

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

THE SOCIAL DIMENSION
OF 1992

THREE DIRECTIVES ON ATYPICAL WORK

The Commission of the European Communities has laid important foundation stones in the context of the Social Action Programme on the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights. On 13th June, it adopted three proposals for directives on part-time, temporary and other forms of atypical work.

Equal working conditions

The aim of the first proposal for a directive is to provide part-time and temporary workers with the same working conditions as full-time workers and those with indefinite contracts. Equality of conditions concerns both access to vocational training and the social services offered by the enterprise, and the benefits in kind or in cash paid under a social assistance or non-contributive social security system. Employers would also be required to take account of part-time and temporary workers when calculating the thresholds beyond which they are required to establish representative staff associations within their enterprises. In enterprises with more than 1000 employees, a regular survey of the number of positions of this kind would be made. The directive also states that the employers should inform these workers of full-time recruitment possibilities in the enterprise.

Equal social welfare benefits

The second proposal for a directive is aimed at approximating the provisions of the Member States as regards certain labour relations producing distortions of competition between enterprises. It would oblige employers to pay social contributions on behalf of temporary and part-time



WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

NEWS
ON THE EQUALITY POLICY
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Dear readers,

Although atypical work is widespread (it concerns 24 million people in the Community, a majority of whom are women), it has not yet been dealt with in protective regulations such as those governing normal work.

With a view to making good this shortcoming, the European Commission adopted three proposals for directives on part-time, temporary and other forms of atypical work in June in the context of the Social Action Programme for the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Social Rights. It is hoped that these proposals will ensure the same working conditions, social welfare benefits and improvements in health and safety for atypical employees as for other employees.

In the same spirit, and after several studies, reports and seminars had examined the impact of the Single Market on the employment of women, the Commission recently reacted quite promptly by agreeing to a set of initiatives to promote measures on employment, one of which is aimed specifically at women. With NOW (New Opportunities for Women), the aim is to ensure better integration of women into the labour market, for instance by means of advanced vocational training. At a time when statistics are revealing that unemployment among women has increased in recent years, and that the employment of women is not yet properly used either from the quantitative or qualitative points of view, these initiatives demonstrate the Community's determination to add a social dimension to the Single Market.

Fausta Deshormes La Valle

employees; they would also have the right to annual leave, seniority and redundancy compensation, in proportion to that granted to full-time employees and those with indefinite contracts, and in proportion to the period during which they have been working.

The proposal also intends to restrict renewals of temporary contracts. Employers should consult the employees' representatives before making use of such contracts.

Improvement in health and safety

Temporary employees must be able to benefit from the same health and safety conditions at the workplace as other employees.

The third proposal contains an obligation to inform temporary employees of any risks and to provide them, if necessary, with adequate training. Temporary workers may not be used for work which requires long-term medical monitoring.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN

To make full use of human resources in the Community, the European Commission has decided to launch a set of initiatives aimed at promoting employment and vocational training measures.

The "NOW" initiative (New Opportunities for Women), aimed specifically at women, is one of three new programmes which have been granted preliminary approval by the Commission. With a budget of 120 million ECUs, the programme is intended to guarantee equal treatment between men and women, to ensure the latter will benefit from the economic and technological consequences of the Single Market. Based on the view that women are a potential source of human resources which so far has been underused, the aim is to improve training and employment opportunities for women.

This initiative is part of a broader programme proposed by the Commission. It also includes "EUROFORM" (new jobs and professions), and "HORIZON" (to promote the social and vocational integration of handicapped and underprivileged people into the labour market). The Commission must first obtain the agreement of the European parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the European Social Fund

... Committee (main source of financing).

Once approved, the Member States and the organisations concerned will have six months to make the projects operational.

EMPLOYMENT IN EUROPE

The second Commission report on Employment in Europe was presented on 5th July by Ms Vasso Papandreou, Employment and Social Affairs European Commissioner. The report notes a significant increase in the number of jobs, which should continue in the coming years. Between 1985 and 1988, approximately 5 million jobs were created, 60% of which (3 million) were occupied by women, 40% of which were part-time jobs.

