

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

PRIORITIES OF THE DUTCH PRESIDENCY IN THE SOCIAL AFFAIRS AREA

On 11 September, the Dutch Social Affairs Minister, Mr de Vries, presented the Presidency's priorities in the social affairs area to the social affairs section of the Economic and Social Committee (ESC). (Readers are reminded that the Presidency of the European Community is held in rotation by a different Member State every six months). Mr de Vries indicated that the Dutch Presidency had accepted the "Luxembourg heritage" as its starting point for future negotiations. In the area of social affairs, however, the Dutch government attaches a certain importance to the subsidiarity principle and believes that the role of the ESC needs to be consolidated and strengthened. The protection of pregnant women at work, working hours and European Works Councils, are some of the priorities confirmed by the Dutch Government, although Mr de Vries said that it will be difficult to achieve agreement on the directive concerning the protection of pregnant women.



THE FIGHT AGAINST CANCER

As part of the "Europe against Cancer" programme, a European week was devoted, from 7 to 13 October 1991, to the early detection of cancers, in particular female cancers. The campaign message is clear: a larger number of cancers will be cured if detected and treated at an earlier stage.

The first European network of pilot projects for the early detection of breast cancer was set up in 1989 and will be followed by a similar network for cervical cancer. Women are quick to respond to the recommendations



WOMEN OF EUROPE NEWSLETTER

NEWS ON THE EQUALITY POLICY OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

*"LET'S SAVE LIVES BY EARLY DETECTION OF CANCER"*¹

Prevention is offering interesting perspectives. Some 75% of cancers are lifestyle-related: tobacco, alcohol, diet. The suppression of tobacco alone could reduce cancer deaths by one third (all ages combined). And theoretically, by following the rules of the European code against cancer, cancer deaths could be halved. However, it would be unrealistic to expect this to come about during the next one or two generations. Habits such as the use of tobacco and alcohol are deeply rooted in our civilization and several generations will be necessary to achieve such a result.

The potential gain of early diagnosis is more modest, but it can be achieved rapidly and independently of scientific progress and changes in life styles. Numerous studies have shown a strategy of early diagnosis to be effective in combatting breast cancer and cancer of the cervix. For both these cancers, examinations are available which are free of danger, inexpensive and which permit diagnosis at a very early stage. For other cancers such as those of the colon and rectum, research results are very encouraging and we can look forward to effective early detection methods being available within just a few years. Until then, only breast and cervical cancer justify large-scale early detection programmes.

Experience on a world scale has already taught us that, even in these cases, a saving in human lives can be obtained only if the early detection programme is carried out rigorously, with the acceptance and support of both doctors and the public. It is essential that a high portion (at least 60%) of the female population participate. Failing this, the programme is doomed to failure. In the same way, by providing mass detection programmes, States enter into a moral contract with the populations concerned and guarantee the quality of the detection methods. If properly managed, early detection programmes could, once running at full capacity, save 20,000 lives a year in European Community.

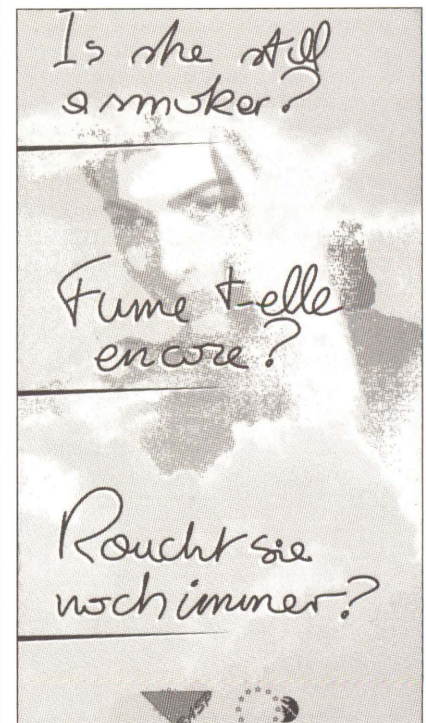
*Monique de Kleber-Gruener.
Europe Against Cancer Programme.*

¹ Based on a text by Professor TUBIANA for the "4th Europe Against Cancer Week".

of the European Code against Cancer (regular breast examinations, mammographies etc.). However, they must also be made aware of other points contained in the code, which apply to both sexes, such as consulting a doctor if a lump appears or in the case of abnormal bleeding, hoarseness or a persistent cough, unexplained loss of weight, etc.

