Observatory on national policies to combat social exclusion

SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

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SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

OBSERVATORY

ON NATIONAL POLICIES

TO COMBAT SOCIAL EXCLUSION

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FOREWORD

This is the second annual report of the Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion. It is based upon the national reports prepared by the members of the Observatory, independent experts who are listed below. These national reports are expected to be published during 1992.

The Observatory was created at the beginning of 1990 by the Commission of the European Communities, Directorate General V (Employment, Social Affairs and Industrial Relations). It operates under the responsibility of Division V/C/1 (Social Security and Actions in the Social Domain). The report does not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission (nor, of course, of the Member State governments).

The Observatory is also producing a set of reports concerned with social services in the various Community countries and their significance for action to combat social exclusion.

As is stressed throughout the report, the data which are properly required for our work are in many cases not available or, where they are, of only limited comparability. For better or worse, it is those countries with the most well developed data systems which are probably the most visible in our analysis: as regards both the achievements and the limitations in their policies. We do not provide, for each section of our report, a detailed inventory of the data available and the most obvious gaps; but this is an exercise which could be undertaken if necessary.

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CHAPTER 1: THE TASK OF THE OBSERVATORY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The Observatory was established early in 1990, in response to three political concerns.

First, the Council Decision which launched the new Community Programme to Foster the Integration of the Least Privileged underlined the need to improve knowledge in this field (Council of the European Communities, 1989a).

Second, the Resolution of the Council of Ministers on combating social exclusion called on the Commission to study the measures which the Member States are taking to combat social exclusion: in particular, in terms of guaranteeing aid and resources and of assisting social integration and insertion into the labour market (Council of the European Communities, 1989b). The Commission was asked, on the basis of these studies, to report to the Council within three years.

Third and more generally, the Commission was concerned with the whole range of measures which are being undertaken or supported by the Community in order to promote economic and social cohesion, in the context of the development of the Single Market. According to the declaration by the Heads of State or Government who in December 1989 adopted the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers "in a spirit of solidarity, it is important to combat social exclusion" (Commission of the European Communities, 1990a). The Action Programme by which the Commission is implementing the Charter includes a number of initiatives which give expression to this goal (Commission of the European Communities, 1989a).

1.2. THE OBSERVATORY AND THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY

The Observatory is charged with studying the efforts of the public authorities within each member state to combat social exclusion: the efforts which they make themselves, and those which they delegate to non-governmental organisations.

This work is strictly in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, under which the Community institutions undertake only those activities which, while essential to the good functioning of the Community, are beyond the scope of action at the national level alone. In

collecting comparable information, and in identifying specific policy issues for cross-national debate, the Observatory enables the Commission to discharge a task which individual national governments are much less well placed to undertake.

On the basis of these studies, the Commission will be better able to promote a transfer of know-how between the member states and an improvement in the effectiveness of their interventions. This may lead to a convergence in their national policies. Such convergence is the more likely, in so far as the social problems which member states face are similar: the social costs of an ageing population; the increasing numbers of single parent families; the trans-national portability of occupational pensions; the links between income support and re-integration into the labour market; and many others. Some of these similarities are the result of the process of European economic integration; others are the result of common social trends in our different European societies. It was in recognition of these points of similarity that the Commission, during 1991, put forward a draft recommendation on the convergence of social protection systems (Commission of the European Communities, 1991b).

However, even where there are these similarities in the social problems which different member states confront, the principle of subsidiarity, taken seriously, can be a prescription for diversity rather than convergence, except in so far as it can be shown that this diversity would have serious negative consequences for the working of the Single Market. An Observatory such as this, founded on the principle of subsidiarity, can widen the range of policy options under examination in each country and may, therefore, stimulate greater policy divergence among member states.

Finally, it is necessary to recognise that the doctrine of subsidiarity, taken seriously, also has implications for the sub-national level. Responsibility for the administration - and perhaps even the formulation - of policy should be devolved to sub-national actors as far as possible (Spicker, 1991). In this connection, it is worth noticing that the Maastricht Treaty gives stronger recognition to the role of regional authorities in EC policy-making; and the Social Accord, signed by the eleven Member States other than the UK, also reinforces the role of the social partners - the employers and unions. In this second annual report, we provide tables summarising the responsibilities of sub-national authorities and we address our report as much to them as to the national authorities.

1.3. THE ORGANISATION OF THE OBSERVATORY

The work of the Observatory requires the regular collection of information in each country of the EC: statistical and administrative data, legislative texts and regulations, research findings, etc. For this purpose, the European Commission has established a network of independent experts, who are coordinated within the framework of the programme for the least privileged ("Poverty 3") (see Box 1). The experts have prepared detailed reports on the measures undertaken in their countries to combat social exclusion, using a common framework. The present document brings their results together.

BOX 1

The reports of the independent experts reveal the precedents which exist at national level for such systems of "observation" at Community level. In France, it was the administrative decentralisation to the regions during the 1980s that made "observatories" popular; and indeed, in June 1990 a new national observatory was established, concerned with "decentralised social action". These French observatories, by revealing what developments are taking place at the local level and what strategies are being adopted by different social actors, are intended to contribute to coherence in policy planning at the national level.

Links are being built with the other elements of Poverty 3: first, and most obviously, with the various initiatives in the field of statistics and research; second, with the action projects and their efforts to "observe" changing patterns of social exclusion at the local level. No less important, Directorate V/C/1 of the Commission is coordinating the activities of this Observatory with analogous and related systems of "observation" which the Commission is sponsoring in such fields as family policy, policies for elderly people, child care, employment, social security, disability, housing, education and migration.

Close cooperation has also developed with the Social Fund in particular, which is providing financial support to the Observatory. The Observatory will therefore take a particular interest in policies which fall directly within the scope of the Fund: for example, in relation to groups which have difficulty in gaining access to, or returning to, employment and which are therefore at risk of marginalisation: young people, one-parent families, migrants, the long-term unemployed, people with disabilities and women.

Alongside the general reports which it produces on policy developments in the various member states, it is expected that the Observatory will also produce a number of more specialised studies. Thus, in 1992 reports are being produced which deal with the role of

social services in relation to social exclusion. Finally, some of the results produced by the Observatory are being used in a newsletter being produced by the Commission from this and some of the related Observatories.

1.4. THE THEORETICAL DEBATE

The notion of "social exclusion" is neither clear nor unambiguous. If it is to provide the focus for the work of this Observatory, it must:

* be given a precise theoretical content, which usefully distinguishes it from such concepts as poverty, marginalisation, etc;

* be identifiable empirically by means of well-defined indicators (in the broadest sense);

* provide a point of reference for the design and evaluation of practical interventions to combat it.

Here we define social exclusion first and foremost in relation to the social rights of citizens. Within the countries of the EC, it is generally taken for granted that each citizen has the right to a certain basic standard of living and to participate in the major social and occupational institutions of the society. This right may or may not be expressed in legal terms (see box 2); it may or may not be rooted in custom and tradition; and it may be precise or only vague in its formulation. Indeed, some statements of rights - including the EC's Social Charter - are no more than a declaration of policy that it is hoped to put into effect some day. Nevertheless, such social rights are regularly reaffirmed in policy statements at national and Community levels and they reappear in the Community legislation which provides the terms of reference for this Observatory.

BOX 2

In Portugal, the Constitutional Law of 1989 affirms such social rights as the following and places obligations on the State to ensure that these rights are realised:

Social Rights of Citizens	Obligations of the State
"Right to an employment"	Ensure this right "through economic and social policy, by the implementation of employment policy, creating equality of opportunities in the choice of an occupation ... and by the cultural, technical and vocational training of workers"
"Right to a salary ... and to material assistance when involuntarily unemployed"	Should "create and update a national minimum income"
"Right to social security"	Should "organise, coordinate and subsidise a social security system, unified and decentralised, with the participation of the trade unions and other representative bodies of workers and representative associations of other beneficiaries"
"Right to health protection"	To provide "a universal and general national health service which, taking into account the socio-economic conditions of citizens, is in principle free".
"Right to accommodation in a house with adequate size for them and their family, with conditions of hygiene and comfort which may preserve personal and domestic privacy"	Ensure this right through a "housing policy and, support to local initiatives intended to solve accomodation problems... and to stimulate private construction and access to privately owned dwellings"

Social rights are not of course the same across the twelve countries of the EC. In one country there may, for example, be a formal right to a minimum income, guaranteed by government legislation; in another, there may be no more than the general sentiment that public action is required if a citizen is destitute. Nor do rights remain the same over time. During the past century, there has in general been a steady expansion in the social rights which are formally guaranteed (see box 3). However, in recent years some governments have resorted to increased use of means-tested benefits, carrying the risk of stigma, and discretionary benefits, where the element of rights is much weaker.

BOX 3

Judicial review is one mechanism by which social rights may be expanded. Within the Irish Constitution, the only explicit social right - in the sense used in the present report - is the right to primary education. However, since the 1960s, the High Court and the Supreme Court have been creative and radical in expanding the scope of constitutional rights. This has involved the discovery by the courts of additional implicit rights within the Constitution: the right to life and bodily integrity; the right to marital privacy; the right to earn a livelihood; the right to legal aid in criminal cases. This process of discovery may not yet be at an end: debate continues as to whether implicit in the Constitution are rights to a basic standard of living; to shelter; to child benefit; and to protection against discrimination.

Social exclusion can be analysed in terms of the denial - or non-realisation - of social rights. Here the most obvious points of reference in the social scientific literature include T H Marshall's essay on citizenship and social class (Marshall, 1950). But no less significant (within the UK at least) was, for example, the pioneering work of Atkinson (1969), taking the UK government's own standards of income maintenance and examining how effective were the government's efforts as judged by these standards. An essential part of the Observatory's work must be to extend this type of analysis, studying the extent to which public authorities have been effective in implementing the citizenship rights which are implicit or explicit in their own declarations.

However, citizenship consists of more than social rights. It also includes civil and political rights (Marshall, 1950). Political rights involve the right to participate fully and effectively in processes of political decision-making. These rights are at the centre of current debates about the "democratic deficit" in the EC institutions. Exclusion from political rights often goes hand in hand with other forms of exclusion. Political rights will, however, be included in the present report only in so far as they are directly linked to our analysis of social exclusion.

Civil rights - the right to buy and sell freely within the market place - are no less relevant (Marshall, 1950). For market freedoms not only dominate the system of production in EC countries; they also, and in some countries to an increasing extent, pervade the welfare system. Within the welfare system, the attempt to guarantee social rights can be in tension with the civil right of market freedom. But again, such rights will be included in the present report only in so far as they are directly linked to our analysis of social exclusion.

To speak of exclusion suggests restrictions on access, whether these are intended or not. But citizens may fail to make use of their rights because of their own incapacities or, indeed,

by deliberate choice. Where incapacity or choice result from previous exclusions - from education, from information, etc - then they can be counted as a denial of access. But it is necessary to identify the specific mechanisms that have operated.

Here, of course, comparative study of different national systems can be particularly illuminating. For within individual countries, efforts have been - and are being - made to identify and remove these mechanisms of exclusion. Cross-national comparisons are liable to put in question patterns of social exclusion which have until now been taken for granted within a country; to expose the interests of particular actors in the perpetuation of such exclusion; and to suggest new policy initiatives, including perhaps the abandonment of certain well-established practices and interventions. At the same time, cross-national comparisons can reveal variations in the precision, the content and the coverage of these social rights of citizenship in the countries of the Community.

To repeat, we define social exclusion in relation, first of all, to social rights. We investigate what social rights the citizen has to employment, housing, health care, etc; how effectively national policies enable citizens to secure these rights; and what are the barriers and processes by which people are excluded from these rights.

But this is only the first step. We go on, secondly, to study the evidence that where citizens are unable to secure their social rights, they will tend to suffer processes of generalised and persisting disadvantage and their social and occupational participation will be undermined. The Observatory therefore makes use of studies of multiple, persisting and cumulative disadvantage. We refer to patterns and processes of generalised disadvantage in terms of education, training, employment, housing, financial resources, etc; and we have investigated whether those who suffer such disadvantages have substantially lower chances than the rest of the population of gaining access to the major social institutions.

For this work, the most obvious points of reference in the scientific literature include Townsend's work on poverty and deprivation (Townsend, 1979). Within this literature, one of the principal points of debate has been the identification of discontinuities in the distribution of disadvantage which separate one sub-group of the population from the mainstream (Robbins, 1990). This scientific debate is of particular interest for the work of the Observatory, highlighting as it does the ways in which inadequate resources and the denial of access to social rights can also involve processes of separation from the normal living patterns of the mass of the population.

It is, of course, a matter for debate as to how far the patterns and processes of disadvantage which research reveals can be taken as demonstrating the ineffectiveness of existing policies or as establishing a case for new interventions by the public authorities. Some writers have been ready, for example, to take persisting inequalities in educational achievement between different social classes or between people of different ethnicities as sufficient to demonstrate the failure of the educational system to provide equal access and opportunity (Halsey, 1972, Chapter 1). But even among these writers, there is disagreement as to how far changes in educational policy alone will suffice to ensure equal access. Other writers, however, are ready to regard these educational inequalities as the result of choices and incapacities which reside in the individual and the family concerned, except where specific mechanisms of exclusion can be identified. And some see these persisting inequalities as the perverse consequences of over-extended public intervention, rather than as evidence that any increased intervention is justified.

The Observatory and this report will not be able to escape from these debates. Here again, however, comparative study of different national systems can be particularly illuminating: first, to display the extent to which such processes of exclusion reappear, in the same form and to the same extent, in different social systems; secondly, to reveal the political choices which different countries have made as to the public effort that should be made to combat specific forms and processes of exclusion.

1.5. METHODOLOGY OF THE OBSERVATORY

We have been charged with studying the efforts of the public authorities within each member state to combat social exclusion. This is not without fundamental difficulties.

First, for many national governments social exclusion is not an explicit policy concern or point of reference. They tend to regard social inclusion and well-being as being determined by the general condition of the economy and the labour market, rather than by measures focussed specifically on social disadvantage and exclusion. Even social policies are framed more in terms of the delivery of particular services than in terms of social exclusion. Those organisations - governmental or non-governmental - which seek to combat social disadvantage generally focus their activities upon one particular policy area or population group, rather than upon social disadvantage and social exclusion in general.

In so far as governments hold to larger concerns in their social and employment policies, these may be very different from those which preoccupy this Observatory. The UK

Government, for example, has been concerned less with social integration and patterns of distributive outcome than with introducing improved value for money and greater consumer choice. Public policy has been aimed at producing a society in which individual citizens can compete freely in the supply and purchase of goods and services and are led by that competition to maximise societal efficiency. Consumer choice and competitive efficiency are, moreover, defended as being at the very heart of the liberal model of citizenship, and as preferable to social integration and exclusion as guides for public policies and their evaluation. But even the supporters of liberal market policies accept that there is a significant minority whom these policies leave behind. Part of the Government's reponse has been a conscious effort to strengthen consumers' rights in the social policy field. In July 1991, the Citizens' Charter was presented to Parliament, setting out a plan for improving the responsiveness of public services to consumers.

Second, we have had to consider whether an Observatory which is located at Community level should concern itself with intra-country variations in efforts to combat social exclusion, or only with national "averages" and typical cases (for example, in urban and rural settings). In general, in the interests of an economy of effort, it would seem best to focus on the latter. However, there are some circumstances where this report also concerns itself with variations within countries. In some countries there are major variations in levels of economic development and in the pattern of social exclusion and disadvantage with which the public authorities are confronted: for example, the contrasts between west and east Germany and between north and south Italy. In other cases there is sufficient decentralisation of policy-making powers, as well as responsibilities for service provision, to allow significantly different policies for combating exclusion to develop. Thus, for example, in Belgium, substantial areas of social and employment policy have been devolved to the sub-national level (the Communities and the regions); and in Italy, the fragmented development of the welfare system means that it is difficult to delineate any "average" situation for the country as a whole.

The third difficulty is that the number of activities and policies to be included in the field of interest of the Observatory could become unmanageably vast, unless some clear principles of selection can be established. The same goes for the cast of actors. We have concentrated upon the areas of policy highlighted by the Council Resolution on Social Exclusion, but even this provides too broad an agenda and the result has been some unevenness of coverage, as different national experts have in their reports concentrated on somewhat different fields.

Fourth and finally, the work of the Observatory is limited by the lack of up-to-date and comparable data on disadvantage and policy effectiveness. When it comes to data on the distribution of financial resources between households within the general population,

Eurostat (the Statistical Office of the Commission) is making some progress in improving the quality, periodicity and comparability of data. However, the data which are available on the cumulation of disadvantages are particularly limited. And of course, socially excluded people are also likely to be excluded from statistics which are derived from surveys: the homeless and the institutionalised population for example. For the homeless population, charitable organisations may be able to offer some data, but their data are often only rudimentary and their territorial coverage is very uneven.

The data which are available are also shaped and limited by divisions and changes of administrative responsibility. In Spain, for example, the devolution of administrative responsibilities to the regions, at precisely the moment when Spain's statistical systems are being modernised, means that many of the improvements in information collection are being undertaken on a decentralised - and to some extent uncoordinated - basis. In east Germany, the collapse of the old regime saw the collapse of the statistical system also and its reconstruction on the western model. In consequence, trend data covering the period before and after unification are often not available.

Information about social protection systems is being improved by the MISSOC network of the Commission. However, as far as the **effectiveness** of different policies is concerned, the picture is much less positive. In many countries, there is a serious lack of research into the impact of social programmes, or their consequences for social exclusion. In the Netherlands, the 1990 Social and Cultural Report is sceptical as to the effectiveness of government policies and charges that new policies are being developed without any clear rationale. In some countries, for example Ireland, despite the high expenditure on health care, there is no information on the differential impact of health policies, or whether health services get through to those who need them, or whether access and use are influenced by levels of income or education, for instance. Nor are there any comprehensive epidemiological and morbidity statistics which would show who is most likely to fall ill. Italy, similarly, suffers from a great lack of data on utilisation of health and social services. It is doubtful whether this Observatory can offer any systematic assessment of policies where the national authorities do not.

BOX 4

In the UK, recent years have seen substantial advances in the development of performance indicators to measure effectiveness, efficiency and economy within the public services. Thus, for example, the Green Paper The Health of the Nation, presented to Parliament in 1991, set out a strategic framework for health promotion in England. This incorporated a commitment to the development of improved indicators of performance in relation to specified health objectives. Indicators currently being used include:

- **input** the health resources consumed by different services
- **throughput:** the number of cases dealt with by services
- **uptake:** the extent to which services are used by the people who need them
- **outcome:** the result, in terms of improved health and quality of life.

Complementing the efforts of Eurostat to establish harmonised data systems as far as the distribution of disadvantages is concerned, there would be merits in promoting common systems of performance indicators of this sort. Such a development would improve the opportunities for the national authorities of each member state to scrutinise and evaluate others policies.

The Portuguese expert has sought to overcome some of these deficiencies by going directly to the relevant public agencies, in order to find out about their actions and policies but also to discover their attitudes towards the proposed Observatory. This enquiry provides an interesting model for bringing the Observatory to the attention of national agencies and for orienting it towards their interests and perspectives, as well as those of the EC institutions. The positive response received in Lisbon suggests that it may be possible to develop some sort of antenna within each national government, in order to receive up-to-date information on policy developments. However, it also highlights the central dilemma that we face: on the one hand, the potential interest of the public authorities in its work; on the other, the inadequacies of the information available from those same public authorities, even concerning the extent to which they meet their own declared policy goals.

1.6. CONCLUSION

The varying focus of the twelve national reports and the differences in the quality and availability of data, as between the different countries of the Community, mean that this report is illustrative rather than comprehensive. Within the Observatory team, we have

striven to develop and to use common frameworks, in order that a systematic comparative analysis will be possible for this European report; but the centrifugal forces at work in any multi-national team, driven in part by twelve different national contexts, seriously limit this endeavour. We can, at most, indicate some of the common policy approaches being used and, in some cases, present the evidence as to their effectiveness.

CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: RECENT DEBATES

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Since the launch of the Observatory and the production of our first report, a number of new developments, at both Community and national level have strengthened political concern with social exclusion. These developments, summarised in this chapter, reinforce the importance of the task with which the Observatory is concerned.

2.2. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND THE COMMUNITY AFTER MAASTRICHT

In the period since the Observatory produced its first annual report, there have been a number of important political developments at Community level which are relevant to our work.

i. During 1991, the Commission published two draft recommendations in the field of social protection.

The first recommendation aims to establish common criteria among Member States for guaranteeing to their citizens a sufficient levels of resources and social assistance. It builds on a proposal in the Social Charter of 1989 (Title 1, paras 10 and 25) and the Action Programme for its implementation (para 5). It carries consequences for all the Member States: not only the southern ones, where no national scheme of minimum income currently exists, but the others also, which are expected to adapt their national schemes in a comprehensive and systematic effort to combat social exclusion.

The second draft recommendation is concerned with convergence in the objectives and policies of social protection systems. Here again, a particular place is given to the role of these systems in ensuring a minimum level of resources and in promoting the social - and labour market - integration of benefit recipients.

Both recommendations were approved, with some amendments, in June 1992, under the Portuguese presidency.

ii. During 1990-91, several other Community initiatives relevant to social exclusion got under way - or were in preparation - which are worth a brief mention:

* within the context of the European Social Fund, the NOW programme is intended to further the labour market participation of women, while the HORIZON programme includes provision for disadvantaged groups;

* directives or recommendations are being developed concerned with atypical employment and the protection of young people at work;

* a communication on immigration, recommending more effective policies in favour of immigrants from non-EC countries;

* the proposed HELIOS II programme, aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.

iii. The agreements reached at Maastricht in December 1991 contain several direct, as well as many indirect, consequences for measures to combat social exclusion in the Community.

The amended EC Treaty formally establishes the principle of European citizenship rights.

An annex to the Treaty includes an agreement for Commission/NGO cooperation on poverty. The annex also envisages reform of the structural funds, in part to enhance their role in combating social exclusion.

The inter-governmental agreement on immigration policy and asylum will have important consequences for some of the groups which this report identifies as being at risk of exclusion.

The Social Policy Accord which was agreed by eleven member states (and which incorporates Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) on a number of issues), includes the following points:

(a) Article 1 mentions the combating of exclusion as one of the objectives of Community social policy;

(b) Article 2 (concerned with implementation) extends the domains within which QMV applies, to include the integration of people excluded from the labour market. Working conditions of third country (i.e. non-EC) migrants are also now included, although under a unanimity rule.

(c) Article 2 consolidates the role of the social dialogue - and hence the rights of industrial citizenship enjoyed by workers - in the development of relevant EC directives.

2.3. SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE MEMBER STATES IN 1991/2

Within various Community countries, social exclusion has been a growing priority in political discussion during 1991-2. It is, for example, becoming part of the political vocabulary in Flanders (although it remains more typical for the French-speaking part of Belgium: which is not surprising, since the concept in its modern sense has always been a key concept in the French discourse on inequality and poverty). In Spain, the term "social exclusion" has been gaining usage during 1991, being linked to - but also distinguished from - other concepts such as poverty and marginalisation. In Portugal, parliamentary debates have been paying growing attention to problems of poverty and social exclusion. However, as in other countries, the debate is provoked primarily by the Opposition parties - Socialist and Communist - in part to embarrass the government. These parliamentary critics have been highlighting child employment in particular, and positive action to assist those with no job, training or social security. The government, for its part, has been developing various action programmes at national and regional levels, in part with EC funding.

These growing concerns about social exclusion are related to certain more specific developments, three of which are of particular significance, having been common to a number of Community countries during 1991. All three put in question the willingness of more secure sections of the population to recognise any collective obligations towards those who are less secure and who are therefore at risk of social exclusion. They also challenge the capacity of political leaders to use social and employment policies to legitimise the changes in economy and society which the Single Market is bringing and to maintain political order (Box 5).

BOX 5

In highlighting these three interrelated concerns, it is of course important not to ignore the distinctive features also of each national agenda. The supplement to this report provides a summary of the "hot issues" in each Community country during the period covered by this report, as far as efforts to combat social exclusion are concerned.

One country in particular - Germany - has been facing these problems in a particularly acute and distinctive form, as it strives to confront the enormous difficulties of unification.

Economic restructuring: gross national product in the former east Germany was cut by half during 1990-91, the two years after the breakdown of Communist rule, and the level of employment by one third.

Social Protection: massive transfers of ressources from the population of the western Länder, in order to preserve income and consumption levels in the east and to bring wage levels to those of the west by 1995.

Migration and Urban Conflict: approximatively half a million persons formerly employed in the DDR moved to western Germany in the two years following the collapse of the Communist regime: in addition, at the end of 1991 a further half million persons still living, in east Germany had a workplace in west Germany or west Berlin. Migration of a rather different sort - west Germans laying claim to residential property formerly owned in the east - threatens to produce new lines of conflict, with current residents facing dispossession.

i. Economic Restructuring in the Run-Up to the Single European Market

After the growth in employment which the Community experienced in the late 1980s, the early 1990s have seen some reversal, as part of the wider slow-down in the world economy. In the Community as a whole, the rate of unemployment has gone up from 8.3% in November 1990 to 9.3% in January 1992 (after adjusting for normal seasonal factors). This increase has been concentrated in the UK and, to a lesser extent, Ireland. Some resumption in employment growth is expected beyond 1992 (Commission of the European Communities, 1991d).

Within these general Community levels of employment and unemployment however, economic activity and employment are being redistributed. Economic restructuring in the Community is expected to produce two arc-shaped centres of development: the first, and older, enclosed by London, Amsterdam, Paris and the Ruhr; the second, and younger, extending from southern Germany and northern Italy to southern France and north-east Spain (Commission of the European Communities, 1991c, p.13).

Economic restructuring can have major consequences for patterns of poverty and social exclusion. First, it re-shapes labour market opportunities and the risks of unemployment, sometimes on a scale and with a speed that are quite dramatic; and second, it puts in question the resources that are available for reallocation through social protection systems.

(a) In Portugal, the labour market is currently characterised by very low unemployment rates (one of the lowest in the EC) and high demand for labour, in the context of relatively high economic growth and modernisation of the productive structure. Nevertheless, the crisis in some industrial sectors, with ongoing restructuring and modernisation, is generating unemployment in some sectors and regions. The fear is that, with most firms still small (75% of firms have less than 10 workers and only 2% more than 100), over-manned and technologically backward, this will increase, as growing competition from outside hits traditional sectors such as textiles, in particular.

In neighbouring Spain, substantial numbers of jobs are precarious. The unemployment rate has decreased; nevertheless, the numbers of long-term unemployed and of those in temporary jobs remain high, constituting a large group peripheral to Spanish society. Trade unions and Government are currently debating active as well as improved passive labour market measures: vocational training and work experience in particular.

In Greece, the public sector and manufacturing traditionally absorbed labour. But now there is the prospect of massive lay-offs. At the same time, adjustments in the Common Agricultural Policy will probably boost the rural exodus of the economically active population. Finally, the inflow of migrants will worsen the labour market situation.

With a growth rate of less than 2% since the late 1980s, Denmark has been seeing increasing unemployment: especially during 1991, when the rate reached a peak for the post-war period. The Economic Council in 1991 called for a solidary employment policy, with deliberate efforts to re-distribute employment opportunities to those currently unemployed, even if the cost were to be some greater inequality in the wages of the employed (Economic Council, 1991). However, with rising unemployment there have also been calls for change in the financial basis of the unemployment insurance system. Currently, employers and employees pay a fixed sum, which is adequate at low levels of unemployment; the government supplements this in times of higher unemployment and is currently paying two thirds of the costs. Government and Opposition parties are developing proposals for reduction in this government contribution.