Unemployment

The unemployment trend is changing. Although it currently affects 8.5% of the active population, the drop in the number of people unemployed is not, however, proportional to the increase in new jobs. Between 1985 and 1988, one job out of every eight was occupied by an unemployed person. In the same period, the number of unemployed men fell by about 1 million units while that of women increased by 350,000. Moreover, the number of long-term unemployed people increased considerably, the percentage of the long-term unemployed (more than two years) rising from 23% in 1983 to 35% in 1988. Seven million people (5% of the active population) have been unemployed for more than one year.

Under-employment of women

In every Member State, the growth in real salaries has been curbed and unitary salary costs have continued to drop. The gap between the salaries paid to women and men is still considerable.

In the Community as a whole, men receive 25% more than women in manual industrial trades. In some Member States, women are paid 85% (Denmark and Italy) or even 70% (Ireland and the United Kingdom) of the hourly rate paid to men.

Although women occupy 38% of total jobs in the Community, they are often employed in atypical jobs and under less favourable conditions than for men. 28% of women work part-time, although a large percentage of these would prefer to work full-time.

Similarly, a large number of women are engaged in temporary work, often because they have no other choice.

Women are still employed in a limited number of jobs, professions and sectors, which reinforces the precariousness of their situation on the labour market.

It is estimated that there are 21 million European women outside the labour market, who are registered neither on the labour market nor on the unemployment register.

Only 50% of women with children work. Obstacles to employment are much more serious for women than for men, and the report underlines the fact that it is vital to improve vocational training opportunities and to provide suitable infrastructure (child-care facilities, transport, coordination between working hours and school hours, parental and family leave arrangements, etc.).

Commissioner Papandreou, who acknowledged that these observations were already contained in the previous report, believes that the governments of the Community Member States must make additional efforts to improve employment.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee will meet in Brussels on 4th and 5th September to complete the preparations for the Third Action Programme (1991-1995) which should be adopted by the Commission this autumn. The Advisory Committee will be asked for its opinion on the draft Action Programme and also on a proposal for a directive on the rights of pregnant women at work. Ms Papandreou, Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner, will attend the meeting. On 5th September, the coordinators of the European networks are invited to take part in the discussion on the role, function and future of the various networks and working groups set up by the Equal Opportunities Unit.

NETWORK NEWS

The **child-care network** met in Brussels on 2nd July. It stressed the need for quantifiable information on the current needs and facilities available in each Member State. Following the hearing held a few days beforehand by the Parlia-

mentary Committee on Women's Rights (see "European Parliament" section), the network reaffirmed the importance of the Commission's proposal for a recommendation on child-care, and stressed the essential points which, in its opinion, should be included in this recommendation, such as: equal access to child-care infrastructure, irrespective of income, geographical zones and specific needs with provision of good quality services; the important role of the public authorities to ensure quality; the identification of objectives connected with the specific situation of the Member States; the role of the European Commission in supporting infrastructure (particularly through the Structural Funds); the importance of training skilled people to take care of children.

Reviewing the technical seminars organised this year (see **Women of Europe Newsletter no. 5**), the network declared itself satisfied with this initiative, and announced that the results would be published together with a summary of the main conclusions and recommendations.

Finally, the network would like to extend its contacts with other European groups and networks working in related areas, such as the European network for school-children.

Coordinator: Peter Moss, Thomas Coram Research Unit, University of London, 41 Brunswick Square, UK-London WC1N 1AN.

SEMINARS

The Equal Opportunities Unit supported the second annual symposium of **Women Managers** in Greece, held in Athens on 11th June. Two major themes were at the centre of the debates: the image of women managers and the position of enterprises vis-à-vis them. After hearing a representative of the Equal Opportunities Unit speak about positive action as one of the priorities in the Third Action Programme, several enterprises attending the symposium declared that they were willing to introduce positive action plans within their respective organisations.

Contact: Michèle Teirlinck, Equal Opportunities Unit

Women and the completion of the Single Market: this was the topic of a

...
 three-day seminar (from 13th to 15th June) organised in Utrecht by the Women's Secretariat of the National Dutch Trade Union Federation (FNV) in collaboration with the Vrouwenbond, and with the support of the European Commission (Equal Opportunities Unit). Working groups on employment, child-care, the role of the trade unions and atypical work brought together a number of women trade unionists in this residential seminar, the first of its kind.