Since its "Europe against Cancer" programme, which started in 1985, the European Community has become active in new areas and with new strategies. Moving beyond protection against radiation and the prevention of work-related cancers, Community policy now covers prevention, health education, and the training of health personnel, in a long-term perspective aimed at the year 2000, making use of partnerships and including the preparation of a European Code for combatting cancer. The Second Action Plan (1990-1994) focuses on the links between cancer and diet, on early detection, health education in schools and support for pilot training projects.

A complete issue of **Social Europe** (1/91) is devoted to Europe against Cancer and public health. A report on women and tobacco "**Is She still a smoker?**" has just come out, published by the European Bureau for Action on Smoke Prevention.



Information: Régis Malbois "Europe Against Cancer" Programme, Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels. Tel: (32.2) 235.17.42.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities met in Brussels on 7 and 8 October. After being informed of recent developments and work on equal opportunities at Community level, the Committee proceeded to exchange information on recent developments in Member States. It then discussed the implementation of the Community's NOW (New Opportunities for Women) initiative, as well as of the Third Action Programme for Equal Opportunities. The Committee also presented the conclusions of the working group, which met in September, and highlighted the following items: the desire for closer cooperation between the Advisory Committee and the Networks set up by the Equal Opportunities Unit; the need for more information; and the suggestion of creating an interdepartmental group of senior officials in each Directorate-General in order to ensure the application of "mainstreaming". The Committee addressed a letter to Ms Papandreou, the European Commissioner for Social Affairs, on the situation of the maternity directive. The Committee expressed great concern on the state of negotiations within the Council and urged the European Commission to unblock what is an extremely important directive: there are 52 million women in work within the Community, 80% of whom are of child-bearing age. The Committee demands that minimum standards be set for protecting the health and safety at work of women who are pregnant or who have just given birth. Finally, the Committee elected Ms Joanna Foster (United Kingdom) as new President of the Committee and Ms Renata Lampsa (Greece) as Vice-President. Ms Foster will replace Ms Regina Tavares da Silva (Portugal) whom the Committee thanked warmly for her excellent work during her term of office.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES NETWORKS AND WORKING GROUPS

In August, the Equal Opportunities Unit launched a call for tenders for the management of Expert Networks to assist in the implementation and development of policies under the Third Medium-Term Community Action Pro-

gramme (1991-1995) for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. These networks were set up under the Second Action Programme (1986-1990) (see **Women of Europe Newsletter no. 15**). The Commission is currently examining offers received relating to:

- a Network of Experts on the **application of "Equal Opportunities" directives**, to collaborate with the Commission on the application of the directives and on the developments of legislation in the area of equal opportunities;
- a Steering Committee for **Equal Opportunities in Television and Radio** in order to promote the improvement of women's position in the media industry;
- a Network of Experts to develop, monitor and assess child care services and other provisions permitting a **reconciliation of professional and family responsibilities**;
- a Network of Experts on **women and decision-making** in order to analyze the obstacles encountered by women in the decision-making process in management and administrative functions, trade unions and teaching;
- a Network of Experts to look at the management of **local employment creation** projects;
- a Network of Experts to undertake research into women's situation on the **employment market** and to develop proposals for guidelines to promote their integration into this market.

Offers submitted to the Commission are currently being analyzed. The names of the coordinators and/or experts selected for these networks will be published during the autumn. Contracts will run for one year from the end of 1991, renewable until 1995, the completion date of the Third Action Programme. The **Women of Europe Newsletter** will of course publish immediately any news on the renewal of these networks.

NOW: New Opportunities for Women

On 13 September, the Commission started a series of bi-lateral meetings as part of the implementation of the Community's NOW (New Opportunities for Women) initiative. These meetings, which bring together national managers and managers from the European Commission and the European Social Fund, set out to analyze the operating programmes

presented by Member States, which include the priority activities chosen in the area of women's training and support for enterprise creation by women, between 1991-1993, the dates of application for the NOW programme. Following these meetings, the Commission should, around November, give its agreement to Member States, which will then be able to decide which transnational partnership projects to finance.

Contact: *Margarida Pinto, Equal Opportunities Unit or Celia Alexopoulou, NOW Coordinator, European Social Fund, Commission of the European Communities, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049.*

TENET - Equal opportunities in education

A conference organized from 7 to 10 September 1991 at the University of Limerick (Ireland) rounded off the third year of the TENET research-action programme and provided an opportunity for disseminating the conclusions and material produced by 32 projects in 10 countries. The conference examined problems of education policies, initial and continuing teacher training, changes in behaviour patterns and equal opportunities at every level of teaching, including secondary and university teaching.