(b) During the 1980s, Greek society was undergoing a relatively slow process of macro-economic change. However, this is now accelerating and, in the context of a chronic budgetary crisis, there are pressures to cut back the State and its welfare services. In 1991, budgetary difficulties led to reduction or non-payment of some State pensions and disability pensions are now under scrutiny.

In Belgium, persisting gaps between the regions in terms of their levels of economic development (and in their levels of unemployment: see Figure 15), at a time when they are being politically uncoupled, are prompting a growing number of organisations in Flanders to calling for the -federalisation of social security budgets, to stop the present scale of financial transfers to Wallonia. This could have major consequences for social protection budgets. And in Italy, the persisting - if not widening - gap in economic prosperity between North and South has fuelled the political success of regional parties in northern Italy, calling for reduced transfers of resources between the regions.

ii. Social Protection under Strain

Rising unemployment and slower economic growth are thus placing new strains on social protection systems. And in countries such as Greece, the economic restructuring set in motion by the Single Market seems likely to impose new strains on the traditional forms of social protection offered by the family and the local community. For some countries, including Greece, the inflow of support from the EC structural funds may ease the pain; but these are in any case the countries whose industrial and structures and employment opportunities are arguably at greatest risk from the Single Market.

In Denmark, social security transfer payments now amount to 40% of public expenditure and 24% of GNP. 700,000 persons in the age group 18-66 receive such benefits for at least 6 months each year. Prompted by these rates, the Danish Government in August 1991 appointed a Social Commission, to examine how the social protection system could best strengthen the human and economic resources of the country, not least by reference to the work incentives involved in the benefits system. Three reports are expected in 1992.

In Belgium also, there is heightened concern about work incentives in relation to social benefits. Greater restrictions have been introduced on benefit paid to the long-term unemployed: in principle, benefit is paid without limit, but the "abnormally long" unemployed can be disqualified (i.e. those who have been unemployed twice as long as normal for that category of employment in their area). In the period October 1990 - August 1991, at least 21,000 unemployed were thus excluded from benefit. A new benefit for the long-term

unemployed, intermediate between unemployment benefit and social assistance, is under debate, as is the introduction of a test of willingness as far as training schemes are concerned.

In Spain, similarly, the political and scientific debates on social exclusion during 1991 have been dominated by proposals on minimum income and labour market insertion. The minimum income debate, polarised between central government and regions in 1990, has now quietened down somewhat, with the centre adopting a somewhat neutral stance in relation to the regions' proposals. However, some regions are facing problems - notably financial - in implementing their schemes. It is uncertain how these difficulties will be resolved politically. The situation is further complicated by the new Law on Non-Contributory Pensions passed in 1990 and implemented from March 1991, which will be of major importance for the social protection of elderly and disabled people in particular. However, this omits many insecure groups and the regional minimum income schemes are as yet ineffective. The lack of organised coordination between these different schemes of income support is evident.

iii. Immigration and Urban Conflict

In many countries the prospect of open frontiers - with the advent of the Single Market - has fuelled debates concerning migration and social exclusion. The changes in central and eastern Europe, prompting growing migration westwards, have overshadowed much of the debate in Germany and Greece (Ronge, 1991); clandestine immigration from the Third World is high on the agenda of debate in the southern European countries.

Towards the end of 1991, the parliamentary elections in Belgium saw successes by the far right which alarmed the mainstream political parties. (In France, the regional elections of March 1992 echoed these results.) These developments were especially evident in those cities of Flanders which have concentrations of migrants, where the "Vlaams Blok" took around one fifth of the vote, as well as in Brussels. Policy debates increasingly emphasise control and repression, rather than positive measures of integration. And indeed, legislation on political refugees also has been tightened, despite criticism by Amnesty International and refugee organisations. Nevertheless, these developments may have encouraged traditional parties to pay greater attention to problems of social exclusion.

Not dissimilarly, it was the great migratory pressures from non-EC countries which moved poverty and social exclusion sharply up the Italian political and scientific agenda during 1991. There has been social unrest, by or against immigrants and refugees (mainly Third World but also, to some extent, east European), in such cities as Milan and Turin. At the same time, the worsening of the housing and living conditions in many inner-city and

peripheral neighbourhoods of large cities has only compounded the problem. Inadequate housing in dilapidated inner city areas is now a burning political issue; as are the "temporary" camps set up for erstwhile earthquake victims. These camps accommodate permanently homeless families in illegal conditions, but with the connivance of the local authority until some emergency or scandal occurs, forcing closure.

These national anxieties have had consequences for other elements of the Italian political debate during 1991-2. It has, in part, been the rising numbers of non-Italians - and their visibility on the political agenda - that has made the country reluctant to embark on any new income guarantees even for its own citizens, in case non-EC immigrants manage in this uncertain situation to lay claim to some of these guarantees. The debates on basic income, which have been rather vigorous during recent years, therefore lost their force during 1991, overwhelmed by these other issues. So also, the campaigns by the right-wing regional parties of northern Italy, criticising any measures which appear to involve the North subsidising the South, were directed also against subsidising aliens.

2.4. SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Two key questions are posed by the developments summarised above. First, what new patterns of social exclusion are liable to be created by the process of European integration? Second, how far should efforts to combat such exclusion be focussed around efforts at labour market re-insertion?

In several countries debates are under way about the links between policies to combat exclusion and labour market policies. In Spain, for example, the government takes the view that income maintenance programmes are by themselves inferior to programmes of re-insertion, especially for young people: they may therefore merely perpetuate dependency and, arguably, exclusion. In France, similarly, young people below the age of 25 are excluded from the **Revenue Minimum d'Insertion** because of the priority which they receive in vocational training programmes; the same goes for the **Revenue Minimum Garanti** in Luxembourg, but with an age limit of 30. In the Netherlands, the political debate on the "Social Renewal Policy" highlights the role of labour as a means of social integration. In the UK, participation in employment schemes is for some of the unemployed a precondition for receiving social assistance benefits.

Nevertheless, it is worth emphasising that constraints on labour force participation should not be taken too simplistically as indicating social exclusion. Nor, indeed, is a person's

participation in society as a full citizen adequately indicated by paid employment - especially where that employment is low paid and does not carry with it membership of any occupational community. When lone parents in Luxembourg, offered the guaranteed minimum income without being required to seek employment, actually **reduce** their rates of labour force participation, it would be wrong to infer that their social exclusion has increased, if their choice is to devote more time to child care. On the other hand, when the structure of the benefits system creates perverse disincentives to people who would otherwise choose employment, one is entitled to conclude that the benefits system actually reinforces social exclusion. Social exclusion involves constraints on the exercise of citizenship rights; and citizenship rights involve some degree of freedom to choose.

2.5. CONCLUSION

The next chapter examines the cast of actors and the interests which they pursue in relation to social exclusion. Chapters 4-6 are concerned with policies and their consequences for patterns of social exclusion. Chapter 7 draws together some of the principal conclusions, both substantive and methodological, of this report.

CHAPTER 3: WHO DOES WHAT? THE CHANGING PATTERN OF ACTORS

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Who does what? Any comparison between the countries of the European Community can make little progress for as long as the complexities of different national administrations remain unclear, along with the roles of non-governmental actors - including the social partners - in the formulation and implementation of public policies.

These administrative arrangements and divisions of responsibility depend upon the social history of each country and the mutual accommodations that have been reached among the principal political actors: accommodations in which social and employment policies are one key element. But these accommodations are rarely stable for long periods. It is therefore also important to notice the shifting cast of actors, the new patterns of policy and administrative arrangements which they establish and the consequences which these changes can have for the exercise of social rights by individual citizens.

The first report of the Observatory provided a brief overview of some of the principal actors involved in policies and programmes to combat social exclusion in the countries of the Community. We now offer a somewhat more substantial discussion (complemented by the Tables which appear as an Annex to this report). This is, in part, to complete what was begin in our first report. But is also in recognition of two developments specifically linked to the processes of European integration to which the Maastricht summit gave a new impetus.

First, the agreements reached in December 1991 involved some significant changes in the cast of actors engaged in policy formation and implementation at Community level. On the one hand, representatives of regional government will have a recognised - if only advisory - role, through the new Committee of the Regions. At least as important, the Social Accord signed by eleven Member States gave an enhanced role to the social partners and to the social dialogue. These changes in the constitutional position of key actors may have substantial consequences - even if at this stage they cannot be predicted with any precision - for Community policy-making, not least in relation to social exclusion.

Second, within each Member State we cannot expect the cast of actors to be unaffected by processes of European integration. Generally, the accelerating scale of cross-national contacts among policy-makers and practitioners, prompted in part by specific programmes of

the EC, is liable to put in question some of the established patterns of intervention and the traditional coalitions among different social actors. The harmonisation of professional qualifications is already affecting domestic training and recognition procedures in the field of social policy (Harris et al, 1992). It is, in short, not only among business enterprises that the Single Market and the associated political and social changes can be expected to produce some significant restructuring. These changes may, for the moment, be difficult to forecast but an Observatory such as this will need to place them at the centre of its monitoring activities.

The debates about social exclusion are, as much as anything, debates about the new partnerships which must be forged within our European societies among the actors presented here.

3.2. CENTRAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In our studies of policies within the countries of the Community, we have been faced with significant changes that have been taking place in the division of responsibilities between national, regional and local government. These changes can affect the channels by which ordinary citizens participate politically and secure their social rights.

It is not just a matter of a changing division of responsibilities, however. New policies commonly engender new institutional arrangements: the French RMI, for example, has involved the creation of a new inter-ministerial delegation on RMI; new "councils of insertion" of the départements; and local "committees of insertion". Whether all of these will survive is at best uncertain, however; and will partly depend on their capacity to adapt to the emergence of new forms of exclusion.

In the Netherlands, the Social Renewal Policy of recent years, while it involves little if any additional expenditure, does involve some significant increase in the responsibilities of local authorities for efforts to combat social disadvantage: an increase that has been contested by the social partners and the opposition parties. This follows a period when, during the 1980s, some of the local municipalities were confronted with their lack of competence to implement their own income policy.

In Belgium, recent years have seen the devolution of administrative responsibilities to the regions; and Flanders in particular has developed its own policies for combatting social exclusion. Substantial additional financial resources have been allocated to cities in Flanders

to support vulnerable population groups, in part out of fear that large concentrations of disadvantage may fuel inter-ethnic conflicts. The granting of these poverty funds - for the integration of the poor and of migrants - requires the existence of local partnerships of local authorities and non-governmental organisations and this has helped rekindle interest in poverty.

In Spain, a new integrated plan for basic personal social services was agreed in 1988 between the central, regional and local administrations, aimed at developing local centres of social services.

In Denmark, recent years have seen more and more activities and obligations in connection with the worsening employment situation being transferred to local government. Thus, for example, since 1990 local government has had an obligation to offer temporary employment - if only part-time - to unemployed 18-19 year olds who have applied for social benefit. The law on public employment gives local government the responsibility for finding employment for especially hard-hit groups, including the long-term unemployed. However, this delegation of responsibility has not necessarily encouraged an effective local employment policy. For example, the funding rules are such that in providing employment to the unemployed who are receiving unemployment benefit, the local government enjoys no financial incentive; and that until recently, the incentive to create jobs for the long-term unemployed who are receiving social assistance was much weaker than to encourage their withdrawal from the labour force through early retirement.

In the UK, developments in the personal social services in particular are reinforcing the role of local authorities. The new Children Act (1989) and the Community Care Act (1990) place new responsibilities on the local authority to arrange for the provision of services if not to provide them itself. On the other hand, central government has also imposed new restrictions on, and made reductions in, local authority responsibilities in education, housing and inner city development, for example. And it has introduced a variety of new agencies, concerned with particular local areas but independent of - and by-passing - local government: Urban Development Corporations and Task Forces, concerned with urban regeneration; Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), to manage government training schemes.

In some cases, particular local or regional authorities have emerged as pioneers of social welfare reform and policy evaluation for their countries. In France, local initiatives in providing a minimum income (CERC, 1988) supplied the stimulus for the larger national effort initiated in 1988. In Spain, the Basque government has pioneered a universal health service and a minimum income.

During the 1990s it is possible that these changes will be driven, in part, by the renegotiation of political powers between the EC institutions and the national authorities: a renegotiation which affects their relationships with regional and local authorities also.

3.3. NATIONS WITHIN NATIONS

In Belgium and the Netherlands, the ideological or confessional "pillars" - nations within a nation - were traditionally able to cement the loyalty of their followers, in part through the welfare services that they provide, using subsidies from public funds.

In recent decades, the influence of these pillars - or, at least, their ideological basis - has been declining. Nevertheless, noteworthy in recent years has been the resistance, in Belgium, to the subsidising of new "pillars" for immigrant groups who want to organise for themselves their own religious and cultural institutions. They are expected to fit into the existing organisational structure of the Belgian pillars.

During this same period, in Belgium at least, devolution of administrative responsibilities to the Communities has been a significant feature of national politics. Important aspects of long-term unemployment policies have been transferred to the Communities, as has educational policy. In Scotland and elsewhere, recent years have seen the rise of regional parties aiming for a strong degree of administrative devolution, at the minimum. These "nations within nations may also become a more significant feature of "who does what" during the Europe of the 1990s.

Finally, however, the reunification of Germany has involved the submersion of one nation within another, in terms of social policy regimes at least, with the social system of the Federal Republic being imposed in toto on the eastern Länder. This applies not only to social and employment policies, but also to the cast of actors through whom these policies are administered and by whom they will henceforth be shaped. Thus the former east Germany was a highly centralised polity; now, however, the five Länder, suppressed since 1949, have been re-established as the principal political units, on the west German federal model. Even so, it is evident that some of the political actors in the new eastern Länder claim a political culture distinct from that of the west, waiting to preserve positive elements of live in the former DDR. Thus, for example, the draft constitutions of the new Länder attach greater importance than do their western counterparts to the role of the state in providing for the social needs of the citizen (under the federal system, constitutions exist not only at federal level but also at that of the Länder).

3.4. THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

The "social partners" - whether or not such a partnership is manifest and active - must also be counted among the cast of principal actors.

First, they make a direct contribution to the policy debates with which the Observatory is concerned. For example, during the period covered by this report, the CGTP trade union in Portugal ran a campaign on social rights (January - July 1992), focussed on such issues as labour conditions, trade union rights, collective and labour contract rights. In Italy, the trade unions are vocal in various of the fields with which we are concerned - housing, health services, etc - and do not confine themselves to employment issues. Some, indeed present themselves as "citizens' associations" rather than unions of workers. Some are very active in relation to immigration: advocating better protection for immigrants and themselves offering services (advice, literacy classes, opportunities for organising at the local level).

Second, they shape some of the major social institutions and milieux which govern patterns of social disadvantage. In the UK for example, the government has been seeking to stimulate still greater participation and funding from the private sector for youth training, by linking it more closely to the needs of employers, so as to reduce the burden on the public purse. The social partners are also heavily involved in the implementation of social and employment policies. In France, they are involved in many of the new contractual partnerships which have become commonplace in social policy in recent years. In some countries - for example the Netherlands - the social partners are heavily involved in the implementation of social security policies. In the Netherlands, the role of the social partners is especially evident in the central and regional manpower boards, which involve equal representation of local government, trade unions and employers' organisations.

Third, in many of the Community countries, national accords which involve the social partners and government provide the framework for social and employment policies of central interest to this report. In Belgium, cooperation between the social partners in training schemes has been developed through a series of "central inter-professional agreements", under which the two sides elaborate initiatives and projects for high-risk groups financed through a standard percentage (currently 0.25%) of wages. In Portugal, among the recent agreements reached within the "Permanent Council of Social Conciliation" are an economic and social agreement (October 1990), establishing guidelines for incomes policy and making reference to the needs of the most vulnerable groups; and an agreement on vocational training (July 1991), which includes the aim of helping the "more unprotected population" and which highlights various marginalised groups (long-term unemployed, handicapped) and

groups at risk of exclusion (women, young people). In Ireland, the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (1991) involves an agreement between the social partners and government on macro-economic objectives but also, in contrast to earlier agreements, incorporates a stronger social policy element, for example in relation to social welfare payments, area-based responses to long-term unemployment and greater social rights in relation to health, education, social welfare and housing services.

The strategies which are pursued by the social partners during the 1990s are likely to be shaped, to a considerable extent, by the way that they perceive the opportunities and dangers created by the European Single Market for employment, training and industrial relations. Noteworthy in this connection is the strengthening of the social dialogue through the Social Accord signed by eleven of the Member States at Maastricht.

3.5. THE PROFIT AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTORS

Finally, changes are evident in the roles played by the commercial sector, the voluntary and not-for-profit sector, the family and the informal local community. Shifts between these sectors will, in turn, affect the relative weight which is given to social rights - the collective guarantee of certain outcomes - and to civil rights - the right of individuals and organisations to pursue the opportunities which the market place offers them (Marshall, 1950).

Again, developments at an EC level - in particular, the creation of the Single Market - could have a substantial effect on the relative weights of these different sectors. Enlarged market opportunities could, for example, encourage expansion of the commercial sector in residential care of the elderly; increased geographical mobility could undermine the capacity of the family and the local community to discharge their welfare roles. These developments are difficult to predict. Nevertheless, precisely for this reason, observation of developments on a regular basis will become imperative if public policies are to be effective and to have a preventive, and not merely a reactive, role.

In the UK, recent and current changes in the administration of government - intended to reduce the role of the state - have been re-shaping the social policy agenda and radically re-defining the cast of actors. First, sections of the civil service have been "privatised", that is, established as independent agencies with their own budgets, leaving only small, central policy units as direct advisers to Government Ministers. Second, services previously provided - as well as financed - by government are, increasingly, being "contracted out" to the profit and not-for-profit sectors. Third, industrial and commercial interests have become much more

significant in the cast of actors. In housing policy, for example, the restrictions on local authority house-building have been matched by encouragement not only to owner occupation but also to housing associations, as the main future providers of subsidised rented housing. In the Netherlands, however, in health care at least, it is the market which is under attack. There, the mixed economy of health insurance - private insurance and the health insurance funds - is coming under increasing criticism for the inequalities which it produces and the lack of mutual solidarity which it involves.

In several countries, the role of the NGOs has been strengthened or transformed in recent years. In Portugal, they are involved contractually with the public authorities in the delivery of social services. In Spain, there is a resurgence in their activities; and from 1989 onwards, 0,52% of the national income tax has been made available by the Spanish central government to promote the voluntary sector. In the UK, many NGOs are under contract to provide services previously provided by government and this has involved a substantial transformation of their role. In Belgium - more specifically, in Flanders - decentralisation of the policies with which the Observatory is concerned has been accompanied by a growing importance of these NGOs, not least through the partnerships to which the new poverty funds for local action are directed. This is in part because of the political importance in Flanders of the Catholic "pillar", with which many of these NGOs are associated. But in Wallonia, where the socialist pillar has been traditionally dominant, local social welfare initiatives are being developed primarily through the Public Welfare Centres.

In Greece, a large part of welfare services is provided by private voluntary agencies and the Church. Often, they fill the gaps left by state action. In some cases, they play the major role. Private initiative and the Church account for perhaps two fifths of the places provided for unprotected children (orphanages etc), almost all homes for the elderly and two thirds of places for chronically ill people.

In Italy, local, national and international religious institutions such as Caritas have developed a significant role in relation to drug addicts, homeless people and Third World immigrants. They are the main providers both of services (income, legal, accommodation, training) and of advocacy to such groups. However, the presence and activities of all these non-profit actors is even more differentiated locally than are governmental actors. Given the absence of an effective public policy, the presence or absence of these NGOs can make a crucial difference to the persons concerned. These NGOs are also acting as the main advisers to government, helping to determine how these "problems" are perceived within the wider society. Their experience then shapes the debate about the role of the voluntary sector more generally within the Italian welfare system.

Two national laws during 1991 changed the whole framework for public/private cooperation at the local level in Italy and this is likely to promote a new welfare "mix". First, the **Framework Law on Voluntary Activities and Associations** aims to provide a legal framework within which voluntary organisations can be formally recognised as agents of central and local government in delivering social services and through which they may be financially reimbursed. This is concerned, in particular, with such marginal groups as immigrants and drug addicts. Second, the **Law on Regulation of Social Cooperatives** provides that social cooperatives made up of at least 30% of disadvantaged people can receive favourable tax treatment and subsidies from government and have contracts with local government for delivering services.

3.6. CONCLUSION: THE MIXED ECONOMY OF WELFARE

The different actors identified in this chapter are divided in their perceptions of disadvantage, poverty and exclusion. As new actors enter and old actors leave the political stage, they modify the issues which are raised for policy debate. In Spain, for example, the central government points to economic growth as being both necessary and sufficient to reduce social exclusion, coupled with social services to meet specific needs; many of the regional governments, however, support a system of minimum income; the trade unions focus their attention upon unemployment and precarious employment.

But these actors are not just involved in political debate. They are also involved in the implementation of policy, as the weight given to different sectors shifts. But with this changing division of responsibilities, problems of coordination and the risks of fragmentation are perennial concerns. And of course, the way in which these problems and risks are perceived depends on the interests of the actors concerned.

In Spain, the **coordination of social services and policies** has recently come to the fore as a political issue, in part because of the new forms of participation which trade unions and NGOs now enjoy in public policy development: both at regional level (minimum income policies) and central level (various consultative bodies).

In Italy, there are fears that the new **Framework Law on Voluntary Activities and Associations** (see 3.5 above) will surrender public policy to the more fashionable priorities of these voluntary organisations - such as working with immigrants and drug addicts - ignoring less fashionable groups such as drunks, the chronically ill, violent families.

In Greece, fears are focussed on the rigidities - rather than any recent changes - in the country's administrative system: fears that because of long-standing bureaucratic inefficiency and clientelism, the social protection system will be unable to cope with the twin challenges which the country faces - economic restructuring under the impact of the Single Market and large-scale immigration from the former Soviet bloc.

When, in later chapters, we examine the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion that are evident in different countries, it is to the specific lines of demarcation, conflict and collaboration within these shifting casts of actors that we shall return.

CHAPTER 4: GENERAL POLICIES: SECTORAL

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The Observatory is concerned with policies to combat social exclusion and this dictates the way in which the central chapters of this report are organised.

Chapters 4 and 5 are concerned with the general policies which are accessible to the population as a whole and one of whose aims is, very often, to prevent people becoming excluded. Chapter 6 is concerned with those specific policies which are targetted on groups which have become marginalised. These three chapters will allow us to examine the diverse policy configurations which are to be found in the various countries of the Community. In concluding each chapter, we aim to identify some of the limitations which each form of policy typically encounters.

Of course, the division between these two groups of policies - general and specific - is in practice less easy to draw. Within general policies are to be found specific compensatory measures, intended to eliminate barriers in access to these provisions. And specific policies, targetted on groups which have become marginalised, will commonly depend for their effectiveness upon the existence of an infrastructure of general policies.

In the present chapter, we ask three sets of questions in regard to each of the policy areas which were identified in the Council Resolution, while recognising that very often the data which are available are grossly inadequate and that in consequence we can answer these questions only very incompletely.

i. Standards and Coverage

What standards does each government - and each society - set for itself in combating social exclusion? What social rights does the citizen have to employment, housing, health care, etc and how well-defined are these rights? How far - and why - are these rights or entitlements restricted to certain groups of the population? Finally, what variations are there in the rights and coverage to be found in different countries of the EC?

Of course, in many cases it is difficult to decide what standards the public authorities are using. Even within a single central government department, different actors may take different views of the standards that are being applied to a given policy. And most policies

are then delivered - and some are determined - at regional or local level, where administrators will have their own views of what rights and entitlements should be recognised.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

How effective are these general policies in opening up access to employment, housing, health care, etc? How effective are they in ensuring that citizens secure the rights to which they are formally entitled? What are the barriers to access? Finally, what additional measures have been launched to overcome these barriers and to compensate for their effects?

There are, of course, conceptual and methodological difficulties in assessing effectiveness, for example in establishing cause and effect. Moreover, as noted earlier, the frequent failure of the public authorities to monitor and evaluate their own policies means that this Observatory will be severely limited in the comparative evaluation which it can offer. Nevertheless, comparative study can throw additional light on the mechanisms which impede access and can illuminate the ways in which they may be removed.

iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

What evidence is there, finally, that where citizens are unable to secure their social rights, they will tend to suffer generalised and persisting disadvantage and their social and occupational participation will be undermined? And that those who suffer such disadvantages will have substantially lower chances than the rest of the population of gaining access to the major social institutions and the normal living patterns of their fellow citizens?

Throughout this discussion, as already indicated, two further and related questions will regularly arise. First, how far does each public authority ensure that suitable information is available to monitor the effectiveness of its efforts and, indeed, their perverse effects? Second, how far has international standardisation of these data sources been achieved?

There are three official data sources which are broadly common to all the countries concerned: the Census of Population (CP), the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The extent to which harmonisation exists - or can be developed - among these data sources will in the long-term be an important constraint on our work. Nevertheless, even where indicators which offer the possibility of strictly standardised comparison on a cross-national basis are not available, it can be illuminating to see whether, for example, the same high risk groups emerge in different countries; and whether changes over time are similar within different countries.

Many other research studies, even if not providing representative data on the national populations as a whole, are of relevance and interest to the work of this Observatory. Research work emanating from the Luxembourg Income Study is likely to be of particular interest, as the number of EC countries which are included increases (Smeeding et al, 1990).

4.2. INCOME, TAXATION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Within the social security systems of the various member states of the Community, a number of reforms have been made during 1991-2 which will have significant consequences for the risks of insecurity and disadvantage which are faced by different population groups. These include, for example, new family benefits in Spain and Greece.

But of course, the reforms in social security have not necessarily been directed at combatting social exclusion. Some reforms in the field of family benefits, mentioned above, have pro-natalist aims: for example, those in Greece. Other reforms have aimed at removing disincentives to work and reducing dependency on benefit. These aims may be relevant to some interpretations of "exclusion"; however, surely just as important is the standard of living offered to those who are receiving benefits.

This report does not attempt to describe, still less to evaluate, the whole range of social security measures available in the various member states. (For an overview of these systems, see MISSOC, 1990). Instead, it concentrates on the minimum standards which each system provides for its citizens.

i. Standards and Coverage

What minimum standards does each government - and each society - set for itself, as far as financial resources are concerned? How far do citizens have rights to certain levels of financial resources? Are these rights well-defined and are they restricted to certain groups of the population? Finally, what variations are there in the rights and coverage to be found in different countries of the EC?

To answer these questions in relation to financial resources, it is properly necessary to consider both the taxation and social security systems and their differential impact. This year as last year, we concentrate our attention on the minimum financial resources which are guaranteed through the social security systems of the EC countries. However, in due course it will be necessary, if resources allow, to examine the net effects of the full range of social

benefits, taxation and occupational welfare benefits.

In some countries, there is a national minimum income guarantee: but in the form of a means-tested benefit, payable to those who can provide evidence of their lack of resources, rather than a citizenship "basic income", payable to all (Box 6).

