10 children and to workplace childcare provision; and that it will be easier for parent groups to get public funding. In return for public funding, these services have to meet almost the same standards as other services and charge comparable income-related fees - in other words, they will be incorporated into the existing system, rather than being outside it.

## GREECE

### Employment background

In 1988, 41% of women with a child under 10 were employed and 6% were unemployed; there was little difference in either employment or unemployment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate among childless women aged 20-39 was 52%, one of the lowest levels in the Community and not much above the rate for women with children. Between 1985 and 1988, there was a 4% increase in the employment rate for women with a child under 10, due entirely to an increase in full-time employment. Overall, 12% of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work for mothers employed part-time were 20-29, 40-49 for mothers employed full-time and 30-39 for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for mothers do not vary greatly between the four regions. Greece has the highest proportion of employed women classified as 'family workers' - 24% compared to 6% for the whole Community.

Nearly all men with children under 10 were employed (95%); average hours of work were 40-49. Unemployment was 3%, with little variation between regions.

The proportion of one parent households was 2% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 4% for households with a child aged 5-9, one of the lowest levels in the Community. Lone mothers were rather more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 47% (7% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4, and 58% (17% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9; this difference is entirely due to higher levels of full-time employment among lone mothers. Unemployment was twice as high among lone mothers as among all mothers - 14% for those with a child aged 0-4 (compared to 6%) and 12% for those with a child aged 5-9 (also compared to 6%).

### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave lasts for 14 weeks; 7 weeks must be taken after the birth, with a further 4 weeks which can be taken before or after birth, so that post-natal leave can be between 7 and 11 weeks. During this period, women receive benefit equivalent to 100% of earnings. For women in the public sector, leave is slightly longer, at least 2 months after birth. Women are entitled to take time off work to breastfeed their child.

There is statutory Parental Leave of 3 months for each parent (6 months for a lone parent); employers may refuse leave if it has been claimed by more than 8% of the workforce during the year. This leave is unpaid. Parents with a handicapped child and who work in a company which employs over 50 workers may reduce their working day



by 1 hour, but with no compensation for loss of earnings.

Parents are entitled to unpaid leave to care for a sick child under 16 (or over 16 if the child is handicapped); the amount of leave per family depends on the number of children - 6 days if there is 1 child, 8 days if there are 2 and 10 days if there are 3 or more. In addition, parents with children at school may take up to 4 days of paid leave a year to visit the school; this leave must be agreed with the employer and, where both parents are employed, is shared between them. As with parental leave, these leaves are unpaid and apply only to parents employed in larger private companies.

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none.

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 5½. Some provision for children under 3 is in nurseries ('vrefikos stathnos'), which take children from 8 months to 2½ and mixed age centres which take children from 8 months to 5½. Many of these mixed age centres consist of kindergartens ('pedikos stathnos'), to which accommodation for children under 2½ has been added; new centres however may include the full age range from the time they open. But most provision for this age group is for children aged 2½-3 in kindergartens, which take children from 2½ to 5½. There are places for around 4,000 children under 3 in nurseries and mixed age centres, and a further 13,000 children between 2½ and 3 in kindergartens - altogether 4-5% of the under 3 age group. The number of children attending however is fewer because some services are not operating due to financial problems.

Most provision is made in mixed age centres and kindergartens run directly by the Ministry of Welfare (the only non-school service in the Community provided directly by central government), but there are also some places in services run by local authorities and by private organisations.

Children aged 3-5½ are in two types of publicly-funded service. There are about 70,000 places for this age group in kindergartens (or mixed age centres), provided mainly by central government, though some are provided by local authorities or private organisations. Most of these are open from 7.00-16.00, although some in Athens are open as late as 20.00. In addition, 146,000 children attend pre-primary schooling ('nipiagogion'), which is available for children aged 4-5½ and is open for 3½ hours a day; this service is provided by the Ministry of Education. These two types of services provide for about 65-70% of this age group, although rather fewer children attend because some kindergartens are unable to operate for financial reasons.

In addition, a national private organisation provides 73 'seasonal' kindergartens for 1850 children; these operate in rural areas during busy periods for farming families.

Children in the first 3 years of primary schooling - from 5½ to 8½ - have 20 hours teaching a week, increasing to 24-26 hours for the next 3 years. Because of a shortage of school buildings, many schools operate a shift system, with the first shift of children attending from 8.00-12.00 and the second for 4 hours in the afternoon.

There is no publicly-funded outside school hours care.

Publicly-funded services for all age groups, including children under 2½, are free to parents. Services are concentrated in Athens; however half the population of Greece lives in and around Athens and it is not clear if this area has a higher level of provision than elsewhere.

### Privately funded childcare services

There are some 75 kindergartens and mixed age centres provided by employers for their staff, including 39 providing for 5,100 children run for government workers (though also now available to other parents). In addition there are 465 private nurseries, kindergartens and mixed age centres, most of which are run for profit (though some also receive some public funding, although there is no information on the proportion which benefit in this way). They provide places for 13,900 children between 8 months and primary school age or about 2% of this age group. There is no information on the ages of children attending these two groups of services.

Family day care is rare. There is no information the number of places in this type of service or in own home care.

### Developments 1985-90

1. Parental Leave provision has been extended to workers in the public sector.

2. The Government opened its own services for children under 2½ for the first time in 1984, and the number of places for this age group in Government services has increased during this period; previously publicly funded provision for children under 2½ was very limited and made only by private organisations.

There have however been major constraints on expanding services. It is difficult to find premises in Athens, which is very densely developed. There have also been severe constraints on public expenditure, which have led to new services being provided but not being able to operate and take children. For example, 155 nurseries (to take children under 2½) have been added to existing kindergartens, but only 45 are able to operate.

There has been little growth in services for children over 2½, although a recent law has proposed the establishment of 128 kindergartens, 62 mixed age centres and the addition of provision for children under 2½ in 43 kindergartens.

3. Since 1986, teachers in pre-primary schooling attend a 4 year university course rather than a 3 year college course, which is still the training for workers in kindergartens. This emphasises the split system of provision for children aged 4 and 5 - with some children in kindergartens which are run by welfare authorities and are open 8 hours a day; and more children in pre-primary schooling which is run by education authorities and only open during the morning.

