

COMMISSION  
OF THE  
EUROPEAN  
COMMUNITIES

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR  
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities, created to help the European Commission develop and institute its policy of equal opportunities for men and women, is composed of representatives of the national equal opportunities committees, employers and trade unions and Council of Europe and ILO (International Labour Organisation) observers. It meets regularly to help develop European policies and exchange information on progress made in the respective Member States.

The Committee meeting of 4-5 December was attended by Joke Swibel, President of the Council of Europe's European Committee for Equality. She described her committee's work and prospects, especially in view of the opening up of Eastern Europe. The Advisory Committee also heard the latest developments concerning the Community's equality policy, i.e., assessment of the second Action Programme, preparation of the third Action Programme and studies underway launched by the Equal Opportunities Unit. The latter is also examining ways to include an equality dimension in the Community Structural Funds' policy.

The Advisory Committee discussed the role of the members of the different national coordinating groups and said it wanted to strengthen its ties with the different networks and working groups set up by the European Commission. Finally, it was briefed on the work of the Women's Information Service (see below) and the conclusions of its own "Documentation" Working Group (a study underway on information and documentation concerning women and a project for a directory of national documentation centres). The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities is planned for April 1990.

WOMEN  
OF  
EUROPE  
NEWSLETTER

NEWS  
ON THE EQUALITY POLICY  
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Dear Readers,

*The EC's Ministers adopted, with eleven votes in favour and one against (the United Kingdom), the European Social Charter at the European Summit in Strasbourg (8-9 December 1989). Opinions are mixed as to the Charter's ability to guarantee the rights of European working men and women.*

*Be that as it may, the European Commission feels that the Charter is fundamental for the protection of workers' rights in the Internal Market of 1993 towards which we are racing.*

*Consequently, the Commission has also adopted the Action Programme which completes the Social Charter and contains specific references to new Community legislation (Directives, Regulations, Recommendations, etc.) that must be adopted to enable the Charter to be implemented by the Member States. This will guarantee that the Social Charter, one of the priorities of Vasso Papandreou, EC Commissioner for Social Affairs and Education, will not remain a dead letter. 1990 will also raise the curtain on another Action Programme, the equal opportunities programme entering its third phase.*

*The first Action Programme for Equal Opportunities proposed by the Commission was adopted by the Council of Ministers in 1982 for a three-year term. The Second Action Programme for Equal Opportunities was adopted in 1986 and comes to a close at the end of this year. Like its predecessors, the third Action Programme will give guidelines and advice on measures that the Commission and the Member States should take to guarantee equal opportunities for men and women in all areas of social activity and work. The exchange of ideas that took place during the Toledo Seminar in April 1989 has already given some results to direct the Commission's work. The final text should be ready for Council approval before the end of the year.*

Fausta Deshumes La Valle

THIRD ACTION  
PROGRAMME  
IN THE WORKS

The second Community Action Programme for Equal Opportunities (1986-90) comes to a close this year. The first action programme (1982-85) centred on a developing global employment policy for women. The second programme has a more diversified policy focusing more on disadvantaged women and those in precarious social conditions.

At the informal meeting in April 1989 that coincided with the Toledo seminar on the Community's equal opportunities policy, Ministers responsible for women's affairs recognised the need for a third Equal Opportunities Action Programme. In doing so they backed the conclusions of the seminar calling for the continuation and extension of the work already started by the Commission to prepare for the changes and repercussions resulting from the Internal Market.

The aim is to prevent any detrimental consequences on female employment and introduce specific accompanying measures to make sure that women will benefit fully from the expected effects of the Single Market's completion, on an equal footing with men.

The preparatory work for this new action programme (1991-95) includes intensive exchanges between the European Commission and its partners at both the Community and national levels to identify the priorities for the nineties. A questionnaire was sent to all the Member States to help assess the second action programme. An inventory of all of the programmes and initiatives taken under it is also underway. The conclusions and Recommendations resulting from this evaluation and dialogue make up the starting point of the strategic guidelines of the new programme expected to start next year and run until the end of 1995.