BOX 6

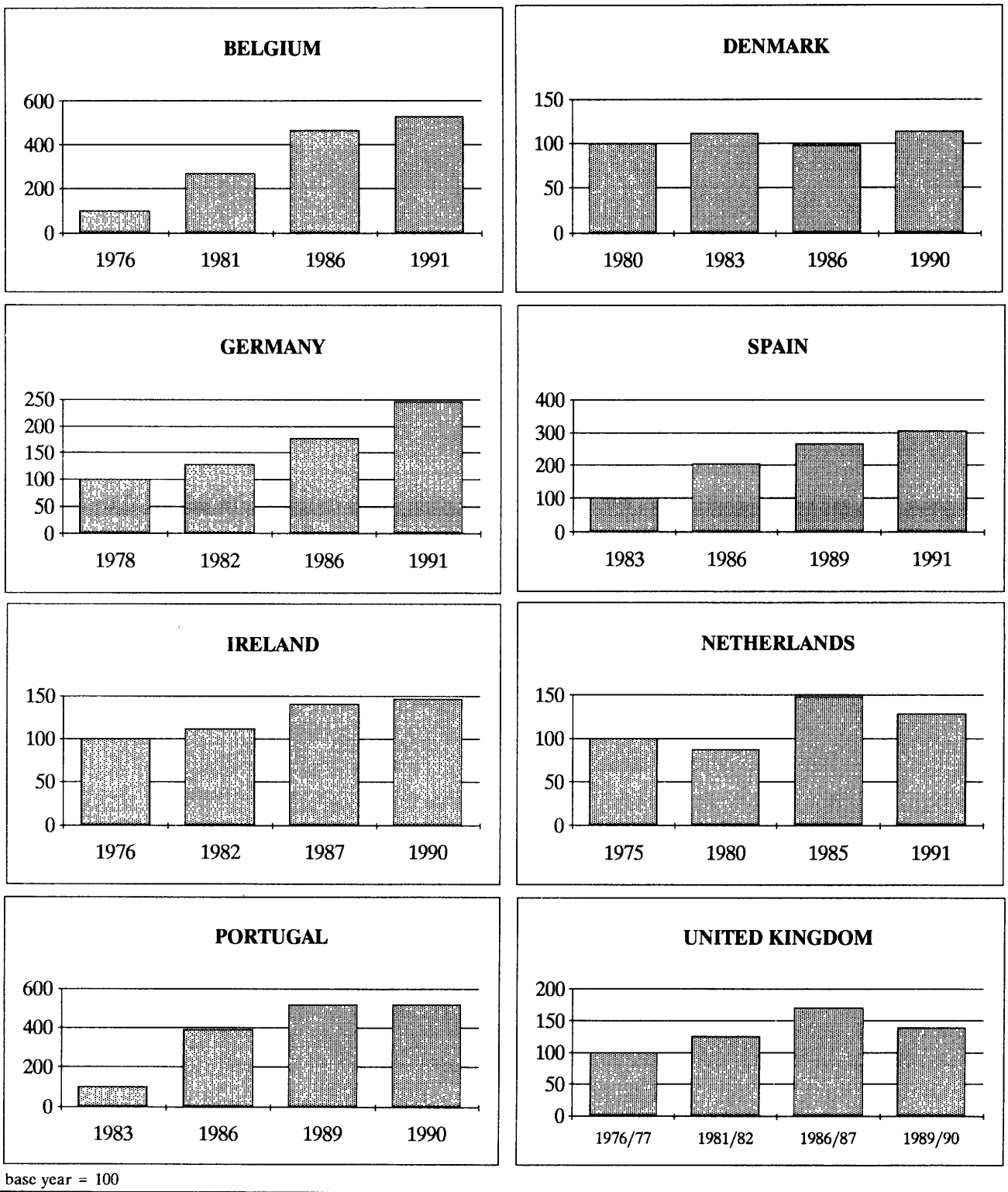
Ramprakash (1990) reports on a conference held under the auspices of the EC Commission at which these various forms of income guarantee were examined. In part on the basis of this conference, the European Commission during 1991 published a draft recommendation, intended to encourage the four southern member states in particular to develop national schemes (Commission of the European Communities, 1991e).

But it is important to notice the moves which these countries are already making in this direction. In Spain, the 1980s saw the development of a range of new assistance benefits alongside the old, covering new and old groups of the poor. By 1990, almost 5 million people were benefitting from such means-tested payments: including assistance pensions, unemployment assistance, the minimum income schemes that some regional governments were developing and - the largest element - means-tested allowances for families and for people with disabilities.

The minimum incomes schemes are now approved in almost all the regions - but implementation is most advanced in Madrid and the Basque country. Even there, however, it is too early to evaluate progress. The benefits provided exceed those of assistance pensions, being approximately 60% of the minimum wage, with supplements according to the number of children. They do not involve a social right to a minimum income but, rather, a discretionary benefit to assist social reintegration.

Figure 1 displays the trends in the numbers of recipients of these minimum benefits in a number of EC countries. In other countries, for example Italy, no nationally uniform minimum income system exists but there is a variety of social minima, depending on local arrangements. And in many countries, of course, the mains social insurance benefits - retirement pension, unemployment benefits, etc - either involve a minimum level of payment, or are paid at a standard flat rate for all recipients (Box 7).

Figure 1 **TRENDS IN ANNUAL NUMBERS OF RECIPIENTS OF MINIMUM BENEFITS**



base year = 100

Notes to Figure 1

In some countries, there are several schemes of minimum benefits. Except where otherwise stated, this Figure concentrates upon those schemes which (a) are general, rather than being targetted on particular population groups; (b) are intended for normal maintenance expenses. The country notes give further explanation where appropriate.

Belgium: The data refer to recipients of the "Subsistence Income" (Minimex), which is a nationally guaranteed social assistance scheme. The figures do not include recipients of the Guaranteed Income for the Elderly (GIE): for this see Figures 15-16. Nor do they include recipients of locally administered social assistance schemes.

Denmark: The data refer to families who are receiving locally administered social assistance, which is in general granted only to people who are not entitled to any other State benefit. The data are confined to those faimilies who receive payments for normal maintenance; they do not include persons who received social assistance benefits intended for education and training (unless they also received normal maintenance assistance).

France: The **Revenu Minimum d'Insertion** is too recent to allow an analysis of trends.

Germany: Social Assistance refers to "Laufende Hilfe zum Lebensunterhalt", administered by local authorities. Figures refer to the number of recipients at the end of the year in question. "Recipients" refers to the number of persons in households which are receiving social assistance. The 1991 figures refer to the western Länder only.

Ireland: Social assistance here includes supplementary welfare allowances, family income supplement and rent allowance, along with a variety of schemes for particular groups, including unemployment assistance; non-contributory pensions for widows and orphans; assistance for deserted wives, unmarried mothers and prisoners' wives.

Italy: National data are unavailable because (apart from social pensions for the handicapped and the elderly poor), these minima are decided at the local level, both in terms of the amount paid and the rules of entitlement.

Luxembourg: Data for the numbers of recipients of the **Revenue Minimum Garanti** were available from 1987 onwards. These have not been included in the present report because it was not possible to present the trend over the same period as for the other countries.

Netherlands: Figures refer to the ABW benefit (General Social Assistance Scheme) and RWW benefit (Unemployment Assistance) combined. They do not include the elderly who are receiving minimum pensions.

Portugal: These data refer to beneficiaries of a variety of different social minimum benefits: the old age and invalidity minimum pensions of the contributory regime; the social pension (means-tested) of the non-contributory regime for elderly and invalid people; the social unemployment benefit, also means-tested, which was introduced in 1985.

Spain: Recipients of Assistance Pensions and Unemployment Assistance.

United Kingdom: Until 1988/89: Families in receipt of Supplementary Benefit of housing benefit supplement.. Until 1989/90: Families in receipt of Income Support. Changes in the social security system in 1988 mean that data for years before and after that date are not directly comparable. Data are for Great Britain (i.e. excluding Northern Ireland).

BOX 7

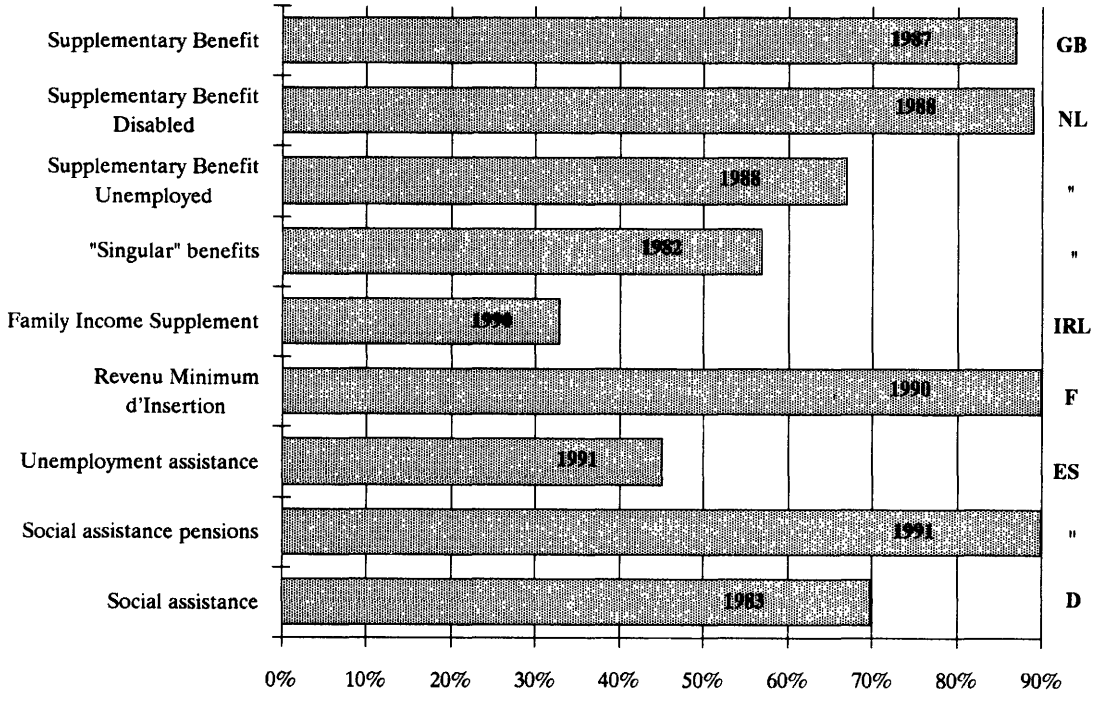
The West German system of social insurance is noteworthy for the absence of minimum levels of benefit, for example in regards to pensions. Only means-tested social assistance establishes a social minimum. However, the transfer of this system to eastern Germany has involved a number of modifications, albeit temporary, including the establishment of various minima within the social insurance system: notably in relation to the calculation of pensions and unemployment benefits.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

How effective have the public authorities been in guaranteeing to citizens the levels of financial resources defined by these social minima and in combating thereby the risks of social exclusion? This can be answered in two ways.

First, the rates of take-up can be examined: the extent, in other words, to which those who are eligible actually receive these minimum benefits. Figure 2 gives these rates for a number of countries. They are significantly lower than those for non-means-tested benefits and this has been explained in part in terms of the stigmatising character of means-tested benefits (Van Oorschot, 1991). (Not that low take-up is necessarily recognised as a problem in all countries. In Belgium, for example, there is little or no research into take-up and little public concern.).

Figure 2 **RATE OF TAKE-UP OF MEANS TESTED BENEFITS**



This figure gives the ratio: those who claim minimum benefits / those who are eligible.

Second, therefore, we can ask how far means-tested benefits tend themselves to produce social exclusion. On the one hand, their stigmatising character and the discretion which local officials exercise in their distribution mean that such benefits have often been criticised as being the antithesis of citizenship rights, and as tending themselves to exclude. Those who apply for these benefits are excluded from normal social esteem by the stigma which they involve; those who are deterred by this stigma from applying for assistance are, it is alleged, denied the basic level of financial resources which their society affirms is their right. The rising numbers of recipients of these means-tested benefits must then be viewed with alarm (Figure 1). They testify to the failure of insurance-based social benefits to protect incomes during the 1980s: either because these social insurance benefits were themselves too low, or because of the entitlement conditions which were being applied.

BOX 8

The Poverty Trap in Ireland (1989-90)

For a family with four children, the table shows that as gross earnings rose from IR£7000 to IR£9000, the net disposable income declined, as a result of increased liability to tax and social insurance payments, the loss of free health care and rent subsidies.

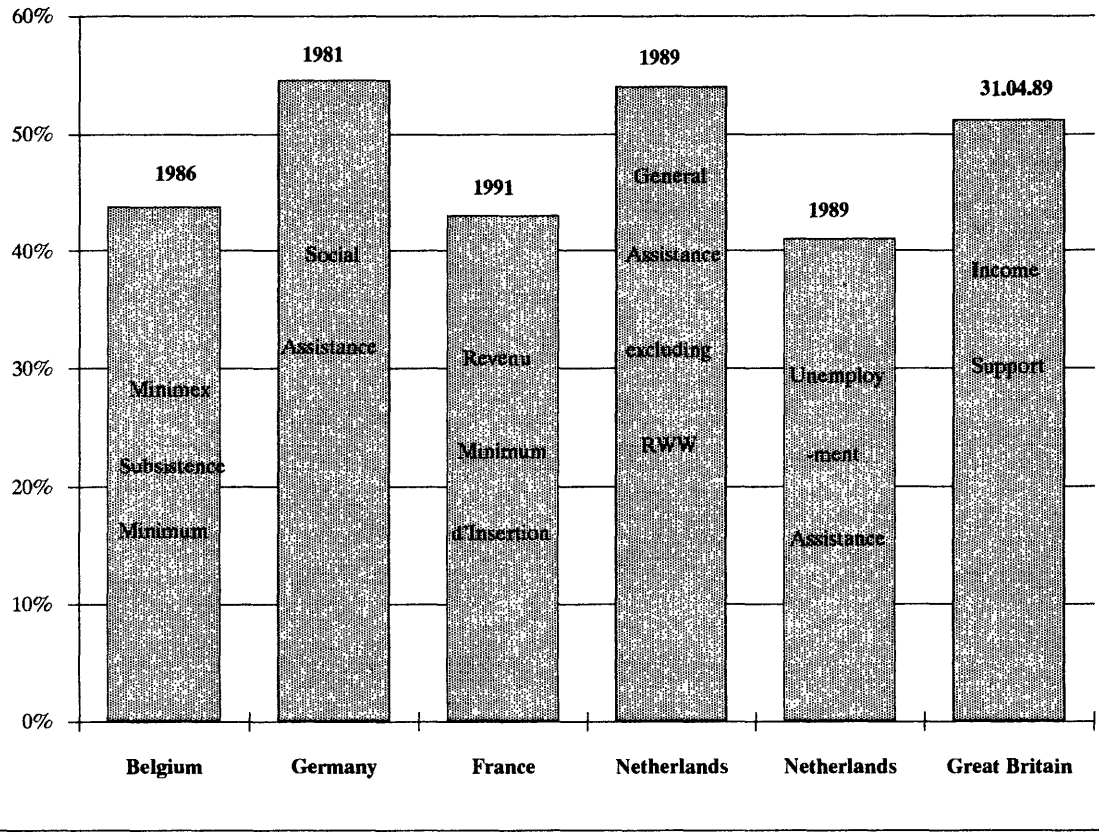
Gross Pay	Net Disposable Income
5000	6611
7000	7145
9000	5837
11000	6498
13000	7500

On the other hand, one of the counter-arguments that has been advanced in political debate is that over-generous social benefits reduce work incentives and encourage withdrawal from the formal labour market at least. Social benefits thus have the perverse effect of reducing access to labour force participation. Fears are being voiced in the Netherlands, for example, that the difference between minimum wages and benefits is too small: and that any increases will reduce work incentives and spur wage demands. In Luxembourg, the **Revenue Minimum Garanti** (RMG) increases with size of family, whereas the minimum wage does not. Where the RMG is higher, the minimum wage recipient can receive an RMG supplement to cover the difference (subject to satisfying conditions of age, residence, etc), but is still subject to higher social and health charges. Much heated public debate has therefore been levelled against the alleged generosity of the RMG, with work disincentives being alleged.

Figure 3 displays the proportions of social assistance recipients who have been dependent upon such benefits long-term in Belgium, Germany and Britain. It is this long-term dependence that has been attacked by the political right for its alleged pauperisation of lower income groups and even, indeed, the creation of an "underclass" (cf Robbins, 1990). However, the results of studies sponsored by the UK Government appear to contradict this view (Bradshaw and Millar, 1991). And in the Netherlands, evidence as to the work disincentive effects of such benefits is inconclusive. In any case, many unemployed people are

single and for them, the gap between benefit and wages is much wider.

Figure 3 **PROPORTIONS OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS RECEIVING BENEFIT FOR AT LEAST THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS**

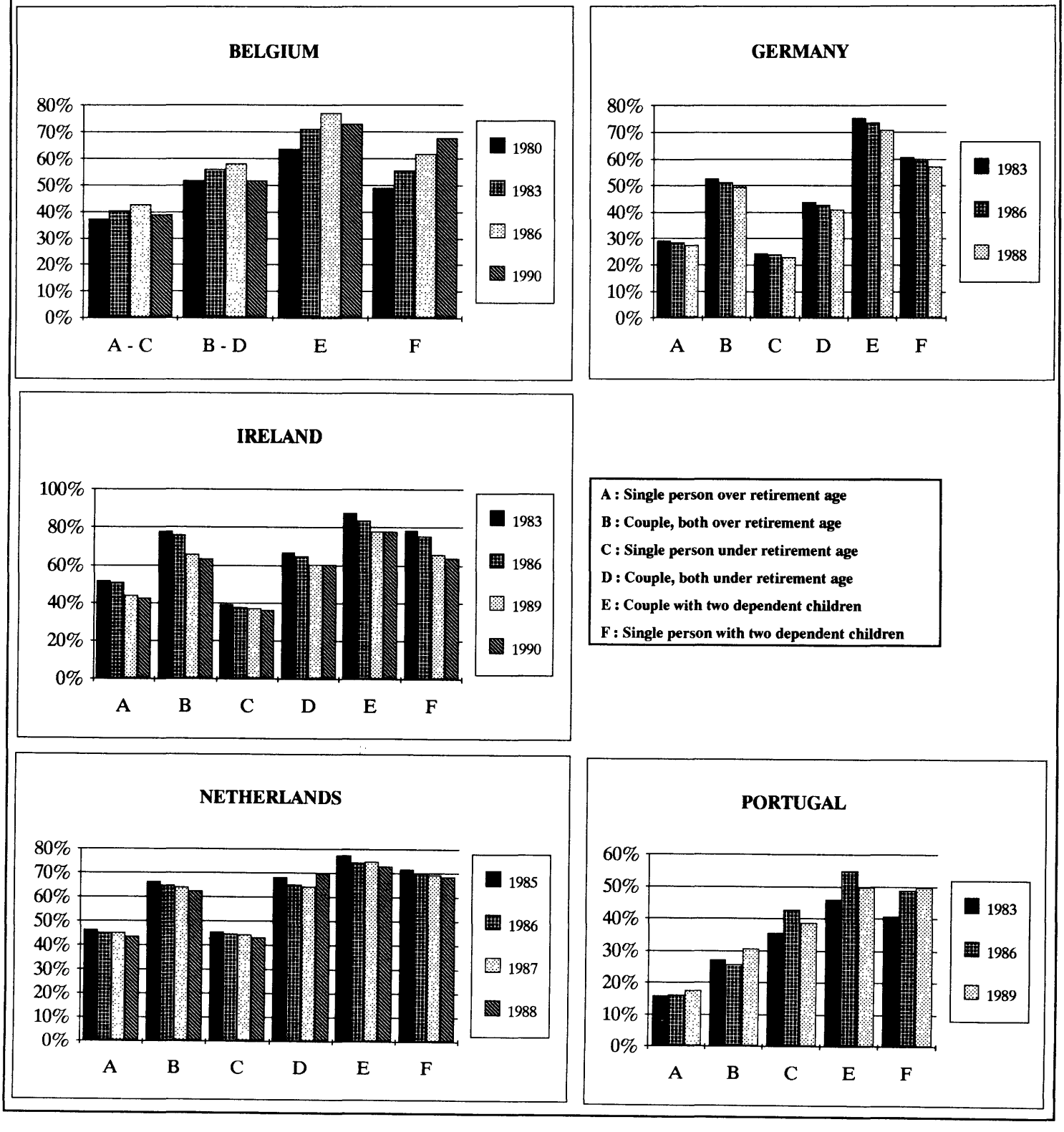


iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

How far, despite these policies, do some groups of the population experience significant disadvantage in terms of their financial resources?

We can, first, ask whether these benefits were set at a level sufficient to protect their recipients from poverty and to ensure a minimum decent standard of living. Figure 4 displays, for some of the countries of the Community, the trends in the real value of minimum benefits relative to the living standards of the population as a whole. In the difficult economic conditions of the 1980s, some national governments allowed the real value of these benefits to lag behind living standards: in part to limit the burden on public expenditure; in part to ensure effective work incentives.

Figure 4 TRENDS IN THE VALUE OF MINIMUM BENEFITS AS A PERCENTAGE OF INCOME PER CAPITA



Notes to Figure 4

This figure aims to provide a picture of the changing real value of the minimum benefits available to different family types.

The figures for people over retirement age re-appear in Figure 16.

Figures for Belgium, Ireland, Netherlands and Portugal are calculated with respect to GNP per capita. Those for Germany are with respect to average per capita disposable income. Country notes below give additional explanation where appropriate (see also notes to Figure 1).

Belgium: The data variously refer to the Subsistence Income (Minimex), the Guaranteed Income for the Elderly (GIE), and the Guaranteed Family Allowance, which provides a supplement for one child aged between 6 and 12, but is not automatically paid.

France: Data for the value of the **RMI** have not been included in the present report because it was not possible to present the trend over the same period as for the other countries.

Ireland: See notes to Figure 1. But note that for those below retirement age, other than lone parents, the minimum benefits used for the calculations are the rates of Unemployment Assistance payable to urban dwellers who have been unemployed for less than 53 weeks.

Italy: National data are unavailable because (apart from social pensions for the handicapped and the elderly poor), these minima are decided at the local level, both in terms of the amount paid and the rules of entitlement.

Luxembourg: Data for the value of the Revenu Minimum Garanti were available from 1987 onwards. These have not been included in the present report because it was not possible to present the trend over the same period as for the other countries.

Netherlands: Includes national assistance, general old age pensions, holiday allowances, incidental benefits, family allowances and student grants.

Portugal: Single person over retirement: beneficiaries of the minimum (contributory) pension. Couple over retirement age: beneficiaries of the minimum pension, with a supplement for spouse. Single person under retirement age: beneficiaries of invalidity minimum pension or social pension or social unemployment benefit. Couple with two dependent children: beneficiaries of social unemployment benefit with three dependent people. Single person with two dependent children: beneficiaries of social unemployment benefit with two dependent people.

United Kingdom: Changes in the social security system in 1988 make comparable treatment of the value of benefits before and after that date particularly hazardous. The UK data, although available, have therefore not been included in this figure.

This was the case in the UK, for example; in Spain, where minimum benefits have been tied to the minimum wage, which fell in real value during the 1980s, although it then rose during the period 1989-92; in the Netherlands, for at least part of the decade; and in Germany in the early 1980s (although for the decade as a whole German benefits more than kept pace with inflation and with average earnings). In Belgium, minimum benefits increased in relation to general living standards during the early 1980s (in part to protect the poorest, at a time when social security benefits more generally were being held back); in the second half of the decade, however, these minimum benefits fell behind (except in the case of benefits for lone parent families), even if they continued to be regularly upgraded, to keep 2% ahead of inflation.

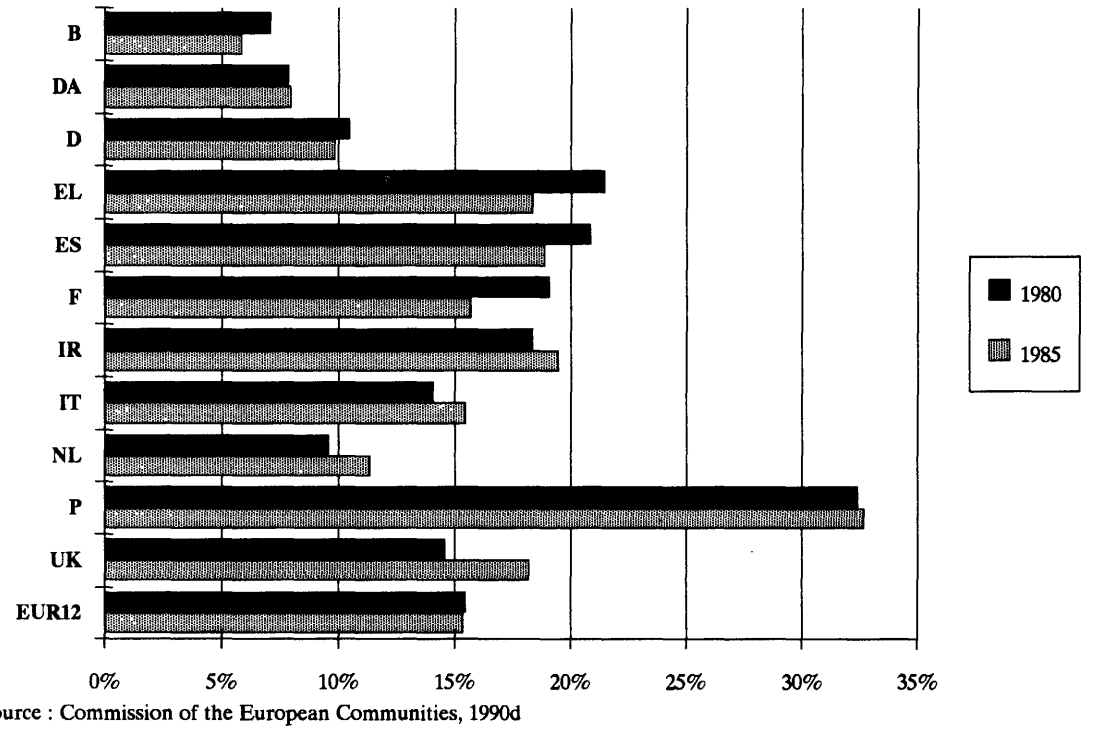
Nevertheless, it would be inappropriate to concentrate attention exclusively upon the basic benefit to which people with low incomes are entitled. Countries vary in the range of free goods and services to which, first, all citizens are entitled; to which, second, the receipt of minimum benefits acts as a passport; and which, third, are available to low income groups in addition to minimum benefits. In addition, of course, social assistance schemes vary in the resources of the household which are disregarded in the calculation of eligibility for benefit. Without being able in the present report to offer a systematic comparison of these additional entitlements, Box 9 displays some typical "packages" of benefits (although in outline only). In the future work of the Observatory it would be valuable, if resources permit, to examine the packages of support available to typical vulnerable households in different EC countries; and indeed, this is something which is being undertaken during 1992 in our special study of social services.

BOX 9

	Goods and Services Free to All	Benefits to which recipients of minimum benefits are entitled automatically	Additional Benefits available to low income groups
F		Health and maternity cover Housing assistance	
IR		Additional payments in relation to emergency and exceptional needs for fuel, clothing and household goods.	Free health care
IT	Health care Education	Free medicines Additional premia for heating and clothes for specific population groups	Free school meals, public child care, home helps Credits towards housing costs
L		Health cover at a reduced tariff Housing allowance Disability allowance Training allowances	Free transport
NL	Child Benefit	Health cover	Rent allowances. Reductions of local taxes and charges. Special payments for social and medical services; to help in labour market reintegration - funds for training, work experience, child care, etc; and to enable people to start new companies.
UK	Health Care Education Child Benefit	Additional premia for specific population groups Free medicines and dental care	Assistance with housing costs Grants or loans from Social Fund (Box 11) Free school meals Free social services

Beyond this, we can examine the broader pattern of inequality in financial resources and the extent of poverty. But of course, how far a given pattern of inequality or poverty can be taken as a judgement on existing policies, or can be used to argue for new policies, is a question which goes beyond the boundaries of a technical report. Figure 5 presents the proportions of the population falling below the poverty lines indicated (which are defined with respect to the average equivalent expenditure in each of the countries concerned) (Commission of the European Communities, 1990d). The figures reveal the extent to which significant numbers of a country's population have incomes which are seriously depressed relative to living standards there: whether it is more appropriate to speak of this in terms of "poverty" or "inequality" is unimportant here. What the figures reveal is that it is in the countries which are poorest - and which, presumably, are most constrained in the resources which they can devote to public services, to labour market policies and to programmes of income support - that the highest rates of poverty or inequality are to be found.