Contact: *Helle Jacobsen, Equal Opportunities Unit.*

Single women, a growing minority in Europe

The Equal Opportunities Unit has just published the results of research into the socio-economic situation of single women in Europe. This is a first, since up till now very little information has existed on this group of women, which represents between 12 and 17% of the population of the European Community. This is a very varied group, by age (from young women to old.), status (unmarried, mothers with children, divorcees, widows) and social and economic situation (migrant women, economically active, out of work, and taking career breaks). The study looks at the demographic development, education, employment, provision for dependents, taxation, the fight against poverty, etc. The report is currently available in English and translations into French and German are being prepared.

Equality in the media

The Steering Committee for Equal Opportunities in Television and Radio, set up under the Second Action Programme for Equal Opportunities (1986-1990), has just published a brochure containing ideas and suggestions for positive action based on the assessment of experience gathered from the major European radio and television bodies. This brochure, in the form of a practical guide, is available in the nine official languages of the European Community and can be obtained from the Equal Opportunities Unit or the Women's Information Service.

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.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

European Women's Lobby

The Lobby Bureau met on 7 and 8 September to prepare the 18 October General Meeting. The main subjects on the agenda of the General Assembly were the promotion of women to decision-making positions as well as the situation of migrant women and ethnic minorities within the European Communities, two themes which figure in the work programme established last year. Further information, including the name of your national representative, a folder in the nine official Community languages, is available from: The Permanent Secretariat of the European Women's Lobby, 22 rue du Méridien, B-1030 Brussels, Tel.: (32.2)217.90.20.

Women in Hungary

The **Women of Europe Supplement** (no. 32) devoted to *Women in Hungary* was presented to the press during a reception organized jointly by H.E. the Ambassador of the Republic of Hungary to the European Communities and Ms Colette Fleisch, Director-General of Audiovisual, Information, Communication and Culture at the Commission for the European Communities.

Women's cycling: the 1991 Tour of Europe

A Dutch woman, Astrid Strop, was the first to cross the finishing line at the Hague of the 6th Tour of the European Communities 1991. Starting at Erfurt, in one of the new German Länder, this competition, supported by the European Commission, was reserved, for the second time, for women only. The event took place from 3 to 14 September across 4 Member States, Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. The fifteen teams of 6 cyclists each competed for prize money totalling some 50,000 ECU.

Next year's "Women's tour" will be held in the south of Europe, starting from Barcelona on 9 September 1992 and finishing in Italy. The tour is part of a series of sports activities and actions supported by the European Commission. Aware of the importance of sport in the life of citizens, as well as its economic importance, especially with a view to 1992, the Commission created, on 31 July 1991 a "European Sports Forum".

This structure will allow representatives of the European Commission, sports movements and Member States to meet and discuss common problems.

Information: M. De Keeper, Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General Audiovisual, Communication, Information, Culture; Public Awareness and Sport Information Unit 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels.

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

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

At its 18 September meeting, the Legal Affairs and Citizen's Rights Committee adopted the report by Nicole Fontaine (PPE,

France) on the consequences of the Court of Justice judgement on equality of salaries between men and women (case 109/88).

This report states that neither Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome stipulating equal pay for men and women, nor the subsequently adopted Directives on equality are being respected.

The report underlines that this judgement should lead Community bodies to introduce into Community law a definition of "indirect discrimination". It also asks the Council to adopt rapidly the proposed directive concerning the reversal of the burden of proof, proposed by the European Commission in May 1988 and approved by Parliament in December 1988.

The text also contains recommendations to the Commission and to Member States for them to promote initiatives aimed at changing mentalities and behaviour in order to combat continuing discrimination against women.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The Women's Rights Committee has decided to prepare a report on the situation of migrant women and ethnic minority women within the European Community. This was announced by the Committee's President, Christine Crawley (Soc, United Kingdom), following a public hearing organized in Brussels on 24 September. Christine Crawley emphasised the urgent nature of the problems encountered by immigrant women and women from ethnic minorities and the precarious nature of their situation, in particular with a view to 1992 and the rise of racism in Europe. Despite considerable discussion on immigration, the female immigrant population remains "invisible", as immigration statistics are not broken down by sex. For Mrs Crawley and many participants, it is impossible, without reliable statistics, to measure the impact of Community policies on this population, and to introduce measures to resolve their problems.

The President also regretted the weakness of the Social Charter in the area of racial discrimination and underlined the danger of "categorizing" migrants in Europe between those of Community origin and those from non-EC countries, in particular with respect to freedom of movement

...

and the right of establishment after 1992.