NETWORKS  
AND WORKING GROUPS

Networks and expert working groups have been set up by the European Commission's Equal Opportunities Unit to ensure the broadest possible exchange of infor-

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 mation between the Member States and the European Commission. Each network or expert group is composed of national representatives and a European coordinator.

■ The Network on Women in Local Employment Initiatives (LEIs) met in Brussels on 15 December. After a review of measures taken in the Member States to stimulate the creation of LEIs for women, the network discussed the selection criteria for financing women's projects. Funding was given to 176 of the 839 grant applications received in 1989. The network also adopted its programme for 1989/90: analysis of subsidy requests (sectoral and regional analyses in the context of women's employment needs and the situations in the Member States); consolidation and development of the work of the national networks (ties with other local and/or Community programmes such as ERGO-research and action Programme against long-term unemployment); evaluation of the LEI programme (study entrusted to the LEI Centre, Belgium); and a newsletter on women's businesses (CREW). The next meeting, which will be devoted in large part to the LEI programme evaluation, will be held in April.

*Coordinator: Caroline Turner, Dim Chrissoulidi 3, Panorama, GR-Thessaloniki*

■ The Working Group of Consultants Promoting **Positive Action in Industry** met on 18 December. The meeting opened with two talks on positive action, one by an Irish consultant on positive action from a legal standpoint and the other by a Belgian consultant stressing positive action in industry (notably through collective bargaining). The working group then defined the strategies to be implemented under the third Equal Opportunities Action Programme, especially the question of strengthening the legal provisions encouraging positive actions (currently there is only a Recommendation). The group stressed that such actions could have great leverage and hoped that they would also occur at a high level. Once again, the consultants said that future work should be carried out in coordination with the Commission's other networks and expert groups.

*Contact: Michèle Teirlinck, Equal Opportunities Unit, Commission of the European Communities.*

■ The Experts' Network on the **Diversification of Vocational Choices** met on 11-12 January 1990. In view of the Equal Opportunities third Action Programme and in the interests of greater efficiency, the network redefined more precisely its tasks and scope for action. It will focus on girls' transition from secondary school to professional and higher education and vocational training. It will also pinpoint the categories of women "at risk" from the Single Market process to improve the occupational status of women. The network will propose actions to overcome the obstacles it uncovers. This research should complement the research currently underway by the **Women in the Labour Force** network concentrating on a typical and precarious jobs (women in rural areas, helping spouses, etc.). The network will also try to promote and implement positive action to improve the diversification of women's vocational choices.

These activities will revolve around the new **IRIS** network (European network of vocational training schemes for women). Future work will be conducted in close collaboration with IRIS.

*Coordinator: Evelyne Sullerot, Boulevard Saint Michel 95, F-75005 Paris.*

■ The Commission has decided to increase its support for vocational training programmes for women. A string of new developments will be launched in 1990 — above and beyond the work already planned under IRIS — in order to improve women's chances to benefit from vocational training. A number of grants will be made available to IRIS members to contact and set up partnerships with other programmes or to find more established programmes to sponsor them. A number of pilot projects will also receive financing to put together a publicity package. An electronic mail system to improve the flow of information and ensure the use of up-to-date communications methods will be set up gradually. Three Member States (Germany, Belgium and the United Kingdom) will participate in this system in 1990, which will link up the Commission, the IRIS Unit and national representatives and members of the IRIS network.

## STUDIES AND RESEARCH

■ The Equal Opportunities Unit has launched a series of studies to prepare the Community's Third Equal Opportunities Action Programme (1990-95). These studies will cover the **impact of new technology on women's health, the mobility of women working in Europe and women and aid for the elderly and disabled**. There are two evaluation reports underway: one to **assess positive actions**, the other to **assess local employment initiatives** (LEIs) for women.

These studies should be completed by the end of 1990 and later published. When they become available, the **Women of Europe Newsletter** will not fail to announce them.

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 Congratulations to Claire Mandouze, head of the Equal Opportunities Unit, on the birth of her daughter. During her maternity leave, Michèle Teirlinck will be in charge of the Equal Opportunities Unit.