4. A 1989 law (September 26) on pre-primary schooling provides new guidance to teachers on curriculum and methods of work, and emphasises the importance of the whole development of the child.

## PORTUGAL

### Employment background

In 1988, 62% of women with a child under 10 were employed, the second highest level in the Community, and 6% were unemployed; there was very little difference in either employment or unemployment rates between women with a child aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate for childless women aged 20-39 was 69%, only a little above the level for women with children. There is no comparable data for 1985, so no information can be provided about changes in employment and unemployment

between 1985 and 1988. Overall, 10% of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work for mothers employed part-time were 20-29, 40-49 for mothers employed full-time and the same for all employed mothers.

Temporary employment is high compared to the rest of the Community, accounting for 16% of employed mothers (compared to 10% in the Community); most (12%/16%) have temporary jobs because they cannot find permanent jobs.

Nearly all men with children under 10 were employed (95%); average hours of work were 40-49. Unemployment was 2%.

The proportion of one parent households in 1988 was 6% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 8% for households with a child aged 5-9. Lone mothers were rather more likely than all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 65% (4% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4, and 68% (7% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9. Unemployment was higher for lone mothers than for all mothers; the unemployment rate was twice as high among lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 (13% compared to 6% for all mothers) but only slightly higher for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9 (7% compared to 5%).

#### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave lasts 90 days; 60 days must be taken after the birth, with a further 30 days which may be taken before or after birth), so that post-natal leave can be between 60 and 90 days. During this period women receive benefit equivalent to 100% of earnings. Women are entitled to take time off work to breastfeed their child.

In addition, parents may take up to 24 months unpaid Parental Leave; take-up is reported to be low. Employees with a child under 12 or a handicapped child may work part-time (2 hours less per day) for up to 3 years, although managers are not entitled to this leave; again, take-up is reported to be low for a number of reasons, including the leave being unpaid, the attitude of employers and the insecurity of many workers who are on temporary contracts.

Paid leave to care for sick children is available to government employees and, elsewhere, for lone parents earning below a certain level; for other employees, unpaid leave is available. As a consequence, while leave is often used in the public sector, it is rarely used elsewhere.

#### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

Tax relief is available on a number of expenses concerning family responsibilities, up to a total maximum of 90000\$00 for single tax payers and 180000\$00 for married tax payers. Expenses that are eligible include education for the taxpayer and his or her dependents, the care and medical treatment of close relatives (for example, accommodation in residential institutions for the elderly) and childcare costs. Proof of payment needs to be provided to get full relief; otherwise, only half the level of tax relief can be claimed.

#### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 6. Services for children under 3 are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security. In 1988, there was provision for 6% of this age group in publicly-funded services. Most of this provision (94%) was in nurseries ('infantario'), with the rest in organised family day care schemes ('creche familiar'). Just

over three-quarters of the services are provided by private organisations (IPPS - 'Instituição Particular de Solidariedade Social'); the rest are mainly provided by Regional Social Security Centres (CRSS), though some local authorities also make provision.

Just under a third (32%) of children aged 3-5 attend publicly funded services. There are two main forms of provision. Just under half the places are provided by education authorities in pre-primary schooling. This service is open from 9.00-16.00, with a two hour midday break; some schools provide supervision during this break so that children can stay. The remaining places are provided in kindergartens ('jardim de infancia'), which are open at least 8 hours a day; most places are provided by private organisations, the rest by CRSS and local authorities. The Ministry of Education is responsible for defining educational standards in kindergartens, but funding mostly comes from the Ministry of Social Security.

Because of the shortage of school buildings, many primary schools still operate a shift system; the first shift of children attend from 8.15 to 13.00, the second from 13.00 to 18.00. A 'normal' school day, operated by nearly 40% of classes in 1985, is from 9.15-16.00, with a two hour midday break. Some primary schools provide supervision during the midday break; in these cases, children may bring their own food. An increasing number of children eat at canteens; these are provided in a variety of ways, sometimes in schools and sometimes outside.

Outside school hours care is mainly provided in centres ('actividades de tempos livres'). These centres often share a building with other childcare services, for example a nursery or kindergarten or both, but in these cases the centres are run separately. Given the high level of shift attendance at school, children may attend these centres for quite long periods of the day. In 1988, there were places for 6% of children between 6 and 11 in outside school hours care centres; the number of children attending would be higher because, with the shift system at school, some children attend centres in the morning, while others go in the afternoon. In addition, a large number of schools have begun to provide extra-curricular leisure activities, as part of a major Government programme (see Developments 1985-1990); however, in most cases, these initiatives are not intended to provide care for children while their parents are at work.

Provision of outside school hours care centres is similar to other types of childcare service (excluding schools) - most is made by private organisations, the rest mainly by regional social security centres but with some local authority services.

Parents contribute to the costs of all these services (except schools) according to income and numbers of children; lone parents also pay less. Levels of all types of provision vary substantially between different areas.

#### Privately funded childcare services

Employers provide a small number of services - accounting for only 400 places in nurseries, kindergartens and outside school hours care centres out of a total of over 150,000 places. However, some collective agreements provide for employers to give financial assistance to parents for childcare costs.

There are 3,240 places for children under 3 in private, for profit nurseries (equivalent to less than 1% of the age group), and 28,900 places for children aged 3-5 (6% of the age group), some in private kindergartens but mostly in private pre-primary schooling. There are also a few places (871) in private outside school hours care centres.

There is no information on own home care or private family day care, although a substantial number of children are thought to be cared for by private family day carers.

### Developments 1985-90

1. The tax relief measure which includes a proportion of childcare costs was introduced in 1989.

2. There has been an increase of 56,533 places in publicly-funded services (excluding primary schooling) in 3 years (from 162,426 to 218,959 between 1985 and 1988). Provision for children under 3 increased 40%; in kindergartens and pre-primary schooling by nearly 25%; and in outside school hours care by 75%. With a decrease in child population, following a falling birth rate, the proportion of children getting a service has risen even more.