Figure 5 **POVERTY IN FIGURES : EUROPE IN THE 1980s**



source : Commission of the European Communities, 1990d

This figure reflects the poverty incidence in 1980 and 1985.
Definition: Poverty is taken as 50% of National Average Equivalent Expenditure in respective years.

BOX 10

This report does not enter into the complex debates on the measurement of financial poverty and the appropriateness of different types of official statistics for monitoring poverty. This has been - and continues to be - a concern of Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities (see for example Eurostat, Poverty in Figures: Europe in the 1990s). It has also been a matter of renewed discussion in the UK, for example, since the late 1980s, with the launch of a new government statistical series, "Households Below Average Income". The methodology for the latter is being revised following an official review stimulated by criticism from - among others - the Parliamentary Social Security Committee. But while it provides data on the distribution of income, it explicitly avoids designating any particular level of income as a poverty line. Recent publications by Eurostat, such as that mentioned above, are less abstemious, but nevertheless refuse to give privileged status to any single poverty line.

The data cited in this section have, in general, offered a number of cross-sectional indicators for different time periods. It would, in principle, be desirable to include longitudinal data also, tracing the experience of carefully selected samples of individuals over a period of time and identifying the obstacles and barriers which they encounter. Within particular countries, such studies are available and in future reports of the Observatory they will be used as far as possible. However, longitudinal data which are comparable cross-nationally are much more scarce. The EC Community Household Panel which the European Commission is considering launching could in the long-term be an invaluable tool for Observatories such as our own.

BOX 11

In any system of social assistance, special and emergency needs may present themselves, requiring additional payments.

In the United Kingdom, a new system of grants and loans - the Social Fund - was introduced in 1988 as part of a more general reform of the social security system. Some aspects of the Fund highlight some of the threats to citizenship rights which are discussed in these pages. First, it offers loans for one-off, urgent needs (which had been met, within the old arrangements, by a system of grants) and it thereby creates debt. To receive a loan, the applicant must demonstrate that he or she is able to make regular repayments; but by the end of the second year of the new scheme, approximately 38,000 applications had been refused on grounds of inability to repay. For successful applicants, the Social Fund tends to add to the burden of their debts: their debts to the State itself.

Second, the eligibility criteria, which link the loan to ability to repay, diminish the right to assistance on the basis of need alone.

Third, the Social Fund loans depend on the discretion of the local officials who administer them, rather than on the rights of those in need. Just as important, the budget available to a local office is fixed in advance and when this budget is spent, no further loans can be made. This has been criticised by, among others, the Department of Social Security's Advisory Committee, arguing that in a nationally-operated social security scheme, benefits should be available irrespective of the geographical area or the time of year when the application is made. The Social Fund budget is to be increased by more than 30% in 1992/3 and various administrative changes are intended to make the scheme more effective. A government-funded evaluation of the Social Fund by independent researchers has been completed and publication of their results is awaited.

4.3. CONSUMPTION AND INDEBTEDNESS

Although much poverty research has focussed on incomes, this is usually because it is taken as an indicator of a particular standard of living for the person or household concerned. What matters more is the actual pattern of consumption that an individual or family is able to enjoy and how far they are able to consume those goods and services which are counted as "normal" in the society concerned.

The burden of indebtedness arising from short-term consumer credit has been a major feature of debates about "new poverty" in the 1980s. A report published by the German government in 1990 reveals that failure to pay debts is concentrated among those who are known from other evidence to be particularly vulnerable to income insecurity, including young families - and especially lone parent households. And in Belgium, for example, a new law on

consumer credit (1991) aims to avoid consumers getting into debt. Such indebtedness is, of course, in some senses the antithesis of citizenship. Debt renders a person dependent on the whim of the money lender; it renders precarious all continuing consumption. Where that indebtedness is to a public authority, it involves the surrender of normal citizenship rights and securities.

A variety of schemes have developed to help those burdened with debt. In Ireland, for example, the Ministry of Social Welfare in 1989 launched the Loan Guarantee Fund, administered through the Society of St Vincent de Paul and the Credit Unions, to secure loans to those in debt to money-lenders. In the Netherlands, there is an infrastructure for solving debt problems, with a central role for the municipal credit banks, which grant "reconstruction credits" for people in debt. The effectiveness of these arrangements remains to be evaluated, kowever.

Public policy debates in many of the EC countries have focussed, in particular, on the risks of people being unable to meet their fuel bills and the conditions under which they may have their supplies of electricity and gas cut off. Exclusion from heating and lighting is recognised to be exclusion from civilised existence itself. And in the case of the elderly, children and the disabled, such exclusion may of course be life-threatening, in winter at least.

The national experts report on these national anxieties and the efforts that the authorities are making to insulate more vulnerable groups from the consequences of their fuel debts. In some cases, the extent of such debts has stimulated local authorities to call for more generous social benefits to be available from central government; and in the UK, a Public Utilities Access Forum, comprising voluntary organisations and other relevant bodies, has been monitoring policy on the regulation of public utilities and low-income consumers since 1989. But as yet, it seems that no policy solutions beyond the immediate and pragmatic are being seriously considered. It may be that only, for example, by institutionalising fuel rights as an element of citizenship can this security be guaranteed.

4.4. EDUCATION

i. Standards and Coverage

The educational rights of citizens in the countries of the EC, as defined by government, consist in little more than being provided with an appropriate education until school leaving age. More generally but more vaguely, a citizen is generally supposed to have the right to be

educated up to the limits of his or her ability and to be provided with the basic skills which all citizens need if they are to function effectively within a complex urban-industrial society.

The school leaving age varies little between the countries of the EC. For the older age group of school pupils, some countries offer schemes which combine part-time education with part-time vocational training or work experience, in an attempt to bridge the gap between school and work and to promote integration into the labour force. Thus, for example, the French Community within Belgium has established **Enterprise d'Apprentisage** Professionel, by which young people between 18 and 25 years receive a package of general education, vocational training and work experience. This establishes their entitlements to health insurance and other welfare allowances, but, crucially, not to unemployment insurance benefit at the completion of the programme.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

Are children being educated up to the limits of their capacities? Or are there barriers to access, even within the nominally free public education system of the compulsory school years?

These questions must be asked against the background of an expanding and changing school population. In Portugal, for example, since the early 1970s, the expansion of educational provision has seen two problems which have also been encountered in many other EC countries. First, increased rates of participation by children from lower social strata in an educational system oriented mainly to the middle and upper classes. Second, the arrival of newcomers from the former colonies, introducing still greater diversity of students' backgrounds.

Economic pressures on low income families create major disincentives to staying on at school. In Portugal, again, some school drop-out is linked to the high rates of (illegal) child employment: here there are bad working conditions and no social security, but often such jobs are important for the economic well-being of the family and may even be seen as a form of apprenticeship. And generally, the opportunity cost of continuing education is greater for poor families (see Box 12).

BOX 12

In 1989 a non-governmental survey investigated the "hidden" costs of supposedly free primary education in Ireland; a second report in 1991, confined to the city of Limerick, looked similarly at secondary education. These two investigations indicate that:

*** 35% of the running costs of primary schools are met from local sources, i.e. the parish and contributions and fund-raising by the parents themselves;**

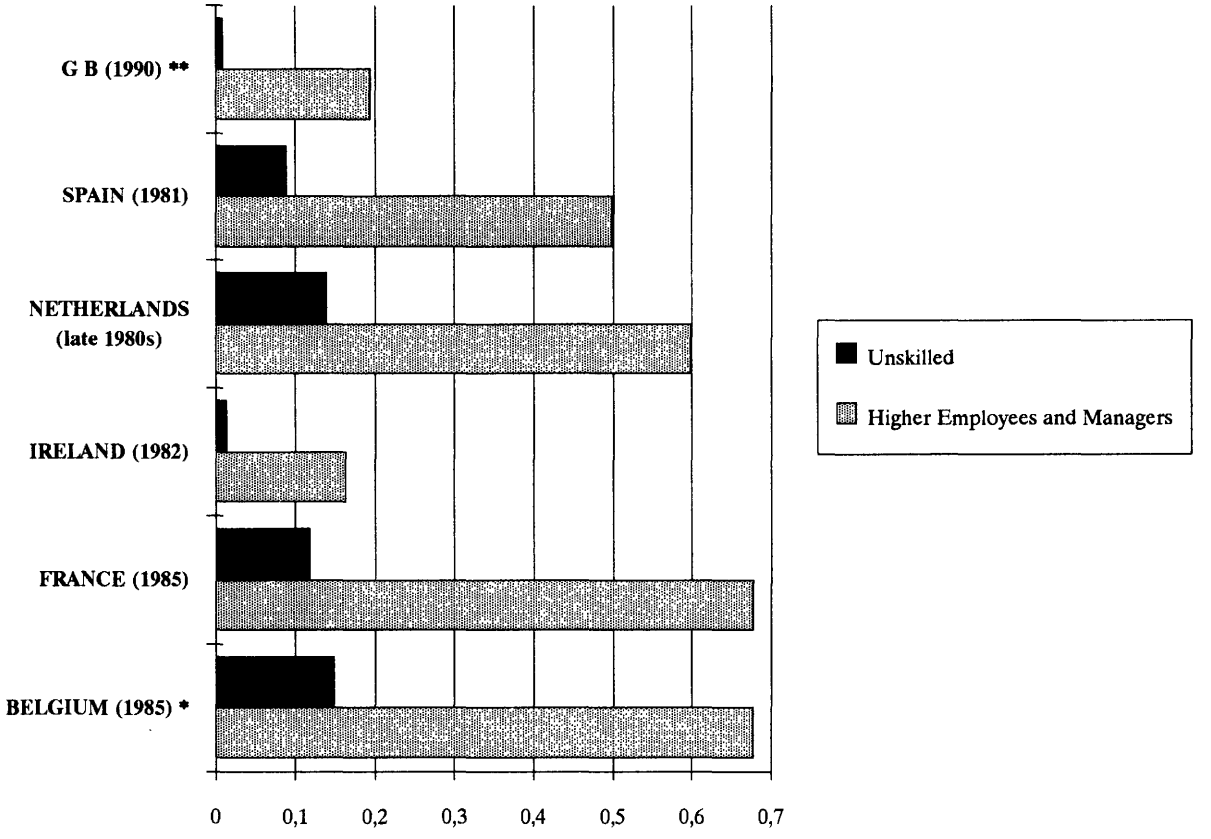
*** the affluence of local communities then has a major influence on the range of facilities available in schools;**

*** low income families also find considerable difficulty in meeting the cost of keeping children at school (books, uniforms etc) some do so only by borrowing or by using social benefits they are receiving; some, however, can receive special assistance with these costs.**

Substantial class gradients are to be found in the proportions of children continuing their education beyond school leaving age - or even, in some countries such as Greece, completing elementary school. Inequalities of educational attainment are also evident as between urban and rural areas. One factor is that children from remote rural areas must live away from home for their secondary education and this imposes an unaffordable cost on many rural families. Another is their high rates of seasonal absenteeism from school, at times when their labour is needed within the rural economy (Rivière, 1991).

Finally, the participation rates of different social classes in higher education provide an indicator of the extent to which children and young people from different backgrounds are being educated up to the limit of their abilities. Figure 6 shows that parents in professional and managerial occupations are, in the countries concerned, at least five times more likely than manual workers to send their children to university. In Greece, at least, access to public tertiary education is in practice dependent on access to private preparatory institutes or private tutoring. Government attempts to establish analogous after-school programmes in State schools have failed.

Figure 6 **PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC CATEGORIES**



* Figures are obtained by adding participation in university and in higher education outside university (assuming no overlap or double-counting).

** Figures are for University acceeptances.

In face of these inequalities, various remedial policies are to be found in most member states, aimed at ensuring that those children who might be neglected by the school system nevertheless achieve their potential. Illiteracy programmes are common. Educational priority policies exist in Ireland, the UK and the Netherlands, for example, with schools receiving additional budgets for pupils from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds and ethnic minorities. However, in Ireland these benefits have been focussed primarily on urban schools, possibly to the neglect of schools in rural areas. And in the Netherlands, evaluation of these priority policies suggests that few of the benefits have been concentrated on the pupils concerned. In Belgium, where education recently became the responsibility of the Communities, the Flemish Community in 1991 launched an educational priority policy,

targetted on vulnerable groups such as immigrants. And a new Flemish Decree on Basic Education, aiming at better coordination of adult education, focusses on the illiterate and unskilled, immigrants and refugees, with cooperation between local "Centres for Basic Education" and local authorities. The initial evaluation is positive.

In Portugal, the Education Law of 1986 set in motion a number of reforms, aimed at the reform of curricula on the one hand, improved support services to those pupils in difficulties on the other. Recent initiatives under this law include pre-school education, the development of home-school links and improved teacher training for schools dealing a high proportion of disadvantaged young people and ethnic minorities. These programmes - operating at primary and secondary levels - are already having some significant effects in terms of establishing new forms of partnership between local agencies; promoting the development of educational statistics, by which progress can be monitored; developing pedagogic support to teachers.

In Ireland, specific additional measures to support educationally disadvantaged groups are under way. "Second chance" educational opportunities for the long-term unemployed have been expanded. In addition, during recent years, educational provision for the children of Travellers has grown, especially at primary and pre-school levels; Junior Training Centres have been established at post-primary level, to provide older Traveller children with basic skills; and visiting teachers have been appointed to liaise directly with Traveller families. In areas where this latter scheme operates, rates of school attendance have increased. Yet despite these specific initiatives, the educational system overall is sometimes criticised as an instrument bu which Travellers are assimilated into the culture and lifestyle of the settled population. Indeed, special classes and segregation in schools are seen by some of these critics as a form of "unconscious institutional racism". They argue that the curriculum should rather include material on Traveller culture and way of live and that teachers should receive special training for teaching pupils from a distinctive cultural background.

In Flanders, educational measures aimed at non-Belgian children include, first, linguistic support in schools where there are substantial numbers of such children. However, only 39% of primary schools with more than 10% non-Belgian pupils are using this additional support; and children of ethnic minorities who have Belgian nationality are not included. Second, additional teachers are provided where schools have more than 30% immigrant pupils, to enable them to offer smaller classes. However, most of the additional teachers are lower paid and only temporary, with high rates of turnover. Third, additional lessons are offered with home country teachers; however, here there are problems of recruitment and low integration of the foreign teachers.

Education for the children of ethnic minorities and foreigners is nowhere more of a challenge than in Luxembourg, given the proportion of foreigners in the country. Education policy-makers there are being forced to choose between, for example, multi-lingual integrated schools and linguistically separate schools. Under the 1990 reform of secondary education, bilingualism, in order to ease the burden on pupils, particularly those foreigners whose mother tongue is neither French nor German. These policy questions, arising from the mobility of the Community's working population, are, of course, of particular significance for a Community Observatory.

Special education is intended, in many countries, to integrate children with special needs into the education system. This includes special classes in normal schools, rather than the traditional emphasis on special schools. In Ireland, for example, there are nearly 300 special classes of this sort, catering for 3000 pupils. In Spain, the Law for the Social Integration of Disabled Persons (1981) has since 1986 aimed at their intergration into normal schools, affecting more than 20,000 disabled pupils during that period. In the UK, however, there are fears that special educational needs will be neglected in the competitive, market-oriented education system of the 1990s (Lee, 1992).

Finally, in Italy, in face of the high drop-out rate of university students, a shorter curriculum has been introduced for an intermediate university degree (**diploma universitario**). However, no effective measures have been developed in regards to drop-out from school. Presidential decrees and ministerial regulations have sought to establish schools obligations in regards to pupils with learning difficulties and to detect school evasion but no compulsory implementation has followed, apart from some local initiatives. Even for immigrant children, a growing concern, no special support system is being implemented. Only the handicapped and Gypsy children are seen as needing additional support so as to have access to basic education: the law provides special teachers for these two groups, within the state education system. Indeed, the 1992 Law on the Handicapped strengthens the obligation on the authorities to ensure that this right is a reality, including e.g. transportation. But this is only for the physically and mentally handicapped: others in difficulties (e.g. emotional and relational stress) are not acknowledged as being entitled to additional support. There is pressure on teachers to "medicalise" the problems which these pupils present.

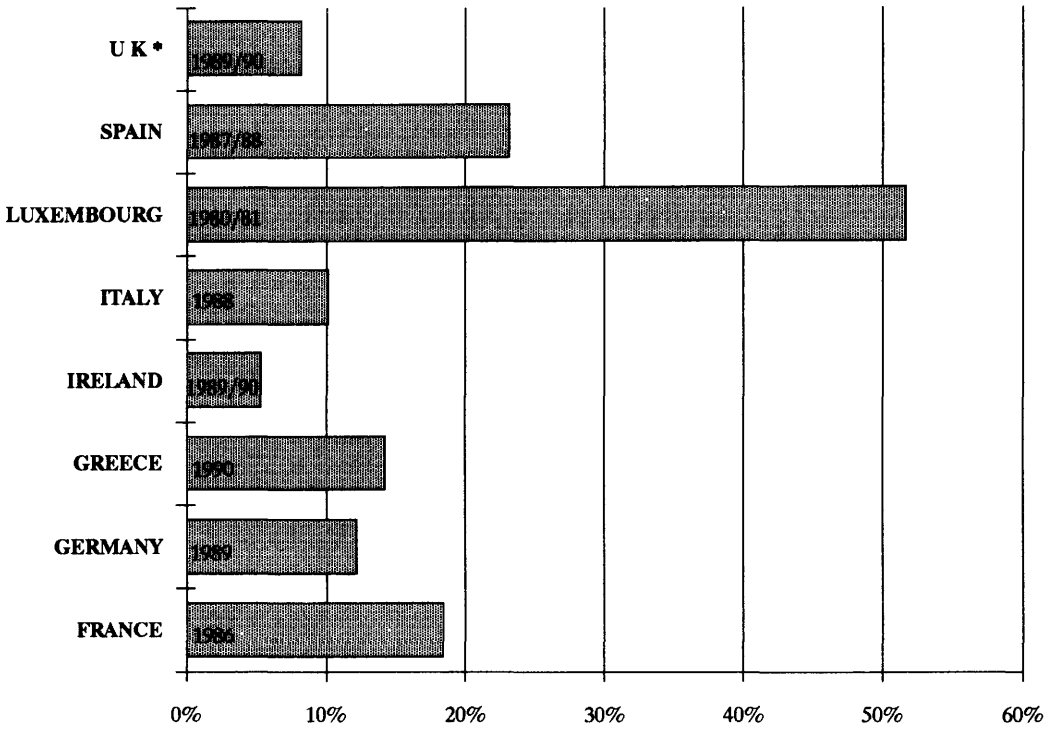
iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

Data from Ireland, for example, reveal that although young people tend to attain higher qualifications than the previous generation, those with different levels of educational qualification face substantial differences in the risk of unemployment. Similar findings

emerge from research in Denmark, although with some interesting contrasts between young men and women: the relatively high unemployment risk for women with higher education is noteworthy. When young people pass out of the educational system, they carry with them skills and credentials which shape how far they can obtain secure positions within the adult world. The inequalities in educational attainment highlighted above are highly fateful for their subsequent adult careers (Rivière, 1991).

Figure 7 indicates, for most of the countries of the Community, the proportion of children who leave secondary school without a certificate. Of course, these certificates vary between countries in their content and their significance. Nevertheless, what seems clear is that in most countries between one tenth and one quarter of children are passing out of the education system with no academic credentials. This may become a life-long handicap, threatening their social and occupational integration. Only in the former east Germany have substantially better rates been achieved. (However, data for 1990 - the most recent available - reveal that like east German adults, substantial numbers of school pupils abandoned the east German schools before completing their education, in order to gain access to west German schools; this had the preserve effect of raising the rates of those leaving east german schools without certificates of any kind).

Figure 7 **PROPORTION OF CHILDREN LEAVING SECONDARY EDUCATION WITHOUT A CERTIFICATE**



* School leavers with no graded examination results.

This figure represents the proportion of young adults who have finished or permanently discontinued their education, but do not have even the lower secondary certificate.

Data on illiteracy trends reinforce these fears. The definition of illiteracy and the estimating of the numbers of persons involved are as difficult as any of the indicators mentioned in this report. Nevertheless, the definitions and figures provided by the educational policy establishments of different countries can at least give some indication of the seriousness of the problem as they view it: the lack of the most basic skills which are needed to survive and function within an urban-industrial society (cf Rivière, 1991). The estimates which we have been able to collect include figures of 5% for Belgium; 4% for Spain; and (depending upon the degree of illiteracy) between 1% and 9% for France, and between

1% and 8% for the Netherlands. Nevertheless, in such countries as Spain, this illiteracy has a strong age gradient and as younger generations pass into maturity, the general level of illiteracy can be expected to fall substantially, even without further policy reforms.

4.5. EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Employment normally provides not only an income but also the principal means of social integration. This was long true for men; but in recent years it has also, to an increasing extent, been true of women, as the steady increase in their labour force participation rates indicates. Unemployment tends to involve exclusion from the labour market and leads to the loss of many other forms of participation in society (see Box 13). Only in Denmark have the bulk of the unemployed remained within the trade union and unemployment insurance systems and "avoided comprehensive existential and political marginalisation" (Abrahamson, 1987, p. 10). On the other hand, more varied patterns of involvement in the labour force - part-time work, early retirement, etc - confirm that social exclusion and labour force participation have no simple interrelationship.

BOX 13

A survey of young people in Ireland, published in 1988, provides evidence that unemployment leads to social exclusion in the sense of dissociation from social activities. Unemployed young people who subsequently obtained employment participated more than previously in group activities such as parties, dances or going to a pub or restaurant. Those who were still unemployed were participating less in these activities and were either doing more things at home, or doing nothing (Ronayne, 1988).

It is important to notice the new patterns of employment that have come to the fore during recent years. The growing importance of part-time, temporary and precarious employment is well-documented (Commission of the European Communities, 1990c, 1991d). In Spain, for example, the growth of employment during recent years has been primarily through the creation of temporary jobs, which now constitute almost one third of all job contracts (having been less than one fifth as recently as 1987). The proportions of temporary jobs are particularly high (more than half) in agriculture and the construction industry. And young people have been particularly involved: less than half of employed young people (16-25) in 1987 had temporary contracts; by 1990 the figure had risen to two thirds.

This has three consequences for social exclusion. First, temporary employment does not

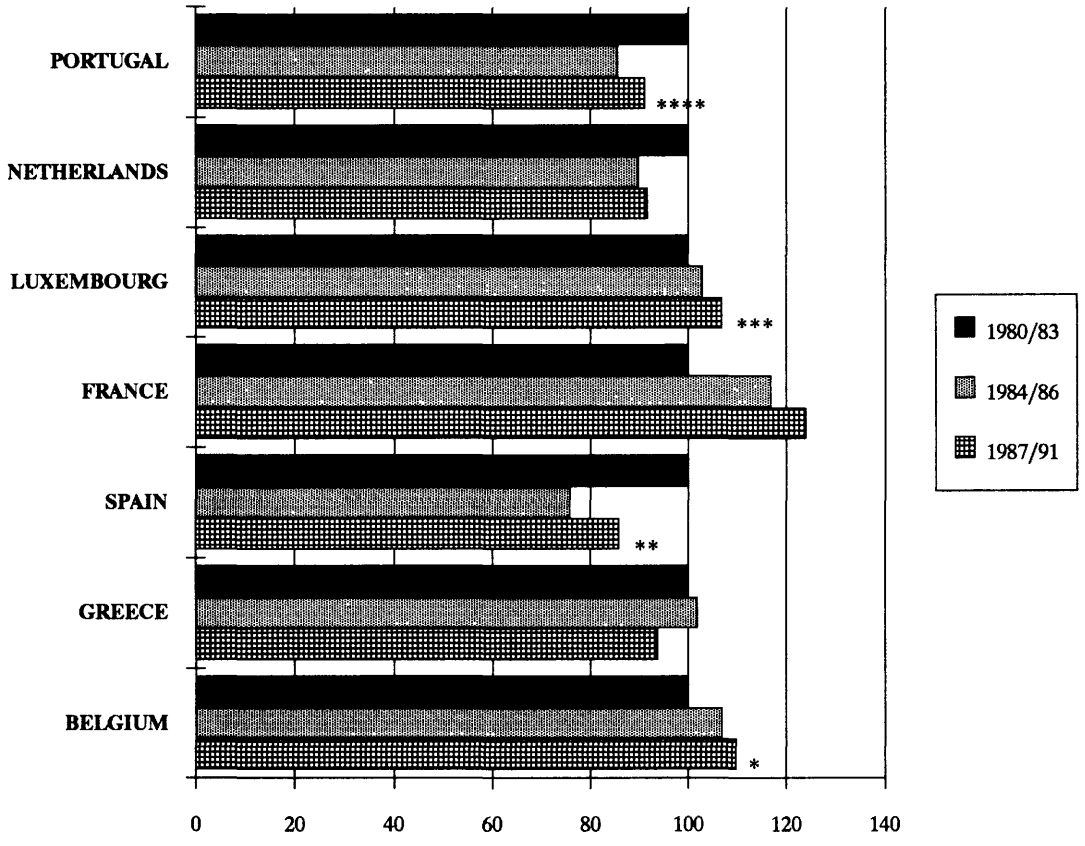
make for stable labour force integration, because only a low proportion of temporary contracts are made permanent and most such workers remain precarious. Second, temporary hiring limits social protection for unemployment; and not surprisingly, therefore, in 1990 less than half of the Spanish unemployed below the age of 20 were receiving unemployment benefit for a period of more than six months. Third, working conditions tend to be worse and job-related accidents are, in Spain at least, three times higher than for people in permanent jobs.

i. Standards and Coverage

During the period since the second World War, governments in the EC countries have with varying degrees of conviction affirmed the importance of full employment as a policy goal. Employment - at a decent wage - has, to some extent, been accepted as a normal right of citizenship. Persisting unem-ployment at rates which in northern Europe, at least, seem high by the standards of the 1960s can then be taken as a negative judgement on the policies which have been pursued, even if in the late 1980s these rates tended to fall. So also can the persistence of low pay. Nevertheless, the right to employment has nowhere in the EC been affirmed as strongly as, most notably, in Sweden. Public policy-makers have tended to place the emphasis upon work as a duty, with unemployment carrying the suspicion that it is the individual concerned who is at fault.

As far as pay is concerned, some countries have had an explicit government-backed minimum wage (see Figure 8). In the Netherlands and Spain, the real value of the minimum wage was lower in 1990 than in 1980. In France, however, during the 1970s and 1980s the SMIC improved its value in real terms and, indeed, in relation to average earnings, and appears to be generally supported as a means of limiting downward pressure on the wages of weaker groups. And the minimum wage, in turn, serves as the point of reference for a number of minimum benefits, especially the minimum old age pension. Perverse effects could, however, include reversed the system of automatic partial indexation of wages (1982-89), including minimum wages. Current incomes policies are expected to worsen wage relativities compared with automatic indexation (which tended to help the low paid) and to increase the risk of exclusion for lower paid workers (especially those not covered by collective agreements).

Figure 8 **TRENDS IN THE REAL VALUE OF MINIMUM WAGES**



* Figures for 1991 refer to employees who are 21 years older and at least 6 months employed

* Figures for 1991 refer to employees who are 21 years or older and at least 6 months employed.
** estimates
*** persons without dependents
**** non-agricultural sectors

The wages are at constant prices.