Women of Europe and 1992 was also the topic discussed by the Mediterranean Institute of Feminist Studies (KEGME) at a seminar organised in Navissos (Greece) from 25th to 30th June, supported by the European Commission. Attended by 150 people, the seminar dealt with the employment and training of women, the family code, etc. Recommendations in the form of a memorandum on the special problems confronting Greek and Mediterranean women with regard to the completion of the Single Market were published after the seminar.

Contact: *Pauline Jackson Conroy, Equal Opportunities Unit.*

The second national 1990 seminar of the IRIS network (European network of training schemes for women) was held at Clermont Ferrand (France) on 28th and 29th June on the theme "Training for women: a strategic instrument for the enterprise and society".

Attended by political decision-makers, representatives of both sides of industry and people in charge of training, it highlighted the qualification requirements for women and the need to integrate these into the modernisation process of enterprises.

Ms Marie-Claude Vayssade, member of the European Parliament, and Ms Michèle André, Secretary of State for Women's Rights (France) attended the seminar, which was preceded by a national day of assessment for the representatives of the French member programmes of the IRIS network.

Contact: *Michèle Teirlinck, Equal Opportunities Unit.*

Japan Conference

In July, the Japanese Institute of Labour invited a representative of the Equal Opportunities Unit to give a

talk on Community policies on equal opportunities for men and women. For a week, Evelyn Collins gave a series of conferences and speeches on the directives and regulations concerning equality, the positive action measures, the development in the status of women in the European Community and the first two action programmes on equal opportunities. Political circles and women's associations were very interested in this, as were the press which reported the Community information widely.

A law on equal opportunities in employment was passed in Japan in 1986. At the Ministry of Labour, a women's office with a substantial number of staff carries out considerable work aimed at encouraging employers to become familiar with and to introduce the measures laid down in the 1986 law.

It should be pointed out that this is not the first time that the Japanese authorities and women's associations have shown interest in Community action in favour of equal opportunities. Two representatives of the Women's Information Service took part in information seminars in Japan in the past: Hilde Albertini in 1987 and Paula Laissy more recently in November 1989.

Contact: *Evelyn Collins, Equal Opportunities Unit.*

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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

1990 Nike prize: The European Commission has just announced the membership of the Jury which will choose the best television programmes presented in each of the three categories of the Prize which will be awarded in Athens next November. The jury consists of the following members:

Documentaries: Chairperson: Ms Geneviève Guicheney (F), member of the Higher Audiovisual Council. Members: Ms Christine Crawley (UK), Member of the European Parliament; Ms Helge Reidemeister (D), producer; Ms Vasso Kanellopoulou (G), national Greek television; Mr Josep V.

Marques (E), journalist and Ms Gemma Hussey (Irl), former Minister of Education and journalist.

Fiction/entertainment: Chairperson: Ms Tonia Marketaki (G), producer. Members: Mr Eckart Stein (D), from the ZDF national television channel; Ms Irene Bignardi (I), journalist; Ms Kit Graas (L), from the RTL-Plus television channel; Ms Natalia Correia (P), member of the Portuguese National Assembly; Ms Eliane Victor (F), journalist and television producer.

Programmes for children and teenagers: Chairperson: Ms Anna Home (UK), BBC journalist and member of the UERT. Members: Mr Henrik Antonsen (DK), director of television at Danmark Radio; Ms Lea Martel (B) from the BRT; Ms Lolo Rico (E), head of a production company for programmes for young people; Ms Paolo de Benedetti (I) from RAI 2 and Ms Sinie Strikwerda (NL), member of the NOS programme council.

More than 20 television organisations form the Member States are taking part in this second edition of the NIKE Prize (the first took place in 1988): Antenne 2 (F), ARD (D), BBC (UK), BRT (B), Channel Four (UK), Danmark Radio (DK), ERT (G), FININVEST (I), Forta (E), FR3 (F), ITVA (UK), La Sept (F), NOS (NL), RAI (I), RTBF (B), RTE (IRL), RTO (P), RTVE (E), TF1 (F), TV2 (DK), ZDF (D).