3. At the same, the proportion of publicly funded services provided by private organisations has increased; with the exception of pre-primary schooling, growth has been almost entirely in this sector, with provision by public bodies such as regional social security centres and local authorities declining. Current government policy is to shift responsibility for delivering services to private organisations (IPPS); this is reflected in a recent agreement between the Government and the association representing IPPS which increases the level of public subsidy, and in the transfer of some services from public bodies to these private organisations. Services run by private organisations are less expensive, partly because of the poor pay and conditions for staff, and no attempt has been made to use the increase in public subsidy to improve quality by attaching higher standards to services.

4. There has been a large drop in the number of services provided by employers - from 6373 in 1985 to just 400 in 1988. There are two reasons for this. First, services are very expensive and employers no longer receive a tax reduction for this purpose. Second, there has been a movement towards employers providing financial assistance direct to parents for childcare costs; this is cheaper for employers and preferred by some parents. This trend is apparent in both private and public sectors; in 1989, for example, the Health Ministry shut a number of services for hospital workers.

5. In the private sector, official statistics show a 50% increase in private nurseries (though the numbers are small compared to publicly-funded nurseries - 3329 compared to 24,507), and a fall of 23% in private pre-primary school places. However, there has been a larger fall in private kindergartens - from 14,424 in 1985 to 5,445 in 1988; but this could be due mainly to a transfer in responsibility for this service - from the Ministry of Social Security to the Ministry of Education - which may have temporarily affected the accuracy of the official statistics.

6. A new Education Law in 1986 made the State responsible for developing a system of pre-primary schooling for all children from the age of 3. The official objective is to provide, by 1993, for 90% of 5 year olds and 50% of 3 and 4 year olds either in pre-primary schools or kindergartens.

7. The law also establishes that schooling should be complemented by extra-curricular activities, to encourage the creative use of leisure time and contribute to children's development. These activities are to be carried out by individual schools or groups of schools and should pay particular attention to the involvement of the children in their development. Within the framework of a Government programme (PIPSE - 'Programa Inter-ministerial de Promocao do Sucesso Educativo'), about two-thirds of

schools have introduced these types of activities, and it is expected that all schools will have done so by 1990/91. These services are not meant to provide care for children with parents at work, and are funded by the Ministry of Youth; in some areas, local authorities and parent groups have combined these two functions - extra-curricular activities and outside school hours care - but face increasing financial problems. PIPSE also includes the development of pre-primary schooling and kinder-gartens in areas with high levels of poor school performance.

## SPAIN

### Employment background

In 1988, 28% of women with a child under 10 were employed, one of the lowest employment rates in the Community, and 10% were unemployed, one of the highest rates; there was little difference in either employment or unemployment rates between women with children aged 0-4 and 5-9. The employment rate among childless women aged 20-39 was 44%, the lowest level in the Community. There is no comparable data for 1985, so no information can be provided about changes in employment and unemployment between 1985 and 1988. Overall, 15% of employed women with a child under 10 had part-time jobs; average hours of work for mothers employed part-time were 20-29, and 40-49 hours for mothers employed full-time and for all employed mothers.

Employment rates for women with children under 10 varied somewhat between regions; they were highest in Este (which covers Catalonia and Valencia)(34%) and Noroeste (Galicia, Asturias, Cantabria)(33%), lowest in Sur (Andalucia, Murcia)(20%). Spain has a relatively high proportion of employed women classified as 'family workers' - 13% compared to 6% for the whole Community. It also has the highest level of temporary employment in the Community, accounting for 19% of employed mothers (compared to 10% in the Community); most (16%/19%) have temporary jobs because they cannot find permanent jobs.

Most men with children under 10 were employed (89%); average hours of work were 40-49. Spain has the highest level of temporary employment among men with children in the Community, accounting for 11% of employed fathers (compared to 5% in the Community). Unemployment, at 8%, was relatively high, and varied regionally, from 15% in Sur and 11% in Canarias to 5% in Madrid and Nordeste.

The proportion of one parent households was 2% for households with a child aged 0-4 and 4% for households with a child aged 5-9, the lowest rate in the Community. Lone mothers were nearly twice as likely as all mothers to be employed, with an employment rate of 50% (22% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 0-4 and the same level (24% higher) for lone mothers with a child aged 5-9; the difference is almost entirely due to higher levels of full-time employment among lone mothers. Unemployment was also nearly twice as high among lone mothers as among all mothers - 18% for those with a child aged 0-4 (compared to 10%) and 14% for those with a child aged 5-9 (compared to 7%).

### Employment rights for parents

Maternity Leave lasts 16 weeks; 10 weeks must be taken after the birth, with a

further 6 weeks which may be taken before or after the birth, so that post-natal leave can be between 10 and 16 weeks. During this period women receive benefit equivalent to 75% of earnings, though some women receive full earnings due to collective agreements. Women are entitled to take time off work to breastfeed their child. There is a period of 12 months unpaid Parental Leave. Parents with a child under 6 can reduce their working hours but without compensation for loss of earnings.

Parents are entitled to take unpaid leave for the first two days of a child's illness.

### Tax relief and other direct subsidies for childcare costs

There are none.

### Publicly funded childcare services

Children start primary school at 6. Children under 3 are found in three types of publicly funded service - nurseries ('guarderías') taking children under 4 and mixed age centres taking children from 0 to primary school age ('escuela infantil'); and some 2 year olds in pre-primary schooling ('preescolar'). There is no information on the numbers of children in nurseries and mixed age centres, which are provided by a variety of organisations including local and regional governments and private organisations. About 6% of 2 year olds (2% of under 3s) went to pre-primary school in 1986/7, most of the places being provided in private schools, some of which receive no public funds; there are no more recent national statistics for the numbers of children in this age group at school, nor for how many attended schools which received public funds. It is therefore impossible to estimate how many places are provided for children under 3 in publicly funded services, but it is likely to be well under 5%.

Children aged 3 to 5 may go to nurseries (until they are 4) or mixed age centres (until they are 6). Most, however, go to pre-primary schooling; this is usually attached to primary schools and about two-thirds of places are in schools run by regional governments or the national Ministry of Education. The school day is usually from 9.00-17.00, with a 3 hour lunch break; increasing numbers of schools, generally in urban areas, provide meals and supervision during this lunch break, but there is no information on what proportion of children attend for a full day, half day or go home for lunch and return in the afternoon.