Policies on employment and unemployment cannot be separated from policies on retirement and early retirement, nor indeed from policies on training. Both of the latter can serve as policy instruments for adjusting the numbers of people seeking work. Thus, for example, policies on early retirement have been especially important in eastern Germany, in limiting the rise in registered unemployment durng 1990-92: in January 1992 three quarters of a million workers were in such schemes. Similarly, policies which modify the amount of work which each employee takes will affect how much is then available to others. In eastern Germany, again, schemes of short-time working, with financial compensation being paid via

the employer by the labour office, involved 2 million workers in the Spring of 1991 (but only half a million by january 1992). So also, general industrial policy will affect the range of employment opportunities which are available. Some Community countries - most obviously the UK - have during the 1980s retreated from an active industrial policy by government. In contrast, in eastern Germany, where many of the enterprises which have not yet been privatised and are considered as "bad risks", policy-makers face the difficult decision as to whether or not to develop public sector industries in order to maintain employment.

However, turning to employment policy more narrowly conceived, two main strategies have been pursued - so-called "passive" and "active" policies - the first to maintain the incomes of the unemployed, the second to promote employment.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

(a) *Passive Employment Policies*

As far as income maintenance policies are concerned, unemployment benefit has become one of the principal elements of social insurance during the present century (for an overview of unemployment benefits, see MISEP, 1990). In some countries the variations in unemployment insurance benefit are so great, depending upon the employment sector concerned, union and company strength, etc, that no overall figures can be given of trends in the value of benefits. In Spain, for example, there are marked contrasts in the unemployment benefits to which the "core" labour force and those in temporary jobs are entitled (see also Box 14). However, it is clear that in many countries the value of unemployment insurance benefit has been insufficient to provide recipients and their families with living standards that keep pace with those of people at work.

BOX 14

In Italy, the degree of protection which workers enjoy against the risk of unemployment reflects broader patterns of inequality within the occupational system. Ordinary unemployment benefit is paid to those who lose their jobs individually: but this is set at just 15% of lost wages. More generous is the special unemployment benefit, for those subject to a collective lay-off, which for industrial workers is set at 80% of lost wages, with somewhat less generous schemes for rural workers and construction workers. The Special Earnings Integration Fund (CIGS), financed principally through national taxation, supports during periods of industrial restructuring those who would otherwise suffer collective redundancies.

Beneficiaries of the ordinary unemployment benefit come mostly from small workshops and enterprises and are particularly numerous in the South, the least prosperous area of Italy; the more generous special unemployment benefit is enjoyed by industrial workers who had a permanent work contract, but not by those on temporary contracts; CIGS tends to favour workers according to the strength, size and visibility of the company they work for and their union support.

In July 1991, CIGS was reformed, following criticisms of its abuses by both sides of industry, and is now available for a shorter period only.

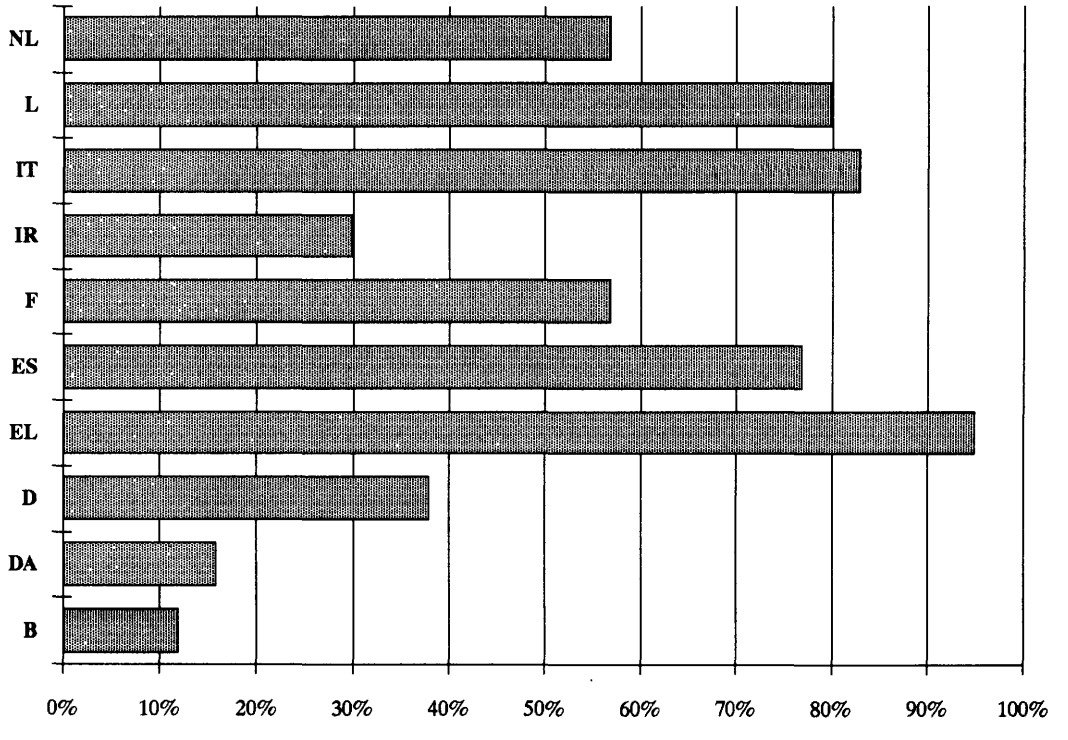
In Belgium, Greece and France, for example, the value of unemployment insurance benefit was falling relative to average incomes or minimum wages during the 1980s. Nor, indeed, has unemployment insurance benefit everywhere been sufficient to raise recipients and their families above the social minimum defined by means-tested social assistance. In Ireland, for example, basic unemployment insurance benefits declined in value from 108% of means-tested assistance in 1983 to just 100% in 1991; and in the Federal Republic, by the late 1980s the annual rate of increase in unemployment insurance benefits had fallen behind that of social assistance.

However, it is by no means the case that all of the unemployed receive unemployment insurance benefit. Those who are ineligible are obliged to rely on means-tested unemployment assistance, where this exists. In Spain, the period 1982-91 saw, first, a slight fall and, then, a larger rise in the proportion of registered unemployed covered by unemployment insurance or unemployment assistance benefit: the proportion varies between 33.6% in 1982, 28.9% in 1987 and 51.7% in 1991 (third quarter). Of these, the numbers covered through unemployment **insurance** varied between 427,000 in 1989 and 620,000 in 1991. However, with rising numbers of unemployed during this period, there was a much more dramatic rise in the number of unemployed who depended on unemployment assistance: little more than 100,000 in 1982, but over 827,000 in 1991. This assistance is set at just 75% of the minimum wage and is thus at subsistence level.

The final line of support is social assistance. But many do not receive even this, as Figure 9 reveals. The precarious labour market situation of many young people means that they periodically go "in and out" of dependency on such benefits. As they grow older, many escape into secure employment but there is a high risk that those who become social assistance claimants before they are 20 will become permanently dependent upon it.

Figure 9 **TRENDS IN PROPORTION OF THE UNEMPLOYED NOT RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFIT OR ASSISTANCE**

Data refer to 1989



source : Commission of the European Communities, 1991 a

% age of total unemployed

Note on Figure 9

In the first annual report of the Observatory, an equivalent figure was included for 1985. That figure had been taken from the European Commission's final report on the Second Programme to Combat Poverty (Commission of the European Communities, 1991a), the ultimate source for that data being the Community Labour Force Survey. For the present report, the table has been updated using data from the more recent Labour Force Survey.

Even here, however, there are further exclusions: notably those unemployed young people whom official regulations deem the responsibility of their parents rather than a charge upon the public purse. And means tests are in some countries applied to the household, rather than the individual. In Germany and Ireland, for example, this is the case for unemployment assistance and many women who are unemployed in consequence do not qualify for benefit.

Of course, unemployed young people may not be poor, if they can count on support from their families. But the lengthening of the entrance period into the labour market and the increase in the age of entrance, lengthen the period during which young people live as dependents in their families, putting stress on lower family incomes.

(b) *Active Employment Policies*

Active labour market policies received increasing emphasis during the 1980s (Room et al, 1990), even if, within the EC, only Portugal and Greece emulated Sweden by spending more on active measures than on income maintenance. Everywhere, it seems, there have been programmes to promote the employment of the long-term unemployed and the young employed, notably by means of wage subsidies to employers (see Box 15).

BOX 15

Of the many active labour market measures identified by the national experts, the following examples are mentioned here because in each case there has been some evaluation of their effectiveness.

*** In Belgium, the Weer-Werk - Work-Again - programme of the Flemish Labour Exchange Office, aims to reach 10,000 persons per annum and to provide vocational guidance, coupled with social employment. The evaluation indicates that the programme succeeded in reaching the hard core unemployed (long-term, no educational qualifications). One third of the 1989 intake found a job. The social employment element of Weer-Werk was less successful.**

*** In Ireland, government training and temporary employment schemes are the responsibility of FAS, the State Training and Employment Authority, established in 1987. One evaluation (Breen, 1991) of training and employment schemes for young people highlights the following global findings:**

- **participation in these schemes is higher among those young people who have qualifications from compulsory schooling than among those who have none: the most disadvantaged;**
- **in the short-term, employment chances are raised significantly by participation in these programmes: especially the temporary employment schemes;**
- **in the longer-term, however, these improvements disappear for training schemes.**

*** In Greece, special programmes of re-training and self-employment for redundant workers shed by firms in difficulties: early evidence suggests most self-employment fails.**

In Italy, under Law 863/84, temporary training and work contracts have had some success with 14-29 year olds, including those with fewer educational qualifications. 85% of these contracts terminate in a permanent contract for the young person or a better job. However, the typical trainee is male, working in a blue collar job in the North; the measure has benn of less benefit for other groups, sectors and regions.

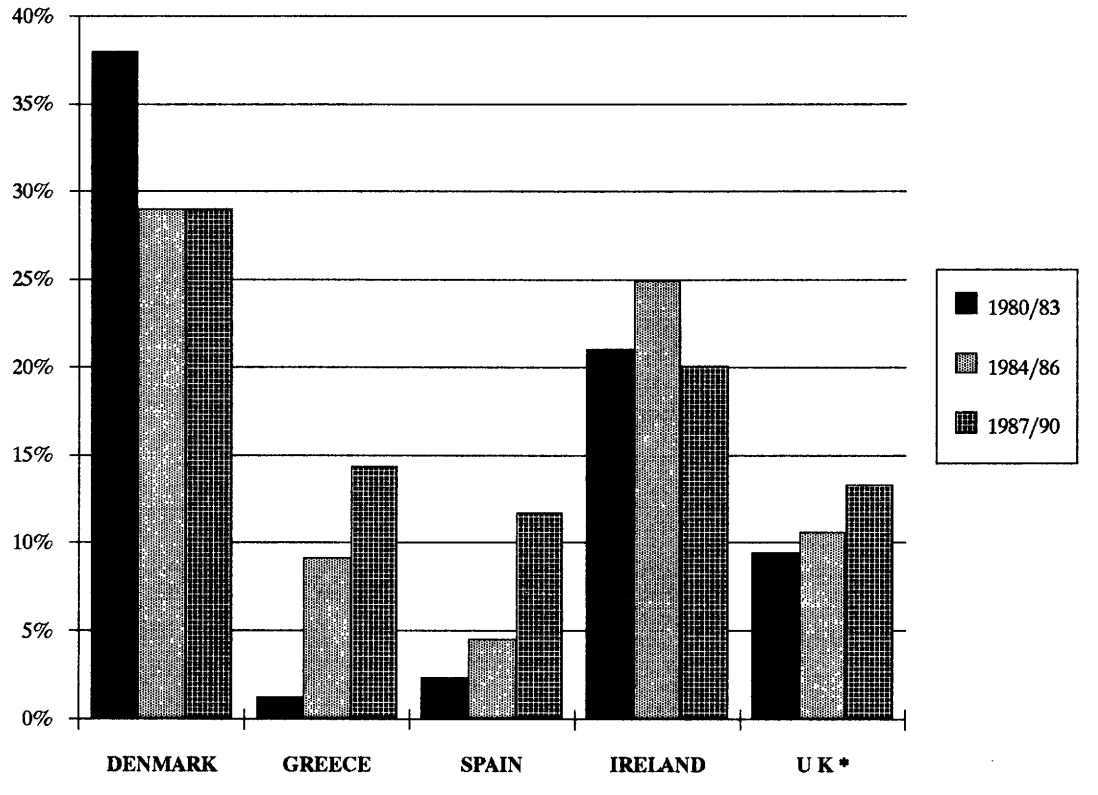
*** In the United Kingdom, the rates of success of participants in some of the major government employment schemes, in terms of subsequently finding jobs, are as follows:**

- **Employment Training: 34% employed three months after leaving;**
- **Job Interview Guarantee Scheme: 25% placed in jobs;**
- **Restart Interviews: 17% placed in jobs or other government schemes.**

In many countries, these programmes are being developed within frameworks agreed by the social partners. In the Netherlands, for example, the new Labour Provision Law makes government and the social partners responsible for the provision of employment and, since the beginning of 1991, the administration of active employment measures, through 28 regional authorities. Similarly, in Belgium the social partners and government in 1988 agreed on a three year plan for reserving 0.18% of wages for training and employment measures: where possible, projects would be proposed by employers and trade unions through sectoral and company agreements. These measures were tightly targetted on specific groups including the long-term unemployed, low skilled unemployed, long-term social assistance recipients, disabled, older unemployed. The schemes which have been proposed on the basis of company or sectoral agreements have mainly involved employment premia and training centres. In 1990, the plan was extended, and expanded to 0.25% of wages. It now includes some categories of the employed; and some funds are targetted still more tightly on those at highest risk. No evaluation of these schemes is yet available, however.

Figure 10 presents the proportions of the registered unemployed who are participating in government special programmes and reveals that in general these have increased substantially during the 1980s. However, evaluative studies of these programmes are not in all cases available. Any such evaluation would certainly need to examine whether additional jobs were created or whether all that happened was that the queue of unemployed was re-ordered. It would also have to examine how far such schemes reach the most marginal. Such studies as exist are not encouraging on this point.

Figure 10 TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF THE REGISTERED UNEMPLOYED WHO ARE ON GOVERNMENT SPECIAL PROGRAMMES



* Figures are approximate, calculated from official data relating to unemployment, and total numbers on training schemes, in order to show trends.

The interaction of these active policies with "passive" measures can have a number of positive and negative consequences as far as social exclusion and labour market insertion are concerned. In Spain, 1985 saw the launching of the FIP vocational training plan, as part of a larger active employment policy; long-term unemployed young people, the self-employed, rural workers and women have been prominent among its beneficiaries. However, the links between these vocational training schemes and income support have been weak. The minimum income schemes of the Regions lack resources for labour market re-insertion, while the vocational training policies are limited by the absence of an income guarantee.

In Denmark, some of the programmes which have been implemented have had only limited success in securing long-term employment (30%) but they have, at least, served to keep the unemployed persons within the labour market and the benefit system, maintaining their eligibility for insurance benefits. And in Belgium, social employment is offered by local authorities themselves (CPAS) to some unemployed people who are receiving social assistance, in order that they can become entitled to certain social security benefits: this social employment does not of itself reintegrate them into the labour market but it does at least provide some vocational training.

On the other hand, in Italy, local social assistance for the able-bodied is dependent upon their accepting any job that is offered or being employed in a public works project. This, in turn, may have the perverse effect of reducing the chances a person has of being re-inserted in a stable manner into the labour market. This situation should, moreover, be contrasted with the government-financed support which some private companies have been able to negotiate for their better organised groups of workers in times of collective redundancy: the Special Earning Integration Fund (CIGS), which provides sufficiently generous and continuous support to allow such workers to develop new and positive options for their re-insertion. Fiat has been prominent in negotiating CIGS for its workers but employees of sub-contractors have been left to cope on the public works schemes mentioned above.

What of those income maintenance schemes that require of the recipient a plan for his or her "reinsertion" into the labour market? In Denmark, the local municipalities have during 1990 been obliged to find a job for young people seeking work: and if the job is not accepted, benefit is denied. Similar rules exist in the Netherlands. Minimum benefits such as the French RMI and the Luxembourg RMG are specifically linked to programmes of re-insertion into social and work milieux and it is by reference to such re-insertion that they will be judged. In the current state of the labour market, such re-insertion is proving difficult. Long-term evaluation is in progress but the results are not yet available.

iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

These policies can, finally, be set against the wider pattern of unemployment and the unequal distribution of its burden among citizens.

Figure 11A gives the rates of long-term unemployment in the different EC countries. Despite the major growth of employment during the late 1980s, the rate of long-term unemployment in the Community was the same in 1990 as in 1985 (Commission of the European Communities, 1991d, p. 51). In eastern Germany, by the end of 1991, a quarter of

the unemployed were long-term unemployed. And as Figure 11B reveals, only in the Netherlands and Denmark was there a marked reduction in the proportion of the unemployed who were long-term unemployed. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to assume too simple a connection between long-term unemployment and social exclusion. In France at least, longitudinal studies reveal that in the period 1987-90, the proportions of the unemployed - and even of the very long-term unemployed - who got back into employment were by no means small: and that between 1983 and 1989, 26% of white collar workers (**salariés**) unemployed for at least three years got back into work. And even in eastern Germany, of the 1.7 million persons who experienced unemployment during the twelve months from November 1990, 0.6 million were back in employment by the end of this period. Insofar as unemployment does produce long-term exclusion, the mechanisms involved are complex: they depend on age, qualifications, family type and the local labour market.

TRENDS IN LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYEMENT

Figure 11 a

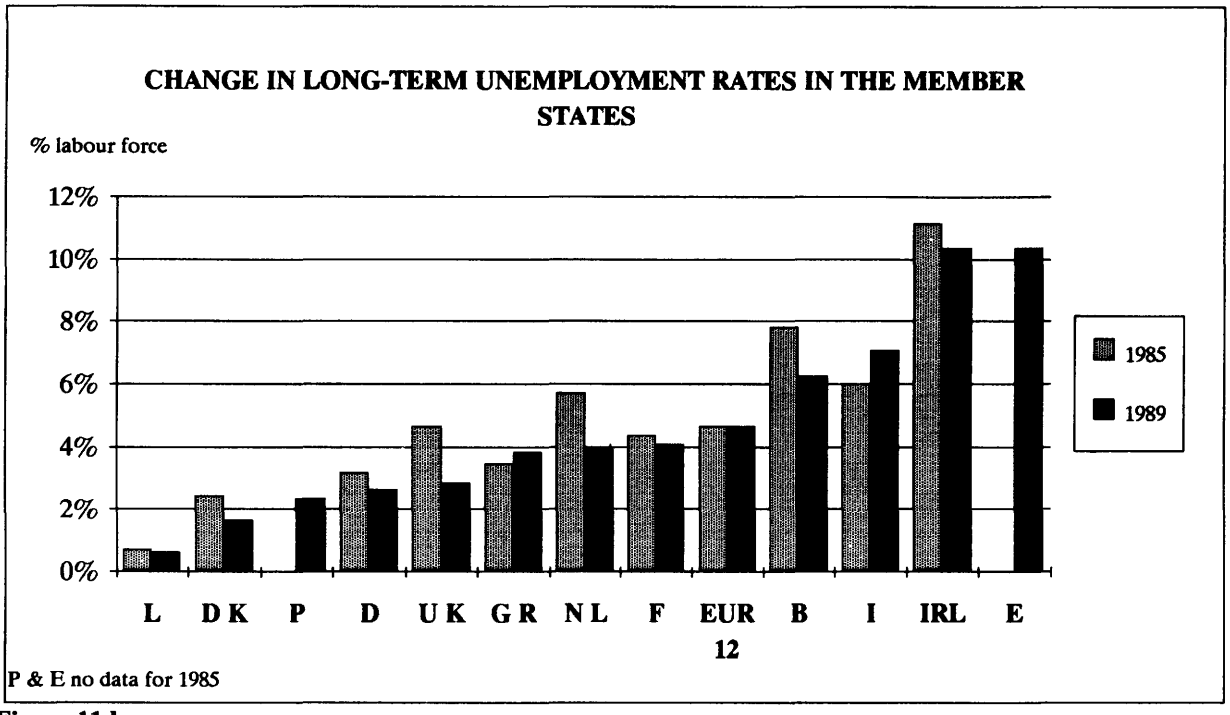
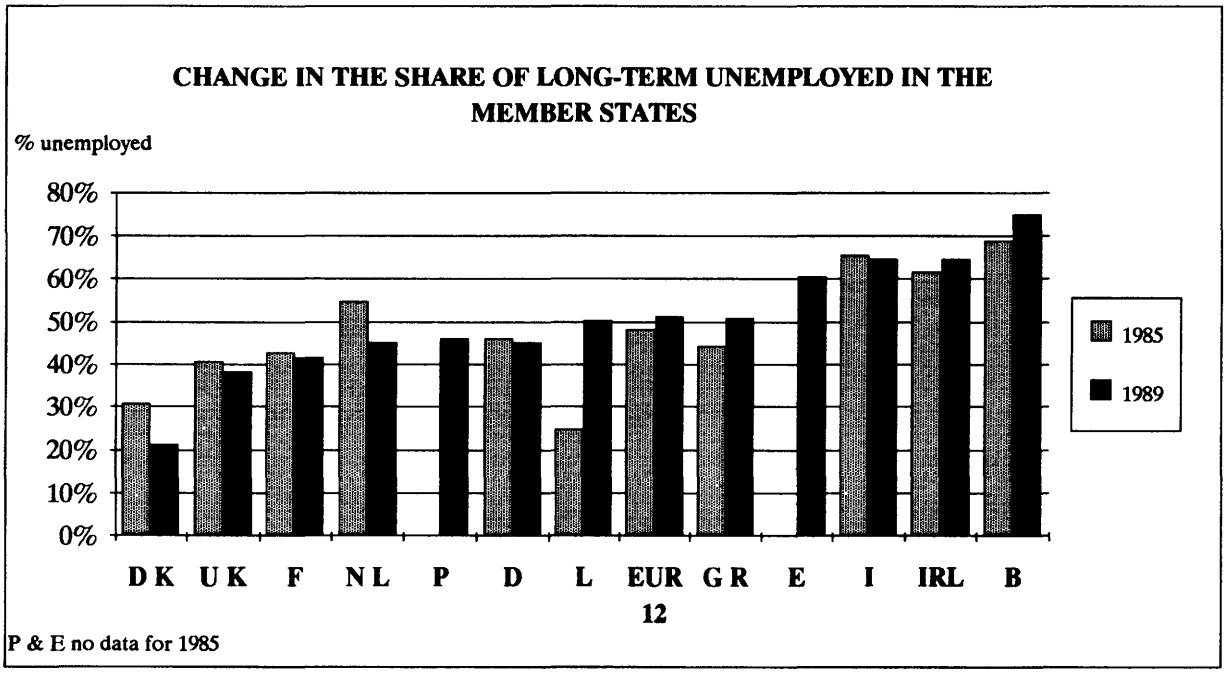


Figure 11 b

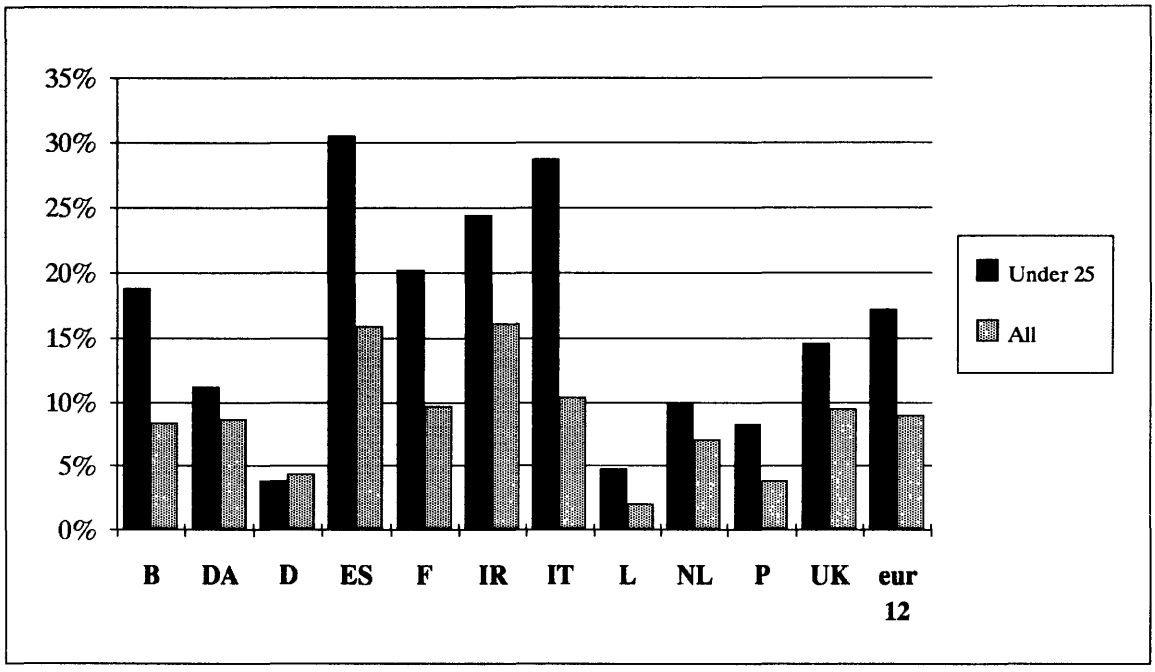


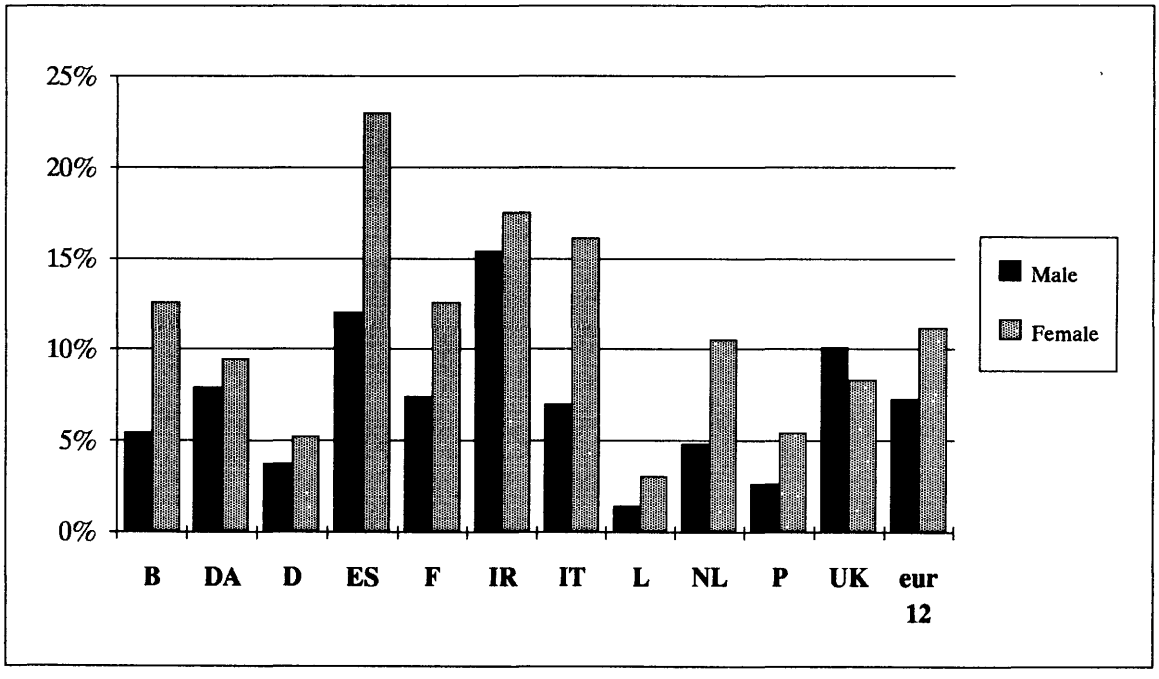
source : Commission of the European Communities, 1991d

Figure 12 gives the rates of unemployment for different age groups and for both males and females. It reveals that, among the EC countries, the disparity between males and females is greatest in the case of Italy and Belgium; while the disparity between young people and other age groups is greatest in the case of Italy, Belgium and Luxembourg. This confirms, incidentally, the picture of Italy as a society in which the well-organised "core" workforce has been able to ensure its security and social protection, while more vulnerable groups are left in a seriously exposed position. However, even there, the recent rise in unemployment has not raised the unemployment rate of young people and women disproportionately (nor has it across the Community as a whole) (Commission of the European Communities, 1991d).