EUROPEAN LOBBY

The first General Meeting of the **European Women's Lobby** will be held in Brussels on 21st, 22nd and 23rd September. During the Meeting, a vote will be taken on the statutes and the Executive Bureau for this new pressure group will be appointed. Numerous women's associations are represented and will also take part in adopting the work programme. It was in 1987 at a European Colloquium organised by the Women's Information Service of the European Commission, that it was decided to set up a pressure group to represent and promote the interests of women in the Community through dialogue with the European institutions.

Women's Information Service, Directorate General for Information, Communication and Culture, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

RESOLUTION ON ATYPICAL WORK

At its plenary session on 10th July, the Parliament adopted by a large majority a resolution on an initiative (the first of its kind, see **Women of Europe Newsletter no. 10**) submitted by Mrs Heinke Salisch (Soc, Germany) on atypical work. This resolution, important in the context of the Social Charter, is particularly so for women, 45 million of whom work in the European Community, mainly in precarious, part-time or temporary jobs.

The resolution proposes an approximation of national provisions aimed at ensuring that people engaged in atypical work will have guarantees such as social welfare benefits, consultation and training rights, remuneration and the social guarantees connected with "the position of subordinate people".

According to the resolution, atypical work will have to be the subject of a written contract during recruitment, and equal treatment compared with full-time employees must be guaranteed.

This concerns in particular health and safety, working hours, remuneration, paid leave and leave for training, access to vocational training and promotion, conditions governing eligibility and dismissal, etc.

The resolution considers that no employee can be forced to accept this type of work.

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

At its meeting on 25th and 26th June, the Committee on Women's Rights held a public hearing on **child-care**. A comparative table of the situation in the Member States was presented by national experts, who demonstrated the proportional relationship between the level of women's employment and child-care facilities. The debate highlighted the need to consider this matter as a social problem rather than a

typically female problem. Moreover, the experts were unanimous that the question of child-care had an economic dimension, and that account should be taken of the fact that women constitute a key resource on the labour market. The quality of services and the skills of the people working there, the social and psychological roles of child-care structures, financing, the organisation of working hours for parents and the importance of parental leave were also discussed.

The Chairperson of the Committee on Women's Rights, Ms Christine Crawley (Soc, UK), pointed out that the Committee was going to propose a framework directive on child-care.

Budget

After hearing the contribution by Mr Alain Lamassoure (LDR, France on the items in the 1991 Community budget the Committee indicated the points it would like to see included in the budget.

For instance, the Structural Funds should provide for specific budget headings for action in favour of women, major budgetary backing should be given to the Third Action Programme, a special item should be included for the child-care issue, and the budget and staff of the Women's Information Services should be substantially increased.

The Committee then unanimously adopted the report by Ms Anne Hermans (PPE, Belgium) on the Commission Communication on its **action programme on the implementation of the Social Charter**; the one by Ms Dagmar Roth-Behrendt (Soc, Germany) on **the living and working conditions of women in the GDR and the consequences of this in a unified Germany within the EEC**; and finally that of Ms Barbara Schmidbauer (Soc, Germany) on the **239/87 petition on equality between men and women**.

European Parliament, 97-113 rue Belliard, B-1040 Brussels.

AGENDA

Training for women and enterprises with a view to 1992, Brussels, 15th, 16th and 17th October. Closing the second year of IRIS existence (European network of training schemes for women), this seminar will be both national for Belgium (15th and 16th October) and transnational (16th and 17th October) for France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. Information: IRIS Unit, CREW, 38 rue Stévin, B-1040 Brussels.

PUBLICATIONS

Women's local employment initiatives in the European Community, V/888/90-EN, Caroline Turner. This report, prepared by the coordinator of the European network on local employment initiatives for women (ILE), comes in two parts: the first part describes the sources of support for local employment initiatives for women in the Member States (training, information and advisory services, financing, etc.), and provides two recommendations in this connection. The second part deals with the development of ILEs in the European Community, the problems women encounter in managing their companies and measures to promote the setting up of companies by women. The original version is in English; a French translation is currently being prepared.

Catalogue of documents available, Equal Opportunities Unit, June 1990, V/1860/2/88-FR. This catalogue lists the research and publications produced for the Equal Opportunities Unit, and also contains an index of authors and subjects.

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