There is no information on the numbers of children over 3 in publicly funded nurseries or mixed age centres. Around 20% of 3 year olds go to pre-primary schooling and over 90% of 4 and 5 year olds. Overall, it is probable that about 70% of children in the age group 3-5 attend some type of publicly-funded service.

Primary schools have the same hours as pre-primary schooling, and the situation is the same for the long lunch break. There is no publicly-funded outside school hours care during term-time, but there is increasing provision of play schemes ('centros d'esplais') during the long summer holiday, mostly for children over 6.

Parents pay for publicly funded services (excluding schools) according to income. There are substantial variations in levels of provision, with higher levels in urban areas though even here there are large differences between local authorities.

### Privately funded childcare services

There is no information on services provided by employers, but the amount is likely to be small. The number of private nurseries and mixed age centres; both Madrid

and Barcelona are estimated to have 600, and there are far more private than publicly funded services. Standards (for example, premises, staff numbers and training, educational orientation) in private services vary considerably, but in general are lower than in publicly funded services; the private sector is accused of poor quality and simply being an easy way to make money.

Family day care is not very common, own home care being much more usual, especially among middle-class families. There are an increasing number of carers who are paid by parents to collect children from school and care for them at the child's home until parents get back from work ('kangaroos').

#### Developments 1985-90

1. In 1989, maternity leave was extended by 2 weeks and parental leave was introduced.

2. A change in taxation has been approved, but will not be introduced until 1991, which will enable parents who are both employed to claim an income tax reduction equivalent to 10% of the total cost of childcare for a child under 3.

3. The proportion of children receiving pre-primary education has increased from 88% of 4 and 5 year olds in 1983/84 to over 95% in 1988/89, partly because more provision has been made but mainly because the number of young children has decreased. Attendance in pre-primary schooling for 2 and 3 year olds has also increased for similar reasons. There is no information on changes in other types of publicly funded services, for example in nurseries and mixed age centres; places have increased substantially in Madrid and Murcia, but elsewhere there appears to have been little growth.

4. A major reform of the whole education system was proposed by the Government in 1987, and is likely to be approved by Parliament in Autumn 1990. This legislation will make the age group 0-5 the first stage of the education system, and divides this stage into two cycles - 0-2 and 3-5. Education authorities will be responsible for all services for this age group (including children under 3), and all services for children under 6 will be officially described as 'escuela infantil'. The reform does not propose one type or model of service; it allows diversity (for example provision could be made in mixed age centres or in nurseries and pre-primary schooling).

The Government has set as a priority the provision of schooling for all 3 year olds, to be achieved by 1992, when 3 years of pre-primary schooling will be available to all children whose parents want them to attend.

5. As part of the process of educational reform, the Government has supported a programme of experimental work and action research. The results of this work formed the basis for a draft curriculum for children from 0-5, which has been the subject of extensive consultation; in its final form, the curriculum ('curricular base - educacion infantil') will form the basis for the development of services for children under 6. Implementing the curriculum will require a lot of adaptation in some cases; already, the Government has made great efforts to train teachers to work with the new curriculum.

6. An increasing number of teacher training colleges are offering the possibility for students to specialise in work with children aged 0-3. An initial 'special programme' of training was introduced into a number of training colleges in the mid-1980s; this offered the opportunity for workers with long experience of work in nurseries to gain a teaching qualification with a specialisation in work with children under 4. This 'special programme' has now finished and has been replaced by ordinary teacher training



courses offering work with this youngest age group as one specialisation.

7. The whole emphasis during this period has been on developing an educational orientation in services for young children, from babies upwards. Increasingly services, especially those that are publicly-funded, have this orientation. The lead in this development is being taken by local authorities who emphasise this educational approach in the services they provide or fund and offer additional support with training, seminars, resource centres, working groups and so on.

8. As part of the new Education Law, all private nurseries and mixed age centres will have to be registered either with the national Ministry of Education or with regional education authorities where they have responsibility for education. Regulations to be applied to these private services will be drawn up once the new law has been approved.

## CONCLUSIONS

This section draws heavily on the conclusions made in the 1988 Report and in the four technical seminars organised by the Network in Spring 1990.

What is needed, and what remains lacking in all Member States, is a comprehensive and coherent programme for reconciling childcare, employment and equality of opportunity; an effective programme must reduce tensions between employment and parenthood and enhance equality of opportunity between women and men and should be judged on its ability to achieve both objectives. It can only develop in the context of clearly defined policies on equality of opportunity and on the needs and rights of children and families. It needs to cover the full range of childcare services; the organisation of employment; and more equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women.

An additional aim should be increased choice for parents, for example about how they organise employment and parenthood and about the range of childcare options available to them. The issue of choice, however, needs careful consideration. The rhetoric of choice is not always matched by a clear definition of objectives, a thorough analysis of what is required to achieve these objectives, and commitment of the necessary means to achieve these objectives. For example, when people argue that parents should have a choice between being at home and going out to work, they need to specify (but often do not) what range of employment options are envisaged as being on offer and for what period of time; what material, employment, domestic and social conditions will permit a free choice; and what policies and resources are necessary to ensure these conditions. To avoid these dangers, therefore, the programme should include clear and detailed objectives defining the options it intends to facilitate; identify the conditions needed to ensure genuine choice between these options (based on recognition and analysis of the many constraints limiting choice); and set clear priorities to guide the development of policies over time as part of a process of expanding choice, with a timetable for achieving each stage.

Moving to the main components of a programme, the most obvious problem on childcare services is that there is not enough publicly funded provision for children with employed or non-employed parents (and we emphasise again the need to take a broad approach which does not treat services for one group of children separately and

recognises the many needs, both of children and parents, that can be met by good quality services). Moreover, demand will increase over time as more women seek to enter the labour market, as alternative sources of childcare, such as relatives, become less available and as the provision of more services affects parents' expectations and preferences. The dynamic nature of demand, combined with inadequate data on existing demand, makes it doubly difficult to answer the question - how much provision is needed? All we can say is that the supply of publicly funded childcare is far away from meeting current demand - and further still from meeting future demand.