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## COMMUNITY SEMINAR UNDER THE PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

■ The Commission holds a seminar on equal opportunities during each Member State's Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This is done in conjunction with the government holding the Presidency. The two previous seminars were on positive action (held in November 1988 in Athens under the Greek Presidency) and evaluating the Community's equality policy (held in Toledo in April 1989 under the Spanish Presidency).

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**Occupational and family strategies of women** in the EC was the theme of the Community seminar held in Paris on 27-28 November 1989 in conjunction with the French Presidency. The seminar clearly showed that while an increasing number of women have jobs, few actually pursue "careers". The persistent obstacles they face to gain qualifications, promotion and real equality of treatment become evident. Ms Vayssade, a socialist member of the European Parliament, invited at the seminar, said new laws on social protection were necessary. Decisions must be taken on atypical-work and homework, parental leave, childcare (not forgetting care of the elderly and disabled), protection of pregnancy and maternity and on equal treatment of migrants.

Although improving the quality of women's work was important, participants agreed that changes also had to take place in mentalities and public services. Ms André, the French Secretary of State responsible for women's rights, said she wanted to see a wider competence in this field. She proposed a special European Council on Women's rights.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**T**he brochure **Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities — the European Community and Women**, already available in French, has just been published in four other Community languages - Danish, Greek, Dutch and Portuguese. The remaining language versions will be out soon. This brochure gives an overview of the Community's equal opportunities policies and a list of useful addresses at Community and national levels.

**Women and Statistics** is the subject of the new **Women of Europe Supplement** (No. 30, December 1989). The supplement gives statistics covering different aspects of women's lives, e.g., demography, employment, working hours, unemployment, education and training. It contains a special section on women's political representation (women members of the national parliaments and European Parliament). These statistics are illustrated by a wealth of graphs and

tables. The supplement is available in English only for the time being. The French version, followed by the other languages, should be available shortly.

*Women's Information Service, Directorate General for Information, Communication and Culture, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels, Tel.: (32.2) 235.78.76.*

## EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

**E**leven programmes will be implemented in Portugal in 1990-93 with the help of 822.6 million ECUs from the European Social Fund (ESF). These programmes concern training and hiring measures for young people, the long-term unemployed, women, migrant workers and the disabled. The programmes concerning women aim to develop and broaden the occupational skills of long-term unemployed women (2 programmes) and young jobless women (2 programmes) in order to improve their employment prospects. Special attention will be paid to women who have the greatest difficulty in finding jobs.

These operational programmes come under the direction of the Ministry of Employment. The work will be supervised by special committees composed of the relevant organisations and including the European Commission.

*Information: European Social Fund, Mr. Portugal, Ms Moura or Ms Fautoso, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*

## SOCIAL CHARTER

**T**he Heads of State and Government of the European Community meeting in Strasbourg on 8-9 December adopted the **Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights**. The Charter, which has the political value of an official declara-

tion, sets out the broad principles of social and industrial rights. Within the framework of the Internal Market, it aims to ensure improvements in the social sphere, notably with regard to the freedom of movement, living and working conditions, health and safety at work, social protection, and the education and training of workers. Drawn up by the European Commission after consultations with the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and Employers and trade union organisations, the draft Charter was submitted to the Council of Ministers, which added its own amendments before adopting the final text.

Implementing the right of the Charter falls on the Member States and on the European Community — within the limits of its powers. As a result, the Commission drew up an Action Programme (see **Women of Europe Newsletter No. 5**) which covers only some of the points raised in some of the articles of the Charter. The European Commission may propose Directives or Regulations only insofar as Community legislation appears necessary to complete the social dimension of the Internal Market.