Figure 12 **UNEMPLOYMENT RATES BY AGE AND SEX**

Data refer to 1991 (annual average) and are estimates





source : Eurostat (1992)

Data for Germany exclude the eastern Länder

How far do the policies reviewed here counter these disparities in the burden of unemployment? It is clear that they are of some considerable significance: without them, the naked inequalities of the labour market would impinge with still more brutal force on the more vulnerable. However, to a considerable extent they are themselves limited by the balance of forces within which they operate; and the employment which they create tends often to be precarious. This sort of employment falls centrally within the area of "atypical" work to which the EC Social Charter and the Action Programme to implement it make copious reference. Not least, it tends to be marked by the absence of any rights of "industrial citizenship": collective bargaining rights, social security, dismissal and redundancy.

Nevertheless, the trends and patterns reviewed here admit of no simple analysis and it would be a mistake to overlook the significant variations between countries which crude indicators can conceal. Thus, for example, since 1990 the rising unemployment in France has been concentrated among the skilled and trained occupational categories: the "core" workers. The proportion of long-term unemployed remains stable. On the other hand, the proportion of women and young people among the unemployed has been somewhat falling. These developments appear to represent two trends. First, employment policies have been concentrating their efforts on women, young people and the long-term unemployed. Second, as unemployment increases, this increase is populated more by the newly unemployed than by an extension to the proportion of long-term unemployed. At the same time, the proportion of employees in fixed term and other precarious work has been falling.

4.6. WORKING CONDITIONS

The EC Social Charter makes specific reference to health and safety at work and this is one of the areas on which Community legislation under the Charter does not require unanimity. Various member states are upgrading their legislation on safety, health and well-being at work, taking into account the EC legislative proposals.

In Germany, the numbers of accidents at work and rates of industrial disease have in recent years been falling, although no doubt the incorporation of east German industry will change this. In Spain and Portugal in contrast, the numbers of reported accidents at work - especially in temporary jobs - has been increasing. This increase may be due simply to better reporting or to inter-sectoral shifts in employment. If not, however, this trend is obviously worrying, especially if it arises from competitive pressures upon employers inducing them to lower safety standards. In Spain at least, the fact that accident rates for temporary workers have been rising at the same time as those for permanent workers have been falling

underlines the risks in current trends.

In the present report we do not deal more extensively with working conditions, since these are covered by the JANUS Observatory of the Euroepan Commission.

4.7. HOUSING

Housing can provide shelter, privacy and a geographical or spatial "address" in relation to opportunities for employment, leisure and other forms of social participation. It is thus fundamental in determining risks of social exclusion.

The demand for housing has been increasing. First, there has been a general trend to smaller households during recent decades: the declining tendency of elderly people to live with their adult children can be seen as one element of this trend. Second, the increasing number of divorces has swelled the demand. Third, urbanisation of the population has increased demand in those urban areas: in France, for example, during the last 40 years this urbanisation has on average involved more than half a million persons annually. Finally, there have been additional problems for specific regions of immigration: Luxembourg, for example, and, in recent months, the cities of western Germany, as a result of immigration from the East (Kirchner and Sautter, 1990). And in Greece, the housing crisis is being exacerbated by the massive inflow of Greeks from abroad; abandoned sub-standard dwellings are being occupied by homeless young people, illegal foreign workers and refugees.

Social housing has grown substantially in some countries, such as Spain, where private sector building fell from 47.5% to 32.8% of the total between 1975 and 1985. But in a number of countries, social housing has been constrained in the 1980s, in part by the austerity policies of central and regional government. In Italy, despite the growing crisis in the housing situation, public intervention in the housing market has been decreasing since the mid-1980s. Even in Spain, public sector support to housing has in recent years decreased sharply. And in Greece there remains little in the way of social housing. Most governments have strictly limited their interference in the free working of the housing market.

Nevertheless, some governments have recently made renewed efforts to provide social housing. In 1991 the German Government launched a new housing programme, with an additional federal fund for low-cost housing. The aim is to build 100 000 low cost dwellings within three years. However, some critics have argued that this drastically underestimates the scale of the housing crisis, which could mean that by the end of 1992 there will be a gap of

perhaps 3 million dwellings. In Ireland, where the numbers on the waiting list for local authority houses have been rising rapidly after declining through the 1980s, central government in 1991 raised capital expenditure for local authority housing by almost a quarter, although the effects are still awaited.

It is of course important to recognise that social housing does not necessarily meet the needs of those who are most disadvantaged. In Portugal, the National Institute of Housing (INH) - an agency of central government - provides loans to finance social housing for disadvantaged groups, working in cooperation with municipalities, cooperatives for housing construction and private construction firms. However, whereas it is the municipal housing which is most oriented to needs of low income groups, this accounted for only 21% of the housing projects subsidised in 1984/90; and only 40% were for rented housing - again, the most suited to low income groups; in contrast, 70% of the projects were with cooperatives for housing construction, building mainly for the middle class.

i. Standards and Coverage

In no country of the EC is there any formal right to accommodation for the population at large. But in most countries it is a general aim of housing policy that each household should be able to obtain adequate quality accommodation at a reasonable price (whatever that may mean). In many - but not all - countries of the EC, there are three principal sets of rights that are supported by legislation.

First, there is the right of certain persons to be housed, if necessary by the public authorities. In Denmark, for example, local authorities are obliged to shelter homeless families with children (which they do using special buildings or private hotels); they are also obliged to establish reception centres or other institutions for homeless individuals. In the UK local authorities are obliged to find accommodation for homeless families with children: either in local authority housing, hotels ("bed and breakfast") or other temporary accommodation. During 1990, local authorities in Great Britain found accommodation for 156000 families who were homeless or threatened with homelessness. But in Ireland, for example, homelessness is mainly left to charitable bodies, although under the Housing Act of 1989, local authorities were empowered to support their efforts. In Italy, a rather different problem arises. There, the priority given in public housing to evicted families means that the low income groups do not necessarily receive high priority, despite often living in overcrowded conditions.

Second, subsidies on rents are intended to limit the financial burden on the tenant. Mortgage tax relief is intended, similarly, to reduce the burden on the owner occupier. Rent subsidies have been a major element of Dutch housing policy, as far as low income households are concerned, although non-take-up of means-tested housing subsidies increased from 24% in 1975 to 55% in 1981 (Van Oorshot 1991). But in Luxembourg, for example, subsidies are limited to recipients of the minimum guaranteed income (RMG) who have an employment income, for fear that such subsidies will only drive up rents. Extension of these subsidies to all recipients of RMG is currently under consideration; alternatively, there may be a rent allowance which is independent of the RMG, but still means-tested. In France, entitlement to housing benefit was extended during the 1980s, to include elderly people, people with disabilities, young people living away from their parents, the unemployed and, in due course, recipients of the RMI. Finally, in the UK housing benefit can cover as much as 100% of rental costs and is available to most people who receive Income Support (social assistance) and pay rent; mortgage interest payments are available to low income home owners.

Rent controls are intended to achieve the similar results, by enabling those with low incomes to maintain tenure, as recent legislation in Belgium has sought to ensure. In Italy, Law No 392 has since 1978 regulated the amount of rent that can be demanded, on the basis of the quality of the building, the geographical location, etc. However, this is often ineffective, because of the scarcity of accommodation in large cities, and here rents can be much higher. But in Italy and elsewhere, rent controls also typically mean that low numbers of dwellings become available for renting. In Portugal, therefore, recent legislation allowed updating of rents in line with inflation; but this has still not been sufficiently attractive to potential landlords. In Greece, June 1991 saw the deregulation of the rented housing market. This applies only for housing above a certain size - housing in which only a few of the low income groups are living - but the effects are expected to extend across the rented housing market as a whole. In eastern Germany, the relaxation of the rent controls which had been in force under the Communist regime led to substantial and continuing rises in rents, whose effects the German government has sought to ameliorate by a version of the federal system housing allowance (means-tested) which is more generous than in the west. The aim is that for these low income households rents should not exceed 10-12% of household income.

Third, there is legislation concerning the minimum quality of a domestic dwelling: in terms of space and amenities.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

(a) *Homelessness*

Homelessness is difficult to define and therefore also to measure. It can, most narrowly, be taken to refer to people living on the streets; or more broadly, to include those threatened with losing their accommodation; or, still more broadly, those who aspire to a home of their own but who are unable to gain access to either the public or private sectors and who are meanwhile, therefore, living with family or friends.

Thus, for example, in Germany, since 1989 there has been an explosive rise in the numbers of emergency shelters, cheap hostels and other forms of emergency accommodation, with very limited facilities: according to some non-governmental estimates, the numbers of people in these hostels or entirely homeless now number almost 1 million. In Britain, the number of households which local authorities accepted as homeless (but did not necessarily manage to provide with accommodation) during 1990 was 167,400: an increase of 13% on the previous year. On a much narrower definition of homelessness, census figures indicate that 2700 people were sleeping rough in England and Wales in April 1991: nearly half of them in London. However, these estimates of the numbers with no accommodation at all are bound to be very approximate, and the voluntary organisations which deal with the homeless commonly produce estimates considerably higher than do official agencies.

The legislation to deal with homelessness is equally varied. In Belgium, for example, single men living on the streets may be faced with the punitive treatment demanded by the vagrancy laws; or they may be offered accommodation in reception centres, under the social welfare legislation. In the UK, families without accommodation may be disregarded by a local authority if they are deemed to have made themselves voluntarily homeless; but the definition of "voluntarily" has been hotly contested.

Local authorities' legal obligations to house the homeless have put pressure on what in many countries is a declining stock of social housing. In England and Wales in 1989-90, for example, 28% of all new local authority tenants were people who had been homeless. Waiting lists for local authority housing then stand as a further and vivid form of exclusion: in Ireland, up from 17,685 households to 23,244 between 1988 and 1991; in England, up from 1,250,000 households to 1,282,500 between 1989 and 1991. And in Belgium, for example, only 11.3% of the beneficiaries of subsistence incomes are living in social housing.

(b) *Housing Costs*

The effectiveness of government action to limit the financial burden of housing upon low income households can be assessed, albeit crudely, in various ways. First, in terms of the rate of rent increases for social housing, relative to prices: in Belgium, for example, rent increases for social housing during the period 1984-89 exceeded the increase in retail prices and in private rents.

Second, in terms of the percentage of a household's income which goes on housing costs: in particular, in the case of low income households. In Belgium, for example, low income households typically spend almost one third of their incomes on rent. In Germany in 1989, of the 1.2 million people who were living in debt arrears, the average proportion of their net income being spent on rent was 40%; similar studies in Luxembourg reveal a similar - indeed, a somewhat higher - proportion. One result has been an increasing number of evictions due to rent arrears. Studies in Nordrheinwestfalen, for example, reveal that of those evicted, 70% were as a result of rent arrears and 90% of the latter had incomes below the social assistance line.

Finally, in some countries the increasing incentives for people - including unemployed people - to buy their own houses, through more easily accessible mortgages, have raised fears about rates of mortgage repossession, which account for substantial numbers of homeless families. In the UK, repossessions by building societies fell by two fifths between 1987 and 1989 but trebled between 1989 and 1990, largely as a result of high interest rates. During the first half of 1991, the rate of repossessions was running at more than twice that for the same period of the previous year and showed little sign of slowing down. But the consequences of repossession for the social exclusion of the families concerned will depend on a variety of additional factors - their financial loss, the availability of alternative accommodation, etc - and here, as at many other points in this chapter, the data which are available do not suffice to complete the story.

So also in France, the diffusion of owner occupation has been accompanied by a growing volume of housing credit and debt. But as in Britain, the spread of owner occupation - and the shrinking of the rented sector - has involved a steady fall in the average income of house owners (at least as measured by the value of the SMIC), as lower income groups have been included. However, these, in turn, have been less able to survive the consequences of unemploment and high interest rates. The 1980s saw the establishment of a number of new funds intended to relieve this problem among lower income households - espacially those affected by unemployment - and to enable these "casualties of home ownership" (less

accidentés de l'accession) to retain their accommodation.

(c) *Amenities and Space*

The evidence collected by the national experts suggests that there are substantial quantities of housing in a bad condition in most EC countries and that these are occupied predominantly by those with low incomes. They include much of the temporary accommodation offered by local authorities. In Spain, it is low income households that are disproportionately to be found in small houses and to lack basic amenities.

In Ireland, at least, the greatest insecurity and some of the worst conditions are to be found outside the public sector. This is partly because the private rented sector is not covered by much of the legislation on housing standards and conditions are therefore often squalid. Private rented housing is twice as likely as other housing to be unfit, although private tenants pay almost double the proportion of their incomes on housing as is paid by public housing tenants.

In Greece, newly released data from the 1987/8 Housing Budget Survey reveal the sharp contrast in housing conditions between urban and rural areas, notably in relation to amenities.

iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

It is evident that, alongside the secure owner occupier and the social housing tenant there are substantial numbers of households living in a precarious housing situation: precarious in terms of their security of tenure, the predictability of their housing costs and their rights of privacy. In Ireland, the private rented sector, as seen already, is exempt from much of the legislation on tenants' rights: many tenants receive no rent book or written contract and rents are uncontrolled. However, government proposals published in 1991 envisage greater protection for these tenants. In the UK, families placed in bed and breakfast accommodation by local authorities have no security of tenure and no rights of privacy. Nor is there any counterpart to the growing numbers of tenants associations, through which other local authority tenants are consulted in an organised fashion by their landlord.

Precarious housing takes a somewhat different form in the South. In Spain, unmet demand for housing is concentrated in the large metropolitan areas of Madrid and Barcelona. This surplus demand comes mainly from young people, especially those in the lower income groups, old people and single parents. In the case of Madrid at least, low income groups are increasingly being expelled to the outskirts of the city in search of a home, amidst growing

commercialisation of housing and land use and spatial segregation of different income groups.

Not surprisingly, therefore, housing policy featured as a central issue in the Spanish municipal elections of 1991 and has been converted into a national problem, the object of maximum political concern. During the 1980s, the principal thrust of policy in Spain had been on the liberalisation of the housing market through lowering of interest rates, rather than on the development of public housing for people in need and definite policies on the development of urban land. But easing conditions on loans has not dealt with the problems of housing supply: in particular, houses for rent and public housing. The results, as the government acknowledges, are those mentioned above: increased barriers to housing, especially for the young, and, for those with homes, increasing rates of debt. From this debate has come the new Plan for Housing (1992-95). This envisages easier access to housing for lower income groups through price controls; but it fails to develop any clear initiatives on the supply side.

BOX 16

Recent additional measures to combat disadvantage in relation to housing include the following:

*** in Flanders, the programme Deprived Housing Areas (1990-91), is intended to stimulate private housing investment in such areas. However, these areas need to be more precisely defined; there is the risk that the middle classes will benefit and that rising rents will only displace existing residents; the quality of the new dwellings is insufficient; and in the long-term the scheme may prove to be more expensive for the public authorities than the direct provision of social housing;**

*** in the UK, during the Winter of 1991/2 the Government developed new schemes with housing associations, whereby currently empty, repossessed properties would be made available for homeless families in temporary accommodation; and with building societies, under which, for example, owners unable to continue with repayments can remain as tenants;**

*** in Portugal, additional incentives (since 1987) for municipalities to build houses for people living in the shanty-towns; however, these funds have been under-utilised, perhaps because it is only recently that municipalities have been given autonomy in the use of their budgets;**

*** in Ireland, as part of the Programme for Economic and Social Progress, 1991 saw the introduction of the Shared Ownership Scheme, focussed on households with a gross income under IR£12,000 who cannot service a full mortgage. Applicants initially acquire a minimum of 50% of the equity in a house and "rent" the remaining equity from the local authority, buying the remainder within 25 years. The "rent" element can also benefit from a housing benefit related to low incomes. The scheme is currently operating on an interim basis.**

Similar developments are taking place around the urban growth centres of Portugal: Lisbon, Oporto and Setubal. Here, urban land prices have been pushed up by demographic pressures but also by the pressure on land from industrial and commercial interests, including increasing numbers of foreign firms. The limited capacity of these cities to absorb new arrivals, in part because of the inadequate supply of social housing, has led to continuing and extended use of degraded housing, shanty towns and a growing number of homeless families. These developments stand in stark contrast to the more prosperous areas of these same cities and vividly express the social exclusion to which their occupants are subject. And the fact that more than 50% of the residents of these neighbourhoods are less than 20 years old, with delinquency and drug addiction rates a growing problem, bodes ill for the reproduction of this poverty into the next generation.

4.8. HEALTH

i. Standards and Coverage

Health care systems can be said to be concerned with two principal goals as far as the individual is concerned: to prevent death and to promote healthy and fulfilled living. But in general preventive health care remains under-developed.

Some EC countries use a system of health insurance. Others - Denmark and the UK - rely on a national health system which is financed mainly by general taxation and which is, in principle, free to the user. In Ireland, low income groups are entitled to a full range of health services free of charge; other people are required to pay for specific items. Greece and Portugal have a public health system which is free to the user, even though most of those who are in regular employment rely on health insurance tied to the social security funds. Thus the Portuguese national health service - free at point of use and financed almost entirely from taxation - purports to be universal; but occupational insurance schemes - overwhelmingly non-voluntary and in the public sector of the economy - cover the better-off groups, with more than one fifth of the population outside the NHS. Moreover, because these insurance funds are largely in the public sector, they are financed partly by State taxation. Within the NHS, financial problems have since 1987 resulted in the imposition of charges (albeit with exemptions for vulnerable groups); and by the late 1980s, cash payments for health amounted to 40% of all health care expenditures - by far largest among OECD countries. In Greece, even within the public health system access tocertain types of care sometimes depends on behind-the-scenes informal payments to doctors.

In Italy, legislation in 1978 established a national health system, although as far as funding is concerned, the health system remains a hybrid. Under a new Law of December 1991, the patient must contribute up to 50% of cost of medicines; and there are increased costs for visits to specialists and for clinical analyses. In Spain, the law of January 1990 aimed to establish universal health cover. Nevertheless, persisting structural and organisational problems in the health care system - in particular, the dominance of the hospitals, deficiencies in primary care and general malcoordination of services - prompted the establishment, in 1990, of a Commission of Analysis and Evaluation of the National Health System, which reported in July 1991. This, the Abril Report, has been controversial particularly in its possible support for privatisation.

In addition to these variations in financial basis, there are, of course, also great variations in the level and quality of health care which is available. In Italy, for example, there is a dearth of health services - especially the more specialised - within the urban areas of the South. In Spain, similar variations are being countered, under the law of 1986, by the development of primary care and the decentralisation of health care to the regions. However, no evaluation of these initiatives is yet available.

ii. Policy Effectiveness, Barriers to Access and Compensatory Actions

How far do some groups of citizens in the countries of the EC suffer exclusion or neglect by their health care systems? There are at least three approaches to this question.

First, we can consider what factors limit the coverage of the health care system. Some EC countries use a system of health insurance. However, those whose insurance contribution records are incomplete - typically the long-term unemployed - risk being excluded from health care. In the United States the lack of health cover for low income groups has become an issue of major public concern. In the EC countries which rely on health insurance, however, special arrangements are normally made for such groups. In France, for example, more than 100,000 beneficiaries are being affiliated to health insurance via the **Revenue Minimum d'Insertion**; such affiliation is automatic in Luxembourg for recipients of the **Revenue Minimum Garanti**.

Second, in many countries there are data dealing with the rates of utilisation of different medical services by different social groups. But of course, what these data do not show of themselves is, first, the extent to which these differences in rates of utilisation reflect medical need; nor, second, the effectiveness of these services in relation to such needs.

In Spain, failures of the primary health care system have tended to produce saturation of emergency services at hospitals and overload of specialised services. Some progress is now being made. The data available refer only to those regions where health care has not been transferred to the regional authorities; here, 65% of the population at the end of 1990 had use of the new system of primary care, in which visits-by-appointment have replaced queues, in an effort to expedite patient access. Coupled with these advances in primary care are programmes of care for women; in the field of mental health; and in social work. The information systems for these policy developments will in due course enable the use of global indicators of service effectiveness.

Barriers to access and utilisation are especially evident in relation to chronic illness, where coordinated action by health and social care services (see para 4.9 below) are properly required. (This will be a major theme of the Observatory's report on social services, to be completed shortly following the present report.) In Italy, for example, increasing separation of the health and social services (the latter organised within the framework of social assistance schemes) since 1985 has had troublesome consequences for chronically ill and disabled people and their families, who find it difficult to have their health care needs recognised. Chronic illness and disability, especially among elderly people, is becoming a route to impoverishment for them and their families also: the latter have to exhaust all their personal resources before receiving any help from the public social care services, given that these form part of the social assistance system. Increasing public concern has been expressed over conditions within public nursing homes for the elderly, for chronically ill and handicapped people, as these have become dumping grounds also for the mentally ill, drug addicts, mentally and physically handicapped children and adults, and AIDS sufferers.

Indeed, these groups commonly suffer barriers to utilisation across the whole range of health services. There are, in some countries, signs of increasing discrimination against people who are HIV+ and suffering from AIDS; and in Greece, for example, studies have shown that doctors and nursing staff sometimes refuse to offer their services or deliberately provide services well below the standards. This is the more serious, in view of the difficulties often faced by such people in being admitted to private health insurance (and indeed life insurance: a barrier that can have serious consequences for a range of other life chances, including house purchase).

In the UK, as part of the Citizens' Charter initiative of the government, a new Patients' Charter sets out patients' rights: to information, to treatment within a specified period, and to complain. A similar charter is to be introduced in Ireland. It remains to be seen how effective these charters will be in breaking down barriers to health service utilisation, and

forcing up the quality of care. The real test will be in relation to the weaker and more needy groups highlighted here.

Third and finally, studies in recent years sponsored partly by the EC have been concerned with those diseases which clinical medicine can now deal with so effectively that nobody need die from them (Holland, 1988). The research has mapped out the extent to which deaths continue to result from these diseases, as an indicator of the inadequacy of the health services in the country concerned. This is not of course to say that disease has no social and economic causes; nor is it to deny the value of improvements in the environment. But this approach claims that were all health services to be raised to the standards of the very best, these diseases would cease to be killers. The resulting pattern of avoidable deaths can be taken as one crude indicator of cross-national variations in the effectiveness of health services in preventing exclusion, in this case from life itself. There is of course no reason why the same sort of analysis should not be applied to comparisons between different social classes, ethnic groups, etc.

iii. Generalised Disadvantage and Marginalisation

The socially unequal distribution of morbidity and mortality is clear from the epidemiological data: many different indicators of morbidity and mortality can be chosen for this purpose. To take just one example, official statistics in Portugal reveal that infant mortality rates are strongly associated with the mother's level of educational attainment. It is, however, more difficult to agree on the most appropriate methods for measuring **trends** in inequalities in health and death between different social groups (Illsley and Le Grand, 1987). It is still more difficult to identify causality and, in particular, to judge whether high rates of ill-health and death arise from inadequacies in medical, occupational, domestic or environmental milieux.

Some of these indicators, although crude, can be compared cross-nationally. As with many of the policy areas covered in this chapter, it is possible to compare the overall rate of disadvantage - in this case, ill health and morbidity - as well as its distribution within the national population of different countries. Tables of life expectancies are readily available, as are national rates of infant and perinatal mortality, for example. So are data on the distribution of different diseases within the various countries of the Community.

For policy makers, however, it is important to disentangle the various causal factors involved. Here comparative analysis is potentially most invaluable. But this demonstrates, for example, that no simple connection can be drawn between ill-health and socio-economic

disadvantage. On the one hand, infant and perinatal mortality, closely associated with poverty and poor health services, have fallen rapidly in the southern countries of the Community. In Portugal, for example, during the 1980s the perinatal mortality rate was cut by half. Now, however, it is heart disease and cancer that have become major killers in the Community countries. With the highest rates in more affluent north-west of the Community, and some of the highest life expectancies in the south (Greece, Spain), it is evident that these are not diseases of poverty; rather, they appear to be associated with specific lifestyles and consumption patterns (diet, smoking) and to be most amenable to modification through health education. These diseases are now showing signs of decreasing in the north, where health education and promotion measures are having an impact, but of increasing in the south, where life styles are apeing those of their affluent role models (Baker and Illsley (1990).

4.9. SOCIAL CARE SERVICES AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

The family and the local community are the archetype of social protection. Where they fail to function effectively, their members are liable to suffer, especially at certain stages of the life cycle - birth, sickness, disability, old age, unemployment.

The personal social services are those which aim to support the family and the local community as systems of social protection. In many countries they focus on specific population groups: the old and the young, the mentally and physically disabled. In many countries, they remain fragmented and organised under the responsibility of different public authorities. Their relationship to other arms of social policy - health care, social security, etc - is equally varied.

In support of weakened family and local community networks, social services are sometimes linked to programmes of community development, aimed at revitalising the economic and social life of local communities and promoting social inclusion of their disadvantaged minorities. Some of these programmes also involve the participation of the European Community (for example, "Poverty 3"). Social services are also often linked to the promotion of individual volunteering.

One of their most obvious recent manifestations in relation to social welfare has been programmes of "community care" for dependent groups previously supported within institutional care. But how far are local communities which are suffering various forms of disadvantage able to offer a "caring capacity"? Recent studies, in the UK at least, suggest

that the economic insecurity which such communities face and their relative powerlessness to control their economic and social future seriously limit their capacity to support dependent groups.

These services are central to some of the major policy developments relevant to social exclusion that are currently under way in the member states of the EC.

In Spain, for example, the resurgence of the NGOs in the social welfare field has included the development of home help services at municipal level. And in Greece, where the personal social services were until recently concentrated on institutional care, there has recently been a change of direction, for example through the home care programme of the Greek Red Cross.

In countries as different as the UK and Greece, major changes are under way in the public care of children. In the UK, the Children Act of 1989, placing new responsibilities on local authority social services departments, aims to reduce the need for children to be taken out of their families and into local authority care or to be brought before the courts. Children in lower income households are at particular risk of being dealt with in these ways. In Greece, until recently many of the children residing in institutions were members of large families whose parents could not support them. Now, however, adoption law reform and the introduction of fostering (until recently unknown in Greece) promises to change the situation substantially, along with recent increases in non-means-tested family allowances, which reduce the poverty of large families and the risk that children will be placed in care.

In these and other aspects of the personal social services, problems of coordination pose a major challenge: within social services and with other branches of policy. In the UK, local authority social services departments are now under new obligations to assess need and act as "broker" or coordinator for the supply of appropriate services to those in need. In countries such as Germany, coordination of the social care system with the health care system is distorted by the medical insurance priorities of the latter (Jamieson, 1991).