More provision is needed, in particular to bridge the gap between the end of Parental Leave and the beginning of pre-primary schooling and to provide outside school hours care. Because supply, demand and national income vary between Member States, and because of the dynamic nature of demand, it is not realistic nor appropriate to set a common optimum level of provision for all Member States and a common timetable to achieve these levels. However, all Member States should have clear long-term objectives - including the ultimate aim of equal access to good quality local services for all children - and should ensure a steady expansion of services; and it is realistic and necessary to suggest targets for minimum levels of provision, that all Member States should meet as soon as possible and no later than the end of the Third Equal Opportunities Programme in 1995:

**\*\*for children under 3** - full-time places (excluding pre-primary schooling) for 6-10% of children;

**\*\*for children from 3 to compulsory school age** - places for the full school or kindergarten day in pre-primary schooling or kindergarten for 65-70% of children, including 50% of 3 year olds (see the 1988 Report for discussion of the implications of this target for Luxembourg, Ireland, Netherlands and Portugal);

**\*\*for children from 3 to 10** - full day childcare for 10-15% (for example, in pre-primary schooling and outside school hours care); and supervision for children during the midday break in all schools which have morning and afternoon sessions.

If these targets were met, it would begin to reduce some of the substantial differences that exist in levels of provision between Member States. But it should also be the aim of future development of services to reduce the substantial differences in levels of provision that exist between areas within Member States; all areas, including rural areas, should receive equal treatment in terms of quantity and quality of provision.

Building-up publicly funded provision to the point where it is generally available will take more than 5 years. In the meantime, private carers (excluding relatives) should be regulated to ensure minimum standards; and private carers (including relatives) should be offered material and other types of support, including opportunities for training, meeting together, the provision of toys and equipment. This is important not only in the interests of equity between parents, but also because it is the youngest and most vulnerable age group which is most likely to be dependent on these private forms of care.

Quantity of provision is important; so too are other issues. Services should be coherent, in other words common and consistent principles and standards should apply in certain key areas. For example, services should be equally available to children of all ages; there should be a common orientation concerned with providing safe and secure care and meeting the full range of children's needs (in short, 'care and education'); workers should have comparable pay, conditions, status and training; and the cost to parents should be consistent. It should be stressed that coherence does not require

uniformity - it is quite feasible to have diverse services operating in a coherent framework. Nor does it require responsibility for services to be integrated into one department, although that is one administrative solution; it does however require close co-ordination between departments operating within a common policy framework.

A central objective of policy must be to ensure equal access for all children to good quality services. Quality is a complex issue, not least because it is a value-based concept - there cannot be one definition in a Community where people have different values. Quality is also a broad issue - assessments of quality should obviously include the experience of children, but also take into account parents, workers and local communities; and they should cover both individual services and whole service systems. Moreover, it is difficult to discuss quality of child-care services without first developing clear concepts about quality of life for all children and all parents.

Given the complexity of the subject, it is not surprising that a lot of work still needs to be done on the issue of quality, and in particular on how to define, monitor and improve quality. If not already begun, all Member States should initiate a process of developing definitions of quality (which can accommodate different values) and a strategy for promoting quality. This process should involve widespread consultation and discussion, and be completed by 1995, though subject to subsequent regular review.

Childcare workers are central to good childcare; for this reason, but also because the importance of their work merits it, all childcare workers should have appropriate pay, conditions and training. Basic training, and pay and conditions for all trained workers should be at the same level as that for teachers of older children. There should however be opportunities for people without the basic training, but with good experience and qualities, to work in services and to gain access to basic training even if they lack formal academic qualifications. Continuous training is also essential, and should be an integral part of the working life of each worker.

Finally, the trend towards services that are responsive to a wide range of local needs, and which serve as a community resource, should be encouraged; these may develop through opening new services or diversifying the work of existing ones. These services offer the possibility of developing new and closer relationships between childcare workers, parents and local communities; and they enable services for children with employed parents to be provided within a general framework which emphasises the needs of all children and parents and the importance of the communities in which they live.

Publicly funded childcare must be complemented by employment rights for parents. There are four basic rights that should be introduced in all Member States by the end of the Third Equal Opportunities Programme:

\*\*Maternity Leave, lasting between 12-16 weeks after birth;

\*\*Paternity Leave, of at least 2 weeks;

\*\*Parental Leave, of at least 3 months per parent initially, with an eventual objective of 6-9 months per parent. When fully implemented, taken together with Maternity Leave, this would provide parents with 18 months of post-natal leave;

\*\*Leave for Family Reasons (to enable parents to undertake essential parental duties including the care of sick children) of at least 5 days each year per parent per child.

These rights should also:

\*\*be very flexible. Parents should have the right (i) to take leave on a part-time basis (with the length extended accordingly); (ii) to take Paternity and Parental Leave

as one block of leave or divided into several blocks; and (iii) to take these leaves at any time until the end of the Maternity Leave period (in the case of Paternity Leave) or until the child's third birthday (in the case of Parental Leave);

\*\*provide compensation for all, or a high proportion, of lost earnings. The long-term objective should be complete compensation for lost earnings; but in the meantime, the objective should be compensation at the same level as the earnings-related component of Maternity Leave;

\*\*be available to all workers, including self-employed workers and workers in family businesses, with eligibility conditions kept minimal and excluding length of service;

\*\*be provided as individual rights to each parent, rather than as a family right. Lone parents should have double entitlements of Parental Leave and leave for family reasons; whether, in the case of these two types of leave, the individual right should be transferable (that is, the individual should be able to transfer their entitlement to their partner or even someone else) is an important, and contentious, issue which will need to be determined in each Member State.

These employment rights are essential, minimum requirements. But they need to be supplemented by changes in the structure and culture of individual workplaces, initiated either by individual employers or through collective agreements. The objective of these changes is to make employment more responsive to the demands of family responsibilities; to achieve this objective, they should include new and more flexible ways of working and pursuing careers which do not damage employment opportunities and career prospects. Government, employers and trades unions all have a major role to play in the introduction of these changes.