During the hearing, a dozen experts and representatives of immigrant associations presented specific situations in several EC countries. Throughout the Community, we are seeing a "feminization" of immigration. Until the start of the 70s, immigration involved single men coming to work, now it is often limited to family reunification. All speakers agreed in claiming separate rights for immigrant women in order to end the precariousness of their situation. Currently, an immigrant woman's residence permit must generally be requested by the spouse and is linked to his status.

Whilst the outer form changes from one State to another, the principle remains the same, with rights disappearing in the event of divorce or widowhood. If the spouse refuses to demand the residence permit, his wife can also be condemned to a clandestine existence, as a French participant highlighted.

She also condemned the "complicity" of the authorities who turn a blind eye to the return of girls to their country of origin, who have acquired host country nationality through forced marriages, but who do not receive even the minimum protection from the host State.

Clandestinity and prostitution

Another type of female immigration on the increase, as seen in Italy, is women arriving, often via religious bodies, to work as domestic servants. Isolated and unprotected, administrative regulations frequently prevent them from changing jobs and many of these young women are later found in clandestine situations and prostitution. Whatever their status, whether immigrants or from ethnic minorities, these women share common features. In all European countries, as speakers underlined, they are economically highly active, but remain stuck in highly precarious, low paid sectors. They are more likely to be unemployed. They play an essential role, in their country of origin by becoming head of the family during the husband's absence, and in the host country by their economic contribution. Education and training are two areas in which governments and the European Community should act to allow women to quit the vicious circle of non-qualified and badly remunerated jobs and unemployment and to encourage the entry into the labour market of women who have no jobs, several speakers declared.

Those responsible for this area at the European Commission reminded delegates that the Commission has not remained inactive. A number of studies have provided information on the situation of migrant women and the problems faced by girls of foreign origin or from ethnic minorities in education, whilst actions, in particular training and assistance in enterprise creation, have been integrated into programmes such as NOW.

Separate rights for spouses

A proposal which has been waiting for Council approval for two years provides for separate rights of residence for spouses. Thanks to an amendment by Parliament, a "spouse" will no longer be defined solely as the married partner, but would be the "person living habitually" with the migrant male or female worker.

In conclusion, Mrs Crawley reminded delegates that she herself was an Irish immigrant in the United Kingdom and insisted on the urgent need for Parliament to put pressure on Community authorities to improve the legal situation of women, to obtain ratification and application by Member States and the Community of various items of international legislation and to pass on the demands formulated during this hearing.

The report of the Women's Rights Committee should also insist on the following measures and actions: to obtain visibility for migrant women; to demand that their needs be taken into account in the financing of various Community actions; and giving women sufficient place in the Migrants Forum recently created by the European Commission.

The various contributions presented during the hearing will be published by the Women's Rights Committee.

Useful address: European Parliament, 97-113 rue Belliard, B-1040 Brussels, or Plateau du Kirchberg, L-1919 Luxembourg.

COURT OF JUSTICE

Sexual equality and night work

In a judgement given on 25 July, the European Court of Justice condemned Member States which forbid women from working at night, stating

that this ban was contrary to the European Directive of 1976 on the equality of men and women.

"The concern for protection which originally inspired the ban in principle on night work by women no longer appears to be founded", the Court of Justice declared, rejecting the arguments of the French and Italian Governments who believe that women should not work at night due to their family obligations and risks of aggression. The Court pointed out that the purpose of the directive was not to regulate questions of family organization or to "change the distribution of responsibilities within the couple". The Alfred Stoeckel case related to a company manager who had proposed an enterprise agreement to trade unions, introducing night work on an exceptional basis owing to the economic constraints of the time. The decision to open up all night posts to women and men had been taken by a majority vote of female personnel.

There is no European directive in this area, but the judgement should be applied in all other Member States which still ban night work. In 1990, the International Labour Organization (ILO) had already made its recommendations in this area more flexible by accepting night work where a collective agreement providing for compensation exists. (Case C-345/89).

European Court of Justice, Plateau du Kirchberg, L-2925 Luxembourg

PUBLICATIONS

"The impact of **The internal market on women's employment in the textile and clothing sectors**", **Social Europe**, supplement 2/91.

Summary report by the "Women in Employment" group of experts.

Editor in Chief:
Fausta DESHORMES LA VALLE
Head of WOMEN'S INFORMATION SERVICE

Coordination: Paula LAISSY
Commission of the European Communities,
Directorate-General for Audiovisual Information, Communication and Culture.

Rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels.
Tel. (32.2) 235.28.60