During 1992, the Observatory is undertaking a special study of these and other issues within the social care services of the EC countries. This is the more necessary - and difficult - in view of the lack of available, and especially comparable, data.

4.10. CONCLUSION: SECTORAL POLICIES AND THEIR GLOBALISATION

The sectoral policies which have been examined in this chapter are the main pillars of the welfare systems of the EC countries. They express a bureaucratic division of labour defined by reference to specific professional skills (medicine, teaching, social work, etc) and population risks (unemployment, homelessness, etc). The benefits and services which they offer give substance to the social rights of citizenship in these countries.

However, it is evident that substantial numbers of people within the countries of the EC do not, in practice, secure these rights. As a result, they are liable to suffer multiple disadvantage which persists over time and which tends to separate them from the social, political and occupational institutions of their societies. This is, according to many recent critics, because of four deficiencies in the sectoral policies on which our societies principally rely (Leibfried and Tennstedt, 1985).

First, these sectoral policies have been shaped primarily by reference to the more secure and better organised sections of the labour force: the "core" workers. The extent to which this is the case seems to vary between countries, with a much stronger commitment to guaranteed minimum levels of, for example, pensions provision in countries such as Denmark than in Germany or Italy.

Second, the priorities accorded to these different sectoral policies have been shaped by organised commercial and professional interests, to an extent which has led to the neglect of certain needs and population groups. For example, in countries such as Germany the central role of sickness insurance within the social security system has consolidated the role of medical care at the expense of the long-term social care on which elderly people and people with disabilities depend (Jamieson, 1991).

Third, any sectoral policy can, almost by definition, be concerned with only one set of needs, whereas those who most require their support tend to have multiple needs for assistance. These needs may well reinforce each other and persist. This is the more likely, where entitlements within one sector depend upon rights built up within another: for example, where access to health care depends upon a continuous record of employment.

Finally, sectoral policies tend to be focussed upon the needs of individuals or families. They are therefore ill-suited to dealing with the needs of geographical areas which are suffering general degradation of employment opportunities and public services, save as part of a larger programme of intervention.

Faced with these limitations (see Box 17), public authorities in the countries of the Community have sought to "globalise" their policies in three main respects. First, by more effective coordination of sectoral policies, in order to be able to deal with multi-dimensional needs. Second, by additional programmes and policies which are focussed on geographical areas. Third, by giving to these various interventions more of a concern with persistent and cumulative disadvantage. It is with these efforts at "globalisation" that Chapter 6 will be concerned.

BOX 17

The system of minimum benefits which has developed in Spain during the last decade is fragmented and lacks any internal coordination. The law on non-contributory pensions of December 1990; the new policies on vocational training; the Regions minimum income schemes; the network of social services: these represent four instruments of intervention which are not coordinated but which could, at little additional cost, constitute the elements of an integrated system of minimum income for social integration.

CHAPTER 5: GENERAL POLICIES: CATEGORICAL

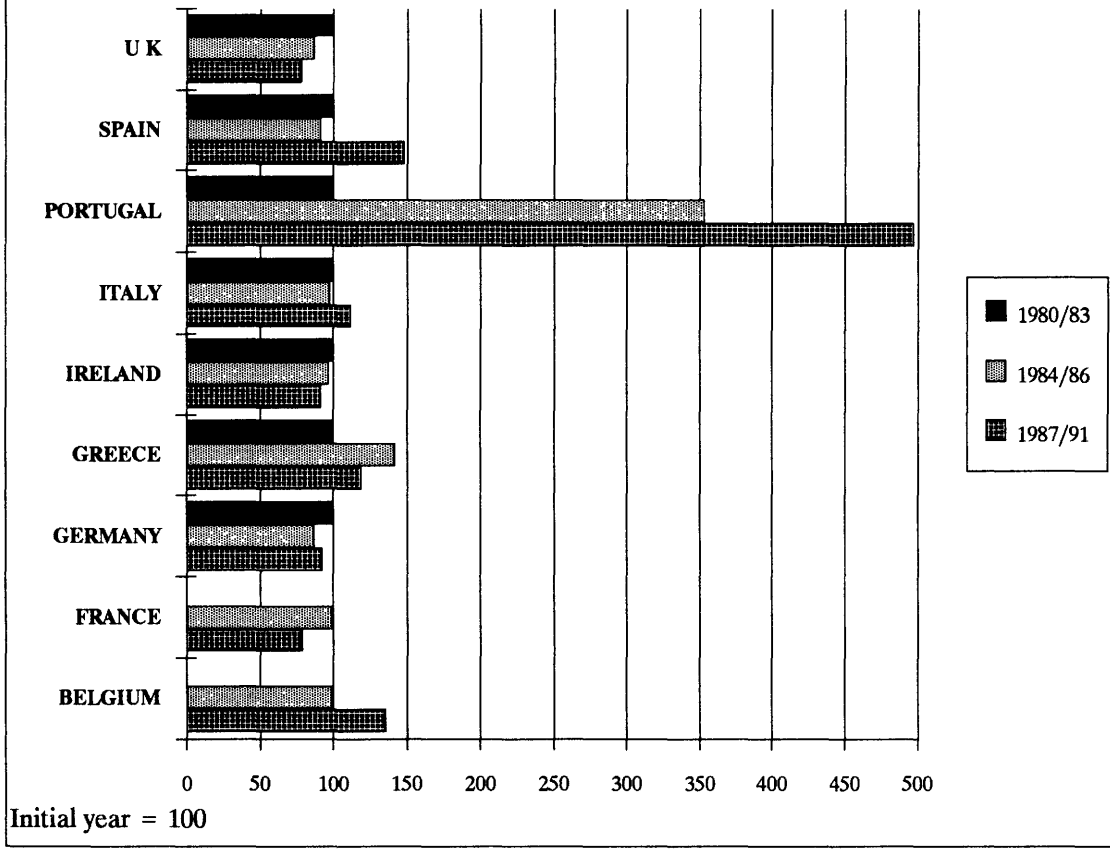
5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines some of the national policies which are focussed on specific population categories. Within sectoral policies, of course, categorical elements may be present. However, in addition to these, distinct programmes and policies for particular population groups have developed.

5.2. ELDERLY PEOPLE

Elderly people have secured significant benefits from the sectoral policies reviewed in Chapter 4. There is good evidence that because of improvements in occupational and state pension schemes - in particular, those that form part of the main social security system - the elderly form a declining proportion of the low income population in most EC countries (Room et al, 1990) (see Figures 13 and 14).

Figure 13 TRENDS IN THE NUMBERS OF ELDERLY PEOPLE RECEIVING MINIMUM BENEFITS



Note to Figure 13

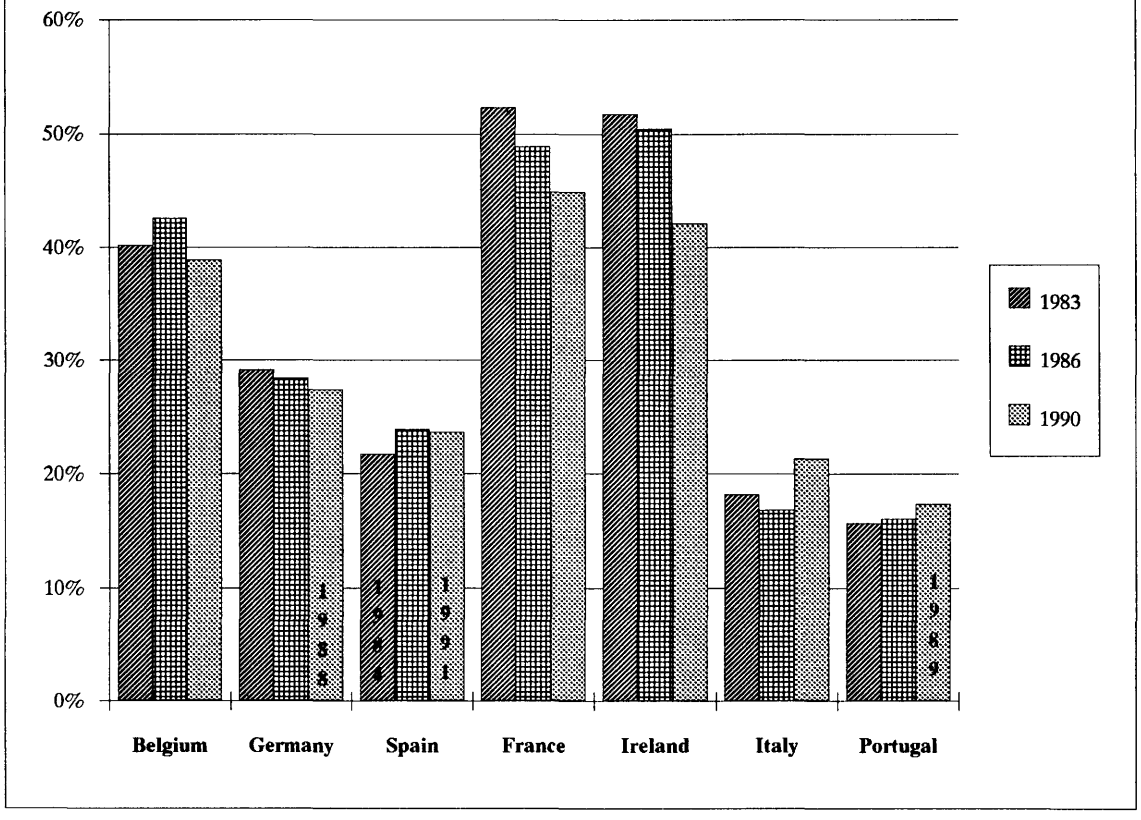
Belgium: Number of People receiving the Guaranteed Income for the Elderly (GIE).

Germany: The data refer to social assistance received by people aged 65 or more. There are no specific minimum income schemes for the elderly. The figures refer to the number of persons receiving social assistance at the end of the year in question.

Portugal: Includes beneficiaries of the minimum pensions of the contributory regimes and of the social pension of the non-contributory regime.

Luxembourg: Data for elderly recipients of the **Revenue Minimum Garanti** were available from 1987 onwards. These have not been included in the present report because it was not possible to present the trend over the same period as for the other countries.

Figure 14 TRENDS IN THE VALUE OF MINIMUM BENEFITS FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE AS A PERCENTAGE OF PER CAPITA INCOME



Note to Figure 14

This Figure uses the data for single elderly people in Figure 4; in addition, however, some additional countries are included, which it had not been worthwhile to include in Figure 4. The data are normally for 1983, 1986 and the most recent available year.

Figures for Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Spain are calculated with respect to per capita national income. Those for Germany and France are with respect to average per capita disposable income.

Belgium: The data refer to the Guaranteed Income for the Elderly (GIE).

Germany: The data refer to social assistance. There are no specific minimum income schemes for the elderly.

Italy: Elderly people receiving a social pension, if they are below a certain threshold, receive a supplement at the local level which varies between localities and which is not taken into account in the national data used here.

Portugal: The data refer to the minimum (contributory) pension.

Spain: The data refer to assistance pensions.

United Kingdom: Changes in the social security system in 1988 make comparable treatment of the value of benefits before and after that date particularly hazardous. The UK data, although available, have therefore not been included in this table.

Despite this general improvement, some older people remain relatively neglected by our welfare systems. This is true in particular of women. However, the pattern of neglect varies significantly between countries. In Germany, pensions are strongly related to earnings and work records, with much less emphasis upon minimum benefits than elsewhere. It is only through the social assistance system that a minimum level of income support is guaranteed. But this means that those older people who must resort to social assistance are exposed to its stigmatising effects. Thus, whereas the rate of take-up of means-tested assistance for the population as a whole rose from 53.5% in 1969 to 70.1% in 1983, among elderly people (65 years or older) the rates have remained substantially lower: rising from 32.9% to 42.9% during the same period. For older men the rates have been even lower and in 1983 were running at just 28.8%.

The improvements which have been achieved in Germany in recent years have acknowledged the barriers which some population groups face in building up their earnings and work records. Noteworthy since 1986, for example, are the pensions credits that are now being given to women whose careers have been interrupted by child-rearing (although still only one year of credit for each child). Since January 1991, this can be split between parents, if they have shared child rearing.

Denmark offers a different tradition. A universal flat rate pension is paid to everyone aged 67 and older, independent of work record. Those who are not receiving any other income are also entitled to a pension supplement and means-tested allowances. Unrelated to work income, such pensions are deliberately redistributive. However, they are less generous than their Swedish counterparts, for example, and they are liable to leave many elderly on low incomes. A policy of universal coverage at relatively low levels has been chosen instead, for example, of more narrowly focussed but more generous State support.

In Greece, as many as 140,000 elderly persons are estimated not to be covered by pensions schemes, principally on account of their inadequate work records. The urban uninsured can receive a basic pension at the age of 68 (and the rural uninsured at age 65) but this leaves them far below the requirements of subsistence. Savings or family support are therefore essential. For many private sector employees, various supplementary and invalidity pensions mean that in practice the minimum pension is close to minimum industrial earnings. However, during 1991 this linkage was loosened and pensions were cut.

Italy illustrates a different model again: with different groups of employees - State officials, private sector employees, etc - enjoying very different pension rights and contribution rules. Those whose pensions fall below the minimum pension receive a supplement either from the Social Security Fund (if they are enrolled within it) or, less generous, a means-tested social pension. The latter is the last resort, and the majority of recipients are women: the very old are especially dependent upon it. There is no rights element within it; and it is both meagre and marginalising.

The situation in Spain is similar. Here the new Law on Non-Contributory Pensions provides a pension which is approximately half the minimum wage and to which people have a specific right. Moreover, the pension gives entitlement to medical care and social services. However, the pension is assessed with respect to the family income, rather than that of the individual, thereby placing part of the responsibility for social protection on the family. Moreover, the new system co-exists with the remnants of the pre-existing scheme of assistance pensions, outside the social insurance system, producing excessive complexity for administrators and clients alike. Finally, as with its Italian counterpart, the Spanish scheme seems likely to cater mainly for women: this is to judge by the experience of the pre-existing schemes of assistance pensions, only approximately one quarter of whose recipients were men.

There are two developments which could increase the risks of neglect faced by elderly people at the hands of our welfare systems. First, the high unemployment of the 1980s is likely to produce a new generation of pensioners among whom significant numbers will have

incomplete insurance contribution records. In their retirement, the long-term unemployed of today will continue to be disadvantaged relative to their contemporaries (Room et al, 1990).

Second, the ageing of the elderly population will become even more pronounced over the next 20 years or so. This has two consequences. It is liable to impose growing pension costs on the working population and other methods of pensions provision are being sought in some countries at least. Second, It is already resulting in increasing numbers of old people requiring long-term social care, which in many countries is relatively underdeveloped. Most are women. Of course, much will depend upon the support which families are able to give. The childless elderly are at a particular disadvantage - including those whose children have emigrated. And even in countries like Greece, where, it is commonly alleged, family support to the elderly is particularly strong, patterns of inter-generational aid are coming under increasing strain. In many Community countries fiscal austerity is inhibiting the development of new programmes to provide social services for elderly, as a substitute or complement to these weakened networks. This will be one element in the special study of social care services and social exclusion which the Observatory is undertaking during 1992.

5.3. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Detailed information about people with disabilities, and the opportunities which they enjoy, varies greatly between EC countries. In the UK, the first national surveys since 1968/9 were undertaken in 1984 and published 1988. In Ireland, there is little centralised information: even the local registers of people with disabilities are incomplete and lack any standard system of classification. In Greece, 1991 saw the launch of a new census of the disabled, but the results will not be available before the end of 1992. The HELIOS network of the European Commission is promoting improved comparability of data in this field.

In some countries, for example Spain, the development of specific national policies in relation to people with disabilities is only recent. Now, however, Spain is seeing new non-contributive pensions, special education and the creation of special employment centres. These pensions are set by the same law as those for the elderly (see section 5.2 above), with supplements in the case of extreme disability.

In Italy, January 1992 saw a new Framework Law approved, unifying all previously existing laws concerning the rights of the handicapped and the obligations of the public authorities towards them. Regions must now establish their own implementing laws and regulations. The Framework Law defines the rights of people with disabilities in relation to

health care from birth; social integration (by home helps, elimination of architectural barriers, transport); schooling (hence schools must be ready and teachers trained); vocational training and job insertion; sport and leisure; and housing (a quota of public housing). It also provides support to those caring for disabled people: supplement to any social pension which the carer is receiving (but therefore benefitting only carers with low incomes); rights of job security if employment is suspended in order to undertake caring; and credits towards pensions for such absent periods. But thesde latter rights apply only to those in permanent full-time work: the privileged "core" workers.

People with disabilities are at considerable risk of becoming socially excluded: in part because of inadequacies in social care services, in part because of barriers to labour market participation. The study of social care services which the Observatory is undertaking during 1992 will pay particular attention to people with disabilities.

As for labour market participation, several lines of policy development can be drawn from the national practices which we have surveyed so far. One approach, used in countries such as Italy, is to stipulate a quota of jobs which is reserved for partially disabled people. In the UK, the emphasis is upon incentives to employers to take people with disabilities into ordinary jobs. In July 1990 the Department of Employment examined how successful was the scheme under which larger firms are required to reserve 3% of jobs for people with disabilities. It found that in general the scheme was ineffective but so far no more effective measures have been instituted. Other recent policy changes - notably in the system of financial benefits for the disabled - have also been aimed chiefly at labour market reintegration: in particular, a disability working allowance, intended to supplement wages from full-time work.. As with all employment promotion initiatives, however, the effectiveness of these measures will depend upon the labour market opportunities that become available.

Finally, it is worth noticing the rather different preoccupations of policy-makers in the Netherlands. There, the growing numbers of people receiving occupational disability benefit are raising fears as to the burden on the public purse. Accordingly, the government introduced a number of new initiatives in March 1992, designed to make resort to such benefits unnecessary, through the integration of people with disabilities into the labour force. And indeed, already between 1986 and 1990 the numbers of disabled people reintegrated into the labour market had risen from 50,200 to 93,001; in 1990, 47.3% of all reintegrated disabled people found a job became self-employed or participated in sheltered employment.

5.4. YOUNG PEOPLE

The previous chapter, in its assessment of employment and training policies, made repeated reference to the unemployed young people who figure as a priority group in such measures. But to what degree do these measures - and the additional schemes which focus specifically upon young people - re-structure the set of opportunities which are available to them and reduce the dangers of their being socially excluded? To pose this question is an essential element in the evaluation of national policies and their effectiveness.

Recent years have seen a wide variety of government-sponsored training and employment schemes for young people. To take one example, in the UK, Youth Training is the government programme to guarantee training opportunities for young people and aims to increase their chances of securing access to the labour market. Some 314,000 youngsters were enlisted on Youth Training (YT) schemes in March 1991. Unemployed 16 and 17 year olds are in general ineligible for State benefits unless they are on these training schemes. The programme is extensively monitored for its effectiveness. Of the YT leavers included in the follow-up survey for April-September 1990, although many dropped out of YT early, 47% of respondents gained a qualification and 65% found jobs during the subsequent months.

The result is that young people are channelled into three groups, having very different rights and enjoying very different degrees of inclusion and exclusion. First, there are those who remain in formal education or who have obtained "real" employment. Second, there are the trainees on government schemes, with low rates of pay and considerable dissatisfaction over the standard of training. Third, there are the young people who prefer to forfeit assistance altogether, rather than entering on one of the training schemes: but these are largely invisible to the official statistics or to public policy. Some reappear in the debate about homelessness and begging. Those in severe hardship are able to receive emergency social payments ("severe hardship payments"); payments in September 1991 were more than double the total for the equivalent period in 1990, leading to fears of worsening hardship among young people, especially those no longer living at the parental home.

Greece, a very different society, offers an equally varied set of trajectories for its young people, having very different rights and enjoying very different degrees of inclusion and exclusion. First, those who have good educational qualifications relative to the older age group (in particular, a university degree) are at less risk of unemployment. But less qualified young people are much more likely to face persistent, hard-core unemployment than are adults with similar or even lower qualifications, who are, in effect, able to exercise rights of occupational possession (even if many of these jobs are low-paying and low productivity).

BOX 18

*** In Denmark, recent initiatives include increased numbers of apprenticeships and places in further education; and a youth allowance programme, under which all 18-19 year olds who apply for social benefits are guaranteed employment by the local authority - if only part-time - after a maximum of two weeks. This youth programme entails a right to employment for young people, and an obligation to employ for the local authority.**

*** In Belgium, there have also been non-governmental programmes, subsidised by government and the European Social Fund. The Entreprises d'Apprentissage Professionel, for young people aged 18-25, combine work experience and training. Participants receive a wage and enterprises are exempt from some social security contributions. These EAPs reach approximately 15% of the 50,000 deprived young people in the French Community but no evaluation of their effectiveness is available.**

*** In the Netherlands, the Youth Employment Guarantee Act became effective in 1991 in certain municipalities and, nationally, January 1992. This law is part of an integrated educational, income and labour market policy for youngsters: to provide work experience to each unemployed person below the age of 21 and each unemployed school leaver from 21 to 26. It gives the right to a temporary job at the minimum youth wage, in the local public service sector, after six months of unemployment. Municipalities must provide additional jobs. Every six months, each youngster is assessed, as to whether he or she needs further work experience and/or training. If a youngster refuses a job offer, he or she can lose social security benefit for a period of 13 weeks. The target group reached is expected to rise from 6600 (1992) to 8800 (1996).**

Similarly, in Italy, the increase in the average years of schooling renders those who complete only the compulsory middle school, as well as those who drop out before completing it, a particularly fragile portion of the labour force. Of the jobs held by young people, one third in the north, but two thirds in the south, are precarious. Law 863/84 allows employers to issue temporary contracts for young workers, at reduced pay (supposedly in return for the training which is received), and with the social security contributions being paid by State. This Law has been effective at inserting unemployed young people into the labour market, especially those with low qualifications. It has been used mainly by industrial employers in the North, to create a flexible (i.e. temporary) and low cost labour force. 70% of those involved go on into regular contracts, 15% into even better jobs. However, the training element has in fact been sparse; and female entrants have fared less well. Most of the trainees remain in the precarious sector of the labour market.

Similar developments can be found in other countries of the EC. In Spain, the reduction of unemployment in recent years has been achieved in part by the creation of large numbers of precarious and temporary jobs: especially among the young and especially in the tertiary sector. It is likely that the degree of social integration and personal identification of this

group is reduced and that temporary employment makes for instability in their social and occupational affiliations. Nevertheless, policies on vocational training for the young were reformed in the Spring of 1990 in order to be better adjusted to the needs of the most disadvantaged: young people from rural backgrounds and those with a poor school record.

5.5. WOMEN

Women remain under-represented within the upper echelons of the major social institutions; they tend to be confined within low paid jobs; and most of them enjoy less social protection than men. They are more likely to be confined at home, caring for the very young and the very old, especially as policies for the elderly increasingly stress the role of "community care" and take for granted that the burden of this can fall on informal carers, mostly women.

These disadvantages must be understood as being in part the result of the major social, fiscal and employment policies in these fields. In some countries the tax system discriminates against earnings by married women; and the social welfare system, by the way that it treats married women, can create disincentives to work. So can childcare costs, and the non-availability of childcare facilities.

The EC has been to the fore in promoting legislation on equal opportunities and equal treatment for women. In part to implement the priorities of the 1991-95 EC Programme, in April 1991 the Italian Parliament passed a law on "Positive Actions for Ensuring Equality between Men and Women". This aims "to encourage women's employment and to realise effective equality between men and women with regard to paid work, even through measures - called positive actions for women - aimed at removing the obstacles which impede the realisation of equal opportunities" (Art 1 para 1). The regions must now establish their own laws, to implement this national law. The fear, however, is that the focus on adult women and training may tend to neglect younger women having little schooling and no qualifications, who are likely to be on the margins of the labour market. In Spain, during 1988-90 the country produced its first Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women, which is directed to promoting equality in such areas as the family, job discrimination and sexual abuse.

Women are also over-represented among lone parents, a population group at considerable risk of being on low incomes. This includes families where one parent is a migrant abroad: not uncommon in Greece, for example, because of high rates of emigration and seafaring occupations. Most national governments recognise the need for additional

measures to assist lone parents although the priorities chosen vary substantantially. In Belgium, for example, new state benefits have been introduced for lone parents; at the same time, by a new law of 1989, legal aid has been offered to them in order to pursue absent spouses for alimony arrears. So far, however, the level of take-up of this legal aid has been low, and the scheme has imposed a heavy administrative load for little money. In Greece, a new monthly allowance has been introduced for single mothers with children (but not lone fathers). In addition, multi-dimensional government-funded programmes have also been introduced to support lone parent families and their social integration, involving counselling services and vocational guidance.

The Family Observatory of the EC, in its 1991 report, reviews many developments in family policy that are relevant here (Commission of the European Communities, 1991f).

5.6. MIGRANTS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

The agreements reached at Maastricht in December 1991 contain several references to the rights of migrants and refugees (see also Chapter 2 above). These include the inter-governmental agreement on immigration policy and asylum; and the working conditions of third country (i.e. non-EC) migrants.

Migrant workers and their families within the EC countries enjoy rights - or suffer from a lack of rights - depending primarily upon their nationality. EC nationals will, increasingly, enjoy the same formal rights as citizens of the host country; legal immigrants from outside the EC have more restricted rights; clandestine immigrants have fewest. Corresponding to this gradation of rights, such migrants and their families will be - and are - exposed to insecurity in the whole range of sectoral policies which were examined in Chapter 4 (see box 19).

BOX 19

Immigrants and members of ethnic minorities remain subject to widespread discrimination and disadvantage:

*** In Italy, immigrants are excluded from public housing, (although a few regions include them if they have been legally resident in Italy for at least one year); in Rome, almost one fifth of immigrants are homeless. Many are not registered for health care and end up using hospital emergency services. Children of illegally resident inmigrants, if their parents cannot look after them, often end up being sent by social workers to the children's institutions which during the 1980s were emptied of Italians.**

*** In the UK, unemployment rates for minority ethnic workers remain higher than those for whites, although they have been falling at a faster rate since 1986. Unemployment among West Indian or Guyanese men, for example, fell from 26% in 1986 to 13% in 1990; but it remains nearly double the rate for all men (7%). In 1991 an evaluation of the effectiveness of the legislation in preventing discrimination in the workplace was pessimistic but highlighted the potential importance of an effective system of individual complaint.**

*** In Luxembourg, although foreigners make up 27% of the resident population - and, indeed, 30% of the economically active population - they are significantly under-represented among beneficiaries of the RMG (minimum guaranteed income). This is variously explained in terms of their reluctance to apply for social benefits, for fear of being expelled, and the greater readiness of their families to support them in times of need. Nevertheless, their representation is increasing gradually.**

Among the EC countries, Ireland has a long history of emigration and, until the 1960s, this was sufficiently in excess of natural population increase that the population of the country steadily fell. In recent years approximately 50,000 people - 70% of them under 25 years - have been leaving annually, most destined for Britain. This can be explained mainly by economic factors, the lack of employment opportunities at home and the availability of higher paid employment abroad. However, despite a long history of emigration to Britain and assimilation within the British population, Irish immigrants are often employed below their level of qualification. Whether this is due to ghettoisation, discrimination, inadequate mutual recognition of educational qualifications or other factors is not clear. This experience is to some extent replicated elsewhere in the Commmunity: east Germans arriving in the western Länder, for example, and south Italian migrants in the northern industrial cities in the 1950s and 1960s.