Changes in employment need to be complemented by measures to increase men's participation in family responsibilities. If leave entitlements and more flexible working practises are only used by women, this will perpetuate inequality. Member States should make explicit policy commitments which recognise the importance of increasing men's participation in the care of children, and define the encouragement and support of greater participation as a general objective of policy; develop a programme of research and action to further this objective; and review existing and future policies in terms of their compatibility with this general objective. Governments can also encourage innovation, both as employers in their own right and by giving special support to employers who are prepared to introduce projects which combine work-family policies with active encouragement and support for take-up by men as well as women. Employers should encourage male workers to take a greater share of family responsibilities as part of their programmes to create more 'family friendly' employment. While Trades Unions should both encourage this approach in collective agreements and use their influence with members to encourage greater take-up by fathers of employment rights and flexible working practises.

The development of employment that is responsive to the needs of workers with family responsibilities and encourages men to take a greater share of family responsibilities requires a mixture of legal rights, collective agreements and individual workplace initiatives; active support for innovative projects, the dissemination of their experience and their general application; regular monitoring of the extent of employment measures intended to assist workers with children and the use made of them; and the availability of structures allowing close collaboration between interested parties. This last point is particularly important. There needs to be structures, at

national, regional and local level, where all those concerned with childhood, equality and employment can meet regularly to discuss issues, propose initiatives and review developments.

Ensuring that children get good care and education is an inherently costly business. In most countries, these costs are carried disproportionately by women - either mothers, whose costs result from huge loss of earnings; or childcare workers who effectively subsidise costs through low wages and bad conditions. The key issue therefore is not whether we can afford the costs -because they already exist - but how these costs are allocated -in particular between parents, employers and society. The present situation is full of anomalies. In most countries, once children reach 3, they receive care for a substantial part of the day free of charge in school; before 3, if they use publicly funded services, parents have to contribute towards costs. Those parents who get a place in a publicly funded service receive a subsidy, while parents who use private carers do not (except, to a limited extent, where tax relief is available for childcare costs).

Various solutions might be applied to this incoherent situation, and especially the inconsistent treatment of children under and over 3. As services increasingly adopt an educational orientation, the same principle of charging might be applied -one option might be a core period of time, equivalent to the school day, which would be free for all children, with parents paying an income related contribution for the rest of the day.

For parents who do not have access to publicly funded services, some form of 'demand-subsidy', for example tax relief or some system of cash grant or vouchers, is an option. In considering 'demand strategy', a distinction should be made between long-term and transitional strategies. 'Demand subsidy' is not a satisfactory long-term strategy for funding the type of childcare services proposed in this report. Tax relief systems tend to favour higher income families, and not target subsidy towards lower income families; public funding distributed in this way is not tied to developing good quality services or to ensuring appropriate pay and conditions for workers; and unless the same principle is applied to pre-primary and primary schooling, it creates new inconsistencies between services for children under and over 3 and militates against the development of a coherent system of childcare services for all children.

There may however be a case for applying some form of demand subsidy as a transitional measure for those parents who do not have access to publicly funded services. If this happens, though, the decision should be made as part of an overall review of policy on childcare services. The system of demand subsidy that is chosen should ensure that the system does not favour higher income families and, if possible, favours lower income families; that parents should not benefit from both supply and demand subsidies; and that demand subsidy does not adversely affect the development of publicly funded services.

The other key issue of funding is the role of employers. In every country there are some examples of employers funding childcare for some of their own employees, and this practice seems to have increased in some Member States in the last few years. While such individual employer provision gives valuable assistance to the workers who benefit from it, this approach cannot provide a basis for the development of the sort of childcare services that are advocated in this report. It seems unlikely that employers will make provision for more than a privileged minority of the workforce, and the provision will be determined by employers' labour force needs, rather than by the needs of children or parents; any childcare provision attached to a particular job introduces an

element of insecurity into the care of children, which is not in their best interests, and constrains women's employment opportunities; finally, services dependent on employers militate against the concept of local provision serving the needs of all children and parents.

Employers should not be expected to provide an alternative to a proper system of publicly funded 'care and education' services. At best, and this may be a valuable contribution, they can fill some gaps until such a service is developed and offer a supplementary, workplace-based provision for parents who may prefer this option (with the partnership approach, involving cooperation between employers, local authorities and other agencies, offering a good model). The real issue is whether all employers should be required to contribute towards the cost of childcare services - not the full cost, because these services meet other needs apart from those of employers, but a proportion. This principle has been applied in France, Sweden and, until recently, in Italy. This clearly needs more discussion, in the context of a general analysis of costs and how they should be divided. This analysis should determine what proportion of total costs should be paid by parents and what proportion of income individual parents should contribute; how much employers should contribute and how this contribution should be made; and how much society, through Government, should pay.

Finally, if there is to be a continuing debate about childcare; if effective policies are to be developed; if policies are to be adequately implemented and their impact monitored - then much better information is needed. In its 1988 Report, the Network described the lack of information as scandalous, and we see little reason to change this opinion. By the end of the Third Equal Opportunities Programme, we would hope to see regular, reliable sources of information available about the following areas:

- \*\*the employment of parents;
- \*\*how children are cared for;
- \*\*parents views and preferences;
- \*\*the availability of employer policies and collective agreements to assist workers with childcare (and other family responsibilities);
- \*\*the use made of employment rights and employment policies for parents;
- \*\*the quality of services.

In each case, information must be collected in such a way that the situation of different groups of children and families can be identified and compared.

## THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION

The development of childcare policies and services requires work at local, regional, national and European level. The European level includes six main areas of work:

Harmonising objectives. The Commission's draft Directive on Parental leave and Leave for Family Reasons was an important initiative, despite its adoption being blocked. The Network believe that minimum standards should be established for the 4 main employment rights for parents - Paternity Leave, Maternity Leave, Parental Leave and Leave for Family Reasons - to meet the conditions outlined above in the Conclusions. This would involve a revision of the original draft Directive; since it is now 7 years old, and circumstances have changed, a review prior to introducing a revised draft would

now be appropriate.