The Social Charter contains an article on equal treatment between men and women (Article 16), which reads as follows:

*"Equal treatment for men and women must be assured. Equal opportunities for men and women must be developed. To this end, action should be intensified wherever necessary to ensure the implementation of the principle of equality between men and women as regards in particular access to employment, remuneration, working conditions, social protection, education, vocational training and career development."*

*Measures should also be developed enabling men and women to reconcile their occupational and family obligations."*



## SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

**World agriculture at the dawn of the 21st century**, São Paulo, Brazil, 5-9 February 1990. Sixth world congress of young farmers held by the European Confederation of Young Farmers (ECYF) and the Young Farmers of Brazil (JA-Brazil) association. The European Commission's Women's Information Service financed the participation of some 20 women farmers from Europe. On display in São Paulo for the occasion will be the photographic exhibition "Women Seen by Women" organised by the Caracas-based European Community's Information Office for Latin America following a competition on this theme (see **Women of Europe Newsletter No. 5**).

*Information: CEJA/ECYF, 23-25 rue de la Science, B-1040 Brussels, Tel.: (32.2) 230.39.45; Fax: (32.2) 230.40.46.*

**Women and the Labour Market: the impact of the Single Market**, Dublin, 14-16 February. The seminar is being organised by the Irish Department of Labour with the support of the Equal Opportunities Unit. It will be opened by Mr. Ahern, Ireland's Labour Minister, and closed by Ms M. Geoghan-Quinn, Irish Minister for European and Women's Affairs. The programme includes discussion on the challenge of creating a Social Europe and how to achieve it in a number of sectors (textiles and clothing, banking and financial services, and electronics); atypical work and specific categories; and, finally, positive action experiences.

*Information: Department of Labour, Davitt House, Mespel Road, IRL-Dublin 4.*

## PUBLICATIONS

**Diversification of the Vocational Choices of Young Women and Women**, summary report by Evelyne Sullerot, October 1989, V/2209/89-EN. Overview of the Network on the Diversification of Vocational Choices giving a general description of the network's role and the specificity of its task. The report includes a "hit parade" of the best measures taken in this area over the last five years and a review of positive actions taken in the Member States. The report ends with proposals for action and recommendations to improve the diversification of vocational choices. The report is also available in French.

*Information: Equal Opportunities Unit, Directorate General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*

**Directory of community institutions and organisations, CEDEFOP Flash No. 4/89**, November 1989. This directory, which consists of different sections, uses a simplified presentation to provide useful information for all those who work in the area of vocational training: Community institutions and organisations; international bodies; workers' organisations; employers' organisations; and European associations, foundations, and institutes involved in vocational training. Available in German, English, Spanish, French and Italian.

*Information: CEDEFOP, Bundesallee 22, D-1000 Berlin 15, Tel.: (49.30) 88.41.20.*

**Analysis of the literature on the politico-economic consequences of 1992**, December 1987-December 1989, P. Goybet, II/424/89-EN. Also available in French.

*Information: Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*

**Commission Communication Concerning its Action Programme relating to the implementation of the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights For Workers**, 29.11.89, COM(89)568 final, ISBN 92-77-55489-4. Available in the Community's nine official languages from the **Official Publications**

**Office of the European Communities, L-2985 Luxembourg.**

**1992: Social Dimension:** This folder, which is designed as a teaching tool, consists of a set of information sheets on work underway connected with the European social dimension. It lists documents, decisions and action programmes, complete with references to the main Community texts (including a number of European Parliament Resolutions and Economic and Social Committee Opinions), and reviews the progress made by the "social dialogue".

*Information: Trade Union and Social Information Unit, Directorate General for Information, Communication and Culture, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.*


### New IRIS publications:

**1990 Network Directory:** This reference publication lists the 201 women's training programmes in the IRIS network by sector and type of training. It also contains several indexes, illustrated with maps and graphs, and is published in the form of a loose-leaf binder to allow regular updates. Available in the nine official languages of the European Community.

**Southern Europe and women: better training for increased participation in the Single Market**, report of the transnational seminar ending the IRIS network's first year of work, held in Athens on 8-10 November 1989. Available in English, French and Greek.

**IRIS Bulletin No. 4:** news on vocational training for women in Europe. Available in English and French.

*Information: IRIS Unit, CREW, 38 rue Stévin, B-1040 Brussels, Tel.: (32.2) 230.51.58/230.58.37; Fax: (32.2) 230.62.30.*




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