Harmonisation should also be sought for the objectives of childcare services, but not for the means to achieve these objectives; Member States have evolved different systems, and it is neither necessary nor feasible to insist on a uniform 'Euro-service'. The Commission is committed to preparing a Recommendation on Childcare as part of the programme to implement the Social Charter; the Network believes a Directive is necessary, given the importance of childcare services to the achievement of equality, cohesion and freedom of movement in the Community (the case for a Directive has been discussed in the 1988 Report and in evidence given to the recent hearing on childcare held by the Women's Rights Committee of the European Parliament). Whichever instrument is eventually used, it should cover:

\*\*the development of locally-based high quality and coherent services for children up to at least the age of 10, with the eventual aim of making these services available for all children;

\*\*the setting of realistic targets for the expansion of publicly funded services, determined by a formula related to national income and levels of need;

\*\*the assurance of equality of access for all children to these services;

\*\*the assurance of appropriate pay, conditions, training and support for all childcare workers;

\*\*the role of public authorities (central, regional, local government), in particular to set objectives and targets and to ensure their attainment including the provision of resources;

\*\*monitoring progress in meeting objectives;

\*\*the provision of financial aid for the development of services in poorer regions by the Commission through the Structural Funds.

In addition, in its preamble, the instrument would emphasise that common objectives do not require common service systems for all Member States or even common services within Member States; diversity between and within Member States would be compatible and desirable. Moreover, although the instrument referred to services for children with parents who were employed or training, it should recognise that services were of wider value and should be generally available; and that as far as possible, segregated services for children with employed parents should be avoided.

Structural Funding. During the Second Equal Opportunities Programme, it has become clear that Structural Funding can be used to support the development of childcare services; and that such services are an integral requirement for achieving the objectives set for the Funds (for example, promoting the development of rural areas). A main task for the Third Equal Opportunities Programme is to ensure that the Structural Funds begin to make a significant contribution to childcare. This can be achieved in two ways. First, the Commission should use the opportunities available to it to initiate childcare programmes, for example, as recommended in one of the recent technical seminars, a rural childcare programme supporting 200-250 innovative projects. The aim of these programmes would be to increase awareness of childcare applications for Structural Funding; support the development of services in poorer regions; and develop innovative

models of childcare<sup>1</sup>.

Second, the relevant Commission Directorates should co-ordinate to support a programme to inform and sensitise all relevant individuals and organisations - at all levels in Member States as well as in the Commission - to the potential uses of Structural Funding for the development of childcare services (and other types of support, for example, replacement services). The objective would be to stimulate childcare proposals in applications from Member States.

Finally, the Commission should develop guidelines and standards to apply in allocating funds for childcare purposes, to ensure they are used to support services that are of high quality and meet other criteria.

Exchanging Information, Experience and Ideas. There are enormous potential benefits to be gained from supporting and encouraging the dissemination and exchange of information, experience and ideas. The technical seminars and programme of visits organised by the Network in 1990 illustrate two ways of doing this, which should be developed. But there are other possibilities, for example, the establishment of data-bases giving information on selected projects, innovations and research projects in different countries and the use of new technology to make this information widely accessible; developing a library of reports and other publications, videos and films etc which are of general interest; and using childcare magazines to disseminate information.

Collaborative work. Closely related to exchanging information and experience, there are also enormous potential benefits to be gained from cross-national collaborative work, including research and policy analysis, development work and demonstration and action projects. Both areas of work - exchanges and collaboration - can be achieved on a unilateral basis, between individual countries, and also through existing European organisations outside the Commission. However, the Commission can make an important contribution which ensures that all Member States have substantial involvement, by supporting projects in both areas of work, for example seminars and conferences; visits and exchanges; the establishment of a data-base and information centre; collaborative policy analysis (for example, of the costs of childcare and their allocation); and collaborative action projects. This should be done as part of a 'childcare programme', prepared within the context of the Third Equal Opportunities Programme and which would identify a number of priority areas for work during the next five years.

Monitoring. The Commission has a vital role to play in monitoring the situation and developments in the Community. Particular attention should be given to: employment rights for parents and employment policies introduced by individual employers or in collective agreements; childcare services and how children are cared for; childcare workers; and parental employment. Some of the material for this purpose can come

---

<sup>1</sup>The Commission has recently announced a first step in this process. It has proposed a new programme - New Opportunities for Women (NOW) - which will focus on training and enterprise creation. This will be funded from the Structural Funds, and includes the possibility of financial assistance for the development of childcare services to support the general objectives of the programme.



from published statistics and secondary analysis of data sets such as the Labour Force Survey. For some items, however, there are no adequate existing sources, and original surveys need to be funded. Two surveys would be particularly valuable, to be undertaken for the first time during the Third Equal Opportunities Programme and repeated every 5 years:

**\*\*a European Survey of Households with Children**, to examine in more detail a range of issues including parental employment; childcare arrangements; parents' views about childcare; the availability of employer policies to assist workers with children; and the role of fathers and other household members in childcare and other domestic tasks. The value of this exercise would be increased if both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

**\*\*a European Survey of Employers**, to examine the availability of, and attitudes to, workplace policies to assist workers with children (and other family responsibilities).

**Social Partners**. Social Partners should be encouraged to include childcare issues in the social dialogue at a European level.

## MEMBERS OF THE EC CHILDCARE NETWORK

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Coordinator       | Peter Moss, Thomas Coram Research Unit, 41 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ        |
| National experts: |   |
| Germany           | Monika Jaeckel, Deutsches Jugendinstitut, Freibadstrasse 30, D-8000 Munich 90       |
| France            | Martine Felix, Institut de l'enfance et de la famille, 3 rue Coq-Heron, 75001 Paris |
| Italy             | Patrizia Ghedini, Regione Emilia-Romagna, Viale Aldo Moro 30, 40122 Bologna         |
| Netherlands       | Liesbeth Pot, Schoutenbosch 71, 1901 PB Castricum                                   |
| Belgium           | Perrine Humblet, 61A Avenue de Foestreets, 1180 Brussels                            |
| Luxembourg        | Jean Altmann, 5 Avenue de la Liberation, 3850 Schifflange                           |
| United Kingdom    | Bronwen Cohen, SCAFA, 55 Albany St., Edinburgh EH1 3QY                              |
| Ireland           | Anne McKenna, Glenstal, Westminster Rd., Dublin 18                                  |
| Denmark           | Jytte Jensen, Jydske Fritidspædagog-Seminarium, Skejbyvej 29, 8240 Risskov          |
| Greece            | Vivie Papadimitriou, 75 Skoufa, 10680 Athens  |
| Portugal          | Eduarda Ramirez, IAC, Av. de Berna 56, 1000 Lisbon                                  |
| Spain             | Irene Balageur, Pasaje del Arquitecto Augusto Font 35, 08023 Barcelona              |

# EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Commission of the European Communities

# INFORMATION

200 Rue de la Loi - 1049 Brussels

Informationskontorer  Presse- und Informationsbüros  Γραφεία Τύπου και Πληροφοριών  
Information offices  Bureaux de presse et d'information  Uffici stampa e informazione  Voorlichtingsbureaus

## BELGIQUE — BELGIË

*Bruxelles/Brussel*  
Rue Archimède/Archimedesstraat, 73  
1040 Bruxelles/Brussel  
Tél.: 235 11 11  
Télex 26657 COMINF B

## DANMARK

*København*  
Højbrohus  
Østergade 61  
Posbox 144  
1004 København K  
Tél.: 14 41 40  
Télex 16402 COMEUR DK

## BR DEUTSCHLAND

Zitelmannstraße 22  
5300 Bonn  
Tel.: 23 80 41  
Kurfürstendamm 102  
1000 Berlin 31  
Tel.: 8 92 40 28  
Erhardtstraße 27  
8000 München  
Tel.: 23 99 29 00  
Telex 5218135

## ΕΛΛΑΣ

Οδός Βασιλίσσης Σοφίας  
Και Ηρώδου Αττικού  
Αθήνα 134  
τηλ.: 724 3982/724 3983/724 3984

## FRANCE

288, Bld St Germain  
75007 Paris  
Tél.: 40.63.40.99  
C.M.C.I./Bureau 320  
2, rue Henri Barbusse  
F-13241 Marseille Cedex 01  
Tél. 91 91 46 00  
Télex 402538 EUR MA

## IRELAND

39 Molesworth Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel.: 71 22 44

## ITALIA

Via Poli, 29  
00187 Roma  
Tel.: 678 97 22  
Corso Magenta 59  
20123 Milano  
Tel.: 80 15 05/6/7/8  
Telex 316002 EURMIL I

## GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG

Bâtiment Jean Monnet  
Rue Alcide de Gasperi  
2920 Luxembourg  
Tél.: 43011

## NEDERLAND

Korte Vijverberg 5  
2513 AB Den Haag  
Tel.: 46.93.26

## UNITED KINGDOM

Abby Building  
8, Storey's Gate  
Westminster  
LONDON — SWIP 3AT  
Tél.: 222 81 22  
Windsor House  
9/15 Bedford Street  
Belfast BT 2 7EG  
Tel.: 40708  
4 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff CF1 9SG  
Tel.: 37 16 31  
9 Alva Street  
Edinburgh EH2 4PH  
Tel.: 225.20.58

## ESPAÑA

Calle de Serrano 41  
5A Planta-Madrid 1  
Tel.: 435 17 00

## PORTUGAL

Centro Europeu Jean Monnet  
Rua do Salitre, 56-10º  
1200 Lisboa - Tel. 54 11 44

## TÜRKIYE

15, Kuleli Sokak  
Gazi Osman Paça  
Ankara  
Tel.: 27 61 45/27 61 46

## SCHWEIZ - SUISSE - SVIZZERA

Case postale 195  
37-39, rue de Vermont  
1211 Genève 20  
Tél.: 34 97 50

## AUSTRALIA

Capitol Centre  
Franklin Street  
P.O. Box 609  
Manuka ACT 2603  
Canberra ACT  
Tél.: 95 50 50

## UNITED STATES

2100 M Street, NW  
Suite 707  
Washington, DC 20037  
Tel.: 862 95 00

3 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza  
245 East 47th Street  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel.: 371 38 04

## CANADA

Inn of the Provinces  
Office Tower  
Suite 1110  
Sparks Street 350  
Ottawa, Ont. K1R 7S8  
Tel.: 238 64 64

## AMERICA LATINA

Avda Américo Vespucio, 1835  
Santiago de Chile 9  
Chile  
Adresse postale: Casilla 10093  
Tel.: 228.24.84  
Av. Orinoco  
Las Mercedes  
Caracas 1060 - Venezuela  
Apartado 67076  
Las Américas 1061 - A  
Caracas - Venezuela  
Tel.: 91.51.33 - Telefax: 91.11.14  
Paseo de la Reforma  
1675 - Lomas de Chapultepec  
C.P. 11000  
Mexico D.F.

## NIPPON

Kowa 25 Building  
8-7 Sanbancho  
Chiyoda-Ku  
Tokyo 102  
Tel.: 239.04.41

## ASIA

Thai Military Bank Building  
34 Phya Thai Road  
Bangkok  
Thailand  
Tel.: 282.14.52  
TAJ MAHAL HOTEL  
Suite No. 222/1  
Mansingh Road  
Chanakyapuri  
New Delhi 110011  
India  
Tel. 38.66.62

## SUPPLEMENTS TO WOMEN OF EUROPE

"Women of Europe" is published every two months in the nine languages of the European Community. In addition there are Supplements to "Women of Europe", and the following issues are still available :

- N° 18 - Women's Studies (1984)
- N° 21 - Women and voting : Elections to the European Parliament (1985)
- N° 22 - Women and Music (1985)
- N° 23 - Equal Opportunities : 2nd Action Programme 1986-1990
- N° 25 - Community Law and Women (1987)
- N° 26 - Women and Men of Europe in 1987
- N° 27 - Women of Europe : 10 years (1988)
- N° 28 - Women and Television in Europe (1988)
- N° 29 - Women in agriculture (1988)
- N° 30 - Women in statistics (1989)

"Women of Europe" and its Supplements are sent to anyone asking to be put on the mailing list. Applicants must however specify their field of interest : women's association, Member of Parliament, journalist, trade union, library, research centre, Ministerial Department, etc..).

---

ISSN 1012-1935

Catalogue number : CC-AG-90-001-EN-C