Luxembourg is remarkable for the high proportion of foreigners, many of whom are EC nationals, resident in the country: 104,000 out of a total population of 378,000. (Of these foreigners, approximately 10% are officials, the rest manual workers). Children of foreigners are over-represented in remedial and special education, with the Portuguese especially over-

represented; and nationality proves to be a better predictor of scholastic performance than sex, size of family or father's occupation. This suggests that the education system is not at all adapted to the needs of such groups: something that other national governments including the Dutch have been seeking to induce by allocating schools extra budgets if they are teaching children from ethnic minority groups.

Immigrants to Greece include both temporary foreign workers and returning Greeks from the Soviet Union. Pontians returning to Greece numbered more than 8000 in 1990: most were young. The numbers are expected to soar as economic conditions in Commonwealth of Independent States deteriorate. These people tend to be concentrated into northern Athens, in overcrowded housing and suffering high unemployment (>50%). Social exclusion tends to arise from language barriers and the immigrants' lack of informal social networks. Successful settlement and integration of these people is likely to be the major single challenge for social policy in the 1990s. The new comprehensive programmes of social integration for returning Greeks will be examined in our report on social services.

Finally, clandestine immigrants are, almost by definition, excluded socially and in many other ways. In Spain, in 1988 they numbered almost 300,000 out of a total of 780,000. In Italy, in the same year, they numbered around 850,000. Without social security and concentrated in the black economy, these people have fewest prospects within the host society. During the 1990s, policy debates in relation to migration are likely to be dominated by concern over this clandestine immigration from poorer countries outside Europe; and over the rising numbers of immigrants expected to enter the EC countries from eastern Europe and the Soviet Union (Ronge, 1991).

National policies towards clandestine immigrants appear to oscillate between repression and amnesty. 1990-91 saw xenophobic attitudes became more common in Spain, particularly in relation to immigrants from Africa. Nevertheless, 1991 saw a positive policy of legalisation for clandestine immigrants, through which approximately one third of the latter are thought to have had their status in Spain legalised. This process involved concerted action between government, the trade unions and the main NGOs (Caritas, Red Cross). However, demographic pressures in the countries of origin are likely to cause continuing dilemmas for Spanish policy makers, with Spain being seen as a southern door into Europe.

In Greece, alongside stable numbers of foreign workers legally present - approximately 24,000 - clandestine workers in early 1991 were estimated at 300,000, to which 90,000 Albanians who arrived later in year must be added. New legislation was introduced in 1991 to control the inflow, with heavy penalties being imposed on those assisting the entry of illegal

workers, and on those who employ them. There are also now more active deportation procedures, with little right to appeal. With few measures aimed at the integration of immigrants, their continuing exclusion is reinforced.

In Italy, a new law (Martelli) in 1990 attempted to develop a comprehensive policy on clandestine immigrants. It offered them legalisation and gave them clear rights: to social security; to registration at unemployment office and hence in the national health service; to be joined by their families (if they have a job and an income). In a few months, 204,000 were legalised. However, concerning measures granting adequate reception and integration, the law is very evasive on the specific measures that should be taken and the possible conflicts that might arise. Opposition critics have argued that the law leaves too much discretion to local police officers in determining the specific criteria for giving permits to stay. Five years of renewed permits allow the person to apply for citizenship; but during this period the immigrant is under constant threat of expulsion.

Fears are already being expressed for social order. These may well prompt new policy initiatives to ease the process of mutual accommodation. In Belgium, for example, inter-ethnic tensions between Belgians and immigrants from Morocco and Turkey, have already stimulated a number of new anti-poverty initiatives in the cities of Flanders. However, the 1981 laws which outlawed racism and xenophobia, as processes creating exclusion, do not apply to employment or the housing market and the courts have in practice been slow to apply them, so that they have lost much of their credibility.

In Italy and elsewhere, no real infrastructure for receiving and supporting the immigrahnts has been prepared at the local level in any systematic way, although fragmented measures are now in the making. The bulk of the work still falls on voluntary organisations and self-help groups. Nevertheless, some new efforts at integration are also in evidence. In Flanders, intercultural workers in health care are being appointed to improve communication between health workers and ethnic minorities. In Greece, the Ministry of Foriegn Affairs has established a new agency, EIYAPOE, for the reception and integration of foreign Greeks: offering language support, vocational training, housing and social assistance, within reception villages. In Belgium, the local CPAS (Public Social Welfare Centres) are required to provide residential accommodation to refugees. However, not all have done so. The larger cities in particular have refused to take new refugees, because of the large numbers already there and their fears of both the financial burden and the social tensions. The Flemish government in 1990 also restructured the government-subsidized NGOs working with immigrants and this has improved their cooperation arrangements. However, these efforts have not extended to supporting the self-organisation of the migrants themselves: no subsidies have been agreed to

support the establishment of their own cultural or religious organisations.

Efforts in some countries to promote equal opportunities at work for different ethnic groups - and hence to dilute sources of friction - may also come to be seen as worthy of wider imitation. In the UK, these efforts are in some respects most advanced in Northern Ireland, under whose Fair Employment legislation large employers must monitor the religious composition of their workforces and take action to remedy disproportionate recruitment. Monitoring according to ethnicity is also being made obligatory on Dutch employers (although without any quotas being imposed, only reporting requirements at this stage).

Action has also been taken in regards to nationality laws and refugee status. In the UK, with substantial increases in the numbers of people seeking asylum (44,000 in 1991, compared with 22,000 in 1990 and 4,000 in 1988), new measures to control asylum have been introduced by the government and new controls on fraud have been proposed. In Belgium, there have been significant changes in the law on nationality. From 1992 onwards, third generation immigrants receive Belgian citizenship automatically, as do the children of mixed (Belgian-foreigner) marriages. This will in turn confer political rights: at present immigrants are excluded even from local elections. However, a new Immigration Act (1991), as well as simplifying procedures, establishes additional restrictions on entry of refugees from Ghana, India, Pakistan and Poland and has produced a reduction in the numbers of refugees accepted.

The EC institutions have long been concerned with migrant workers. As yet, however, race and ethnicity are not part of the EC's concerns with equal opportunities. Nevertheless, the new agreements at Maastricht could give a new impetus to national policies to combat the social exclusion which migrants and ethnic minorities commonly suffer.

5.7. CONCLUSION: CATEGORICAL POLICIES AND THEIR GLOBALISATION

Categorical policies express a hierarchy of moral credibility, designating particular population groups as deserving or undeserving. The advocates of these groups - or, in the case of punitive policies, their critics - have been able to secure their political visibility and priority. Thus in the UK debates, for example, elderly people have tended to fade from the political scene; their place has been partly usurped by unemployed people and lone parents. At the same time, it has been the existence of official agencies concerned with equal opportunities for women and ethnic minorities that have kept their disadvantages on the

political agenda. In Greece, the well-organised lobbies for returning migrant workers succeeded, for example, in securing that such groups were well represented in the second of the EC's anti-poverty programmes (Doxiadis, 1987). And there have been well organised lobbies for some disabled groups. But groups who have fewer political champions tend then to become marginalised politically, reinforcing their social disadvantage.

Categorical policies have been criticised on four inter-related grounds. First, it is argued that they give preferential treatment to those groups which enjoy high levels of political support, rather than to those whose vulnerability may be the greatest. To this extent, such policies do not extend and enrich the social rights of citizenship, they merely add incrementally to the range of deserving groups who have been publicly recognised. Second, by themselves, they tend to segregate their target group from the rest of the population and they may, indeed, reinforce their stigmatisation and exclusion. Third, they may divert public attention from the wider social and economic processes which produce needs in the first place. Finally, they sometimes tend to evoke - and to render once again fashionable - policy responses that echo the charitable traditions of old, rather than the citizenship rights of more recent times.

BOX 20

In Italy, recent administrative changes have produced a fragmentation and overlapping of competences. The Ministry of the Interior was traditionally responsible for such groups as the disabled, minors, vagrants, immigrants. During the late 1980s, a new Ministry of Social Affairs was created dealing with some of these same groups - notably minors, drug addicts, social marginalised groups; and in 1991, another new Ministry was created to deal with migration. Both new ministries are loca ted within the office of the Prime Minister but lack their own budgets. This has produced a fragmentation and overlapping of competences.

This is not, of course, to deny that upon the infrastructure of sectoral policies that has been developed, categorical elements should be built, targeted on those population groups which have been identified as being at risk of exclusion. Within this framework, such categorical elements can help to overcome the additional barriers to access which specific groups confront. They can thereby contribute to the wider realisation of the social rights of citizenship. It is from this standpoint that the efforts which have been made in the countries of the Community to "globalise" policies will be examined in Chapter 6.

BOX 21

Within the French system of aide sociale, there has been a progressive move away from population categories and a reduction in family responsibility (which is also product of stigma). Some social aid benefits have been taken into the system of social security (housing benefit, disability benefit). And within local social aid institutions, there has been an increasing emphasis on social action; this shift has been assisted by the decentralisation of various public programmes, which has given local communities increased scope to intervene in the social field.

CHAPTER 6: POLICIES SPECIFICALLY FOCUSSED ON SOCIAL EXCLUSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The sectoral and categorical policies analysed in the two preceding chapters are "general" in the sense that they are not targetted specifically on those individuals, groups and communities who are already socially excluded. Rather, they deal with the broad mass of the population and their significance for the present report is as much preventive as remedial. Of course, within these general policies there are elements which are compensatory, targetted upon the excluded. They include, of course, the various social minima which were identified in Chapter 4: most obviously, the systems of social assistance at local, regional and national level. But these are integrated, more or less, within the larger policy frameworks.

The present chapter turns to those policies which are explicitly targetted on those who are socially excluded. By dealing in this way with the range of different policy approaches that are evident in the EC countries, the Observatory aims to examine their respective merits and demerits, in giving citizens access to the social rights which their societies have defined. But they should, it is clear, be seen as complements rather than alternatives (see box 22).

BOX 22

Recent Dutch studies, tracing longitudinal movements of households into and out of income poverty, confirm the importance of both sectoral and specifically targetted policies. Employment opportunities and social insurance protection, if strengthened, can be expected to ensure substantial mobility out of insecurity of subsistence. Only a very limited amount of permanent insecurity of subsistence is likely: this could be the basis for a well-directed, specific and multi-dimensional policy for combatting poverty. However, if high unemployment persists and budgetary constraints encourage policy-makers to dismantle the present social insurance systems in favour of means-tested social assistance, this may endanger these primary devices which prevent citizens sliding down to a minimum level of income and of social participation. In these circumstances, specifically targetted programmes will have little impact.

During the 1980s, the policies and programmes which were focussed specifically on the poor were rather diverse, reflecting the confused or even, at times, contradictory policy debates about poverty in the countries of the EC. Some of the protagonists in these debates sought to reveal the connections between poverty, the sectoral policies discussed in Chapter 4

and the broader social and economic changes that are taking place in the Community. They highlighted the way that these changes are exposing gaps in the traditional systems of social benefits and are thrusting hitherto secure sections of the population into the ranks of the poor.

Others, however, have been preoccupied with the more visible and spectacular manifestations of poverty: for example, the numbers of homeless people living on the streets of our cities. One typical response has been to launch programmes of emergency relief: the EC itself contributes between 100 and 150 million ECUs per annum in terms of food distribution. Or, again, the debate has sometimes focussed upon specific categories of the population who are at high risk of generalised disadvantage and marginalisation; and responses have been sought in terms of changes in the social benefits destined for these categories, as seen in the foregoing sections of this chapter.

Finally, some responses have been shaped by fears of a new "underclass": a stratum of people whose energies lie unused, who represent a long-term burden on the public purse and who feel that they have no real stake in our societies. These fears, most obvious in the United States, have also been part of UK policy debates and government sponsored policy research since the late 1980s (Room et al, 1990; Robbins, 1990).

During recent years, a variety of initiatives have developed reflecting one or other of these perspectives. In Belgium, for example, a variety of poverty "funds" have developed (see box 23). But these typically represent short-term **ad hoc** approaches, rather than any long-term strategy.

BOX 23

In Belgium, recent years have seen a plethora of "Poverty Funds" developing to support local anti-poverty initiatives:

*** Through the Special Fund for Social Welfare (BFMW), the central government - since 1989, the Regions - gives financial support to the activities of the local CPAS (Centre for Social Welfare): but selectively, thereby stimulating certain programmes rather than others. In Flanders, 1991 saw increased funding priority being given to poverty, to the social minimum and to social employment. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this new priority for poverty. But with no growth in the overall subsidy, this leaves less funds for homes for the elderly, hospitals, etc.**

*** Additional subsidies became available in Flanders in 1989-90 through the Fund for the Integration of the Deprived (VFIA): for projects run by partnerships among local NGOs, CPAS and local authorities. Additional support also came through the Special Fund for Local Policies on Vulnerable Groups (except for Antwerp and Gent). However, initial evaluations have been rather critical, according to the Social Economic Council of Flanders: the structural framework for combatting poverty at a local level was weak; the project approach hindered the launching of a long-term policy; there was a lack of coordination between municipalities; and the Funds served as excuses not to increase normal social budgets.**

*** The Flemish Fund for Integration of the Underprivileged (VFIK), running 1991-98, is more tightly targetted than its predecessor; the budget is smaller but more concentrated and better targetted on poverty): it can stimulate integrated projects and has promoted general policy discussion within the fifteen municipalities concerned.**

6.2. IN SEARCH OF GLOBAL STRATEGIES

Chapters 4 and 5 were concerned with sectoral and categorical policies respectively. In concluding each chapter, we referred to the limitations of the policies which had been discussed and the case for "globalising" both sectoral and categorical policies. We now examine how policies specifically targetted on social exclusion can be globalised and can, thereby, adequately complement the sectoral and categorical policies studied earlier.This policy aims at a multi-dimensional approach to social disadvantage. It combines two principal aims: active labour market policy and reduction of the social isolation of citizens living on minimum benefits for extended periods.

But what are global policies or policy strategies? Those who use these terms (or similar terms such as "integrated approaches") appear to have in mind strategies which recognise that social exclusion:

* arises, as argued in the conclusion to Chapter 5, from processes of social and economic change whose effects are not confined to particular population groups and which cannot therefore be combated by categorical policies which are focussed upon those groups alone;

* is a phenomenon which is multi-dimensional; which is often spatially concentrated; and which tends to persist over time, as a result of self-reinforcing mechanisms;

* develops out of the play of interests of various key social, economic and political actors, whose engagement in any new strategy must therefore be secured.

Certainly it seems to be this notion of "integrated" or "global" strategies that underpins Poverty 3, the current anti-poverty programme of the EC, to which this Observatory has a particular link. It is in these terms that the discussion of this chapter will be organised.

6.3. POLICIES TO COMBAT MULTI-DIMENSIONAL EXCLUSION

A number of national governments have recently launched programmes which are targeted upon multiple disadvantage. One is the Dutch government's Social Renewal Policy. Active labour market measures are targeted on the long-term unemployed, ethnic minorities, young people, people with disabilities and women; this includes the creation of a "job pool" by the local authority, paid at the minimum wage, for those unable to move into the labour market proper. Alongside these employment measures, the Social Renewal Policy targets the physical rehabilitation of city neighbourhoods on the one hand, welfare, health, culture and education on the other. The Policy as a whole is highly decentralised to local authorities, within the general framework set by central government. No new budget is involved but a large number of previously separate funds for municipalities are brought together. And in approving local expenditure proposals, priority is given to the creation of new local partnerships. So far, however, no specific and detailed evaluation is yet available of these diverse local initiatives.

Policies such as these at national level are difficult to design and to assess, like their counterparts at EC level (including, indeed, Poverty 3 itself). One tool may be the indicators of multiple disadvantage which are being tested in some countries. These include the multi-

dimensional indicators of well-being used every two years in the reports of the Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office, which make reference to housing, health and consumption; the indicators used in a recent Danish study to identify 9% of population as suffering multiple deprivation; and the indicators emerging from research on incomes and poverty by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), the major Irish research institute working in this field. Finally, in France the national statistical institute (INSEE) has been expanding the range of the data on social exclusion which it has been collecting, to include the areas of employment, family expenditure, work, education, vocational training, health and housing.

The results of using such indicators should, of course, be compared with the "sectoral" indicators used in Chapter 4: the degree of association of poverty and employment status, and of employment status and educational achievement, etc. We know, for example, that in Belgium, in the mid-1980s approximately three quarters of the recipients of subsistence incomes had received no more than primary education; and that one third had significant problems with their health. It is by cross-referencing associations such as these that indicators of multiple disadvantage can to some extent be checked.

Where appropriate, these indicators are being exploited by our Observatory. The same goes for such panel and cohort data as are available, to illuminate the cumulation of disadvantage and exclusion over time. And in several member states, substantial research has been carried out on spatial aspects of disadvantage, not least for policy purposes, which can be used to some extent bu our observatory, as well as being of obvious interest to the European Commission, given its policy instruments oriented to spatial disadvantage and re-structuring. However, it is clear that in the work of the Observatory, the investigation of multiple and cumulative disadvantage and exclusion will be severely restricted by the lack of available data. This is not for want of trying. We have examined the extent to which the indicators of "sectoral" disadvantage, used in Chapter 4, can be cross-tabulated with other indicators but have found this to be possible to only a very limited extent.

6.4. POLICIES TO COMBAT SPATIAL EXCLUSION

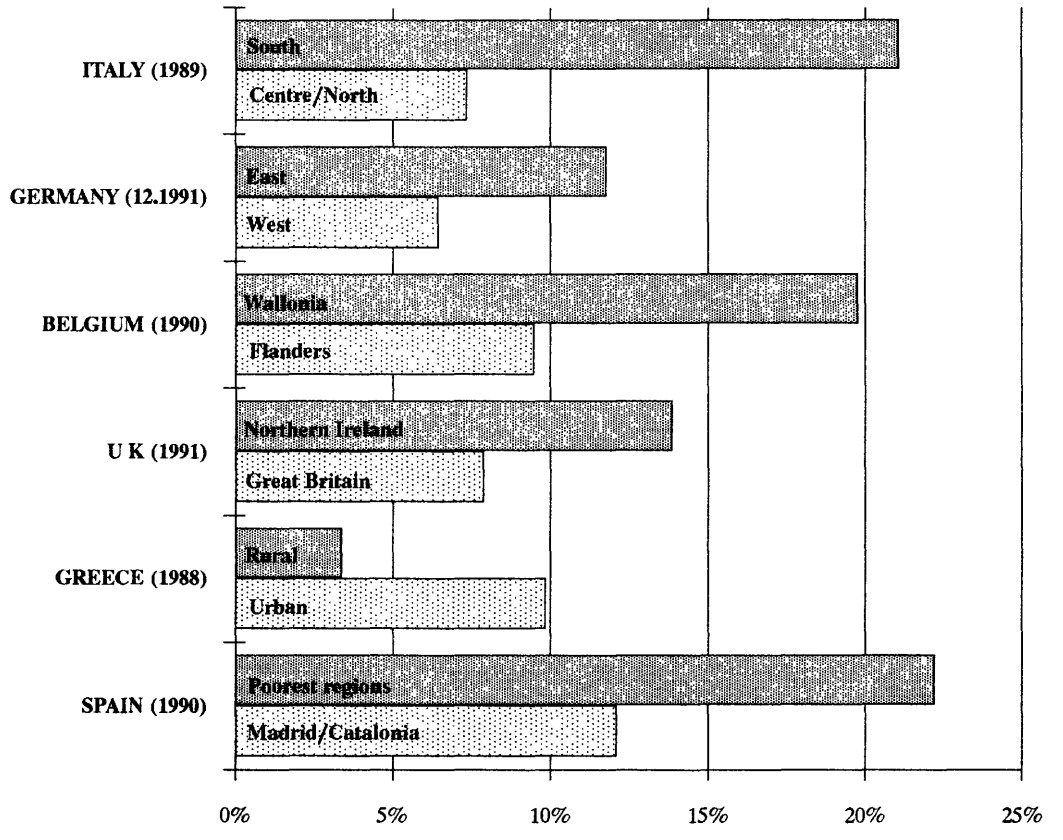
There are major variations in prosperity among the regions of the Community and regional rankings tend to remain stable over time. In Spain, for example, it is Extramadura, Andalusia, Galicia and Castilla la Mancha that consistently figure as the most disadvantaged. These inequalities are, of course, associated with the uneven distribution of economic wealth and power. It is generally in the more prosperous regions that the key economic decision-makers are located, while the less prosperous tend to be peripheral to these decision-making

processes. Moreover, unemployment, with its destructive consequences for the social functioning of a community, is generally higher in these less prosperous regions; and the resources available for public services and for infrastructure investment tend to be lower. In consequence, the inhabitants of these regions tend to have only restricted access to the opportunities and rights which are held out as the normal expectation of citizens in the countries concerned.

These regional inequalities are, of course, of recurring concern to national and Community policy-makers. They have been the subject of some major initiatives by the public authorities, involving in many cases the structural funds of the EC. Nowhere is this more obviously the case than in Germany, where - with the collapse of the whole social and economic system of the former DDR - a whole society is at risk of "social exclusion". Massive transfers of resources are being made to the eastern Länder - matching the gross domestic product of those Länder - with the aim of protecting income and consumption levels and of bringing wage levels to those of the western Länder by 1995.

Figure 15 displays the unemployment rates for Germany, where the rate in the former East Germany has mounted rapidly; for Italy, with its North/South divide, and where, it should additionally be noted, the proportion of employment that is precarious is twice as high in the South as in the Centre/North, falling especially in the construction industry and agriculture; in Belgium, where the disparity in employment and prosperity between Flanders and Wallonia serves as a persisting inter-communal irritant; in the UK, where the high rates of unemployment in Northern Ireland provide poor conditions in which to surmount the long-standing inter-communal tensions; and in Spain.

Figure 15 **INTRA-NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES**



In Greece, there are worrying signs of growing regional imbalance, as a result of deindustrialisation. Traditional industrial areas have been hit by massive plant closures: the result of macroeconomic adjustment, deregulation policies and the impact of preparations for the Single Market. The industrial base of such areas as Lavrion and Evia is collapsing; the workforce has no alternative but to return to low productivity, low income rural occupations; and enormous strains are imposed upon the system of social protection. The Greek government has launched a special programme for Lavrion, with retraining courses for unemployed, rent subsidises for the poorest and new childcare provision.

But it is not just that regions differ in their levels of economic prosperity and their rates of unemployment. What is more, the less prosperous regions are less able to support their more vulnerable groups. Thus, for example, within Spain the coverage of the unemployed - in terms of unemployment benefit and assistance - varies among regions broadly according to

their wealth: with Madrid, Navarra and Barcelona offering coverage rates of more than half, and the poorest regions covering between one quarter and one third. Nevertheless, within such poor regions as Andalucia and Extremadura, these benefits have played a significant role in supporting temporary agrarian workers: a group whose position in the rural economy is becoming steadily more precarious. And while the lax administration of these benefit schemes - in particular, the disregard of qualifying conditions - came in for public criticism during 1991, this did at least mean that the schemes were more able to secure the survival of such agrarian workers and to reduce the risks of social conflict.

Even within the more prosperous regions there are local concentrations of disadvantage: in the inner cities for example. In Britain, for example, the ten most deprived areas are to be found within the most prosperous region, the south-east. There are obvious links between the discussion of high risk groups and these multiply deprived areas: not least, because official criteria for identifying the latter sometimes include the numbers of the former. But even where this is not the case, there is good evidence that groups such as the unemployed and welfare recipients are concentrated into some of the dilapidated zones.

There have been a number of government schemes to promote housing and other development within areas of multiple disadvantage, in part by attracting private investment: in Flanders, for example and in the four large cities of the Netherlands. In the latter, the Problem Accumulation Districts Policy of 1985-90 has been concentrated on 30 disadvantaged districts in 18 municipalities, and includes work experience and training for individual unemployed people. However, the results appear to have been disappointing, due in part to lack of cooperation between central government ministries and local authorities; and evaluation has been poorly developed, in terms, for example, of the definition of objectives and data collection.

In France, the DSQ programme (**Développement Social des Quartiers**) involves intervention focussed on the multi-dimensional disadvantage of certain urban districts. DSQ started in 1982, building on the existing HVS schemes (**Habitat et Vie Sociale**). It is currently operating in 400 sites and is part of the larger **Développement Social Urbain** (1989). DSQ, involving both central and local government, and establishing partnerships between the education, housing, social work and criminal justice departments, has taken various forms: urban renovation, service development, programmes to support families, etc. Increasingly, the DSQ initiatives have been linked to another territorially focussed policy: the ZEP (Educational Priority Areas); also to programmes of local economic development. In Luxembourg, however, while there are a number of programmes aimed at regenerating areas of industrial decline, these appear to be focussed almost entirely upon job creation, without

significant attention to social amenities, public transport and housing.

In the UK, the Urban Programme and the "Action for Cities" programme have been the main instruments for combating urban disadvantage: by increasing investment (especially private investment) and employment, improving housing and land use, and promoting community development. Careful monitoring has been undertaken and the programmes have succeeded in renewing economic activity and development in some areas. "City Challenge", launched in May 1991, gives greater priority to collaboration with local government. Local authorities are expected to construct integrated area development plans, involving a wide range of local actors, and to enter into a contract with central government and the other "key partners" - the Housing Corporation, the private sector, and other local participants - about implementation. The programme also involves competitive bidding for funds among the most disadvantaged areas: in the first round, eleven local authorities were successful; the second round is for funding in 1993/4. But how far these programmes are benefitting the very poor is more doubtful; and indeed, this is a recurring question for all of these government-sponsored urban programmes in the EC countries.

In Ireland, government and the social partners have agreed at national level to establish a programme of pilot projects, in twelve selected pilot areas, with high levels of long-term unemployment. In each local area partnerships have been established, with representatives of employers, trade unions and local community organisations. Each partnership is preparing an Area Action Plan, focussed first on education, health, training and social welfare, and second on enterprise and employment creation.

Finally, of course, in all of these spatially-focussed programmes, involving the allocation of additional public resources to specific communities, the indicators that are used to identify disadvantage and to justify the resource decisions are technically problematic and their political legitimacy is therefore fragile. The UK government has developed a system of indicators for identifying the degree of multiple disadvantage in such areas, to inform the allocation of additional public funding to combat these spatial concentrations: these use census data and will be updated using the 1991 census. However, these, like the spatial indicators used by the European Commission in its allocation of the structural fund monies, are regularly contested.

6.5. POLICIES TO COMBAT INTER-TEMPORAL EXCLUSION

Information on persistent disadvantage, like that on multiple disadvantage, cannot readily be extracted from the main sources of data which were used to examine the different dimensions of disadvantage discussed in Chapter 4. Nor do they allow us to explore the mechanisms by which disadvantage may persist over time. Nevertheless, various longitudinal studies on long-term disadvantage have been identified by our national experts (see box 24).

BOX 24

Danish studies during the 1980s demonstrated that:

* **54% of families were in the lowest quartile for at least part of the time but only 4% for the whole period;**

* **80% of total unemployment over a period of 6 years was borne by just 20% of workers;**

* **15% of the unemployed were unemployed for at least half of a 6-year period;**

* **long-term unemployment increased during the course of the 1980s;**

* **women, young people, foreign citizens and those with only secondary education had least chance of escaping from unemployment and becoming reintegrated into the labour force;**

* **among social assistance recipients of working age, 10%-15% were receiving benefit on a long-term basis (at least four years).**

In the former east Germany, longitudinal studies of income dynamics were set in motion in 1990, modelled on panel studies already under way in western Germany (OD: 13). The first results indicate that between May 1990 and March 1991:

* **average incomes increased by 12%;**

* **however, compared to western Germany, there was a much higher rate of mobility of households up or down the income scale;**

* **there was some increase in inequalities in earnings but the overall distribution of personal disposable incomes remained quite stable;**

* **however, the rate of poverty (measured as 50% of average equivalent income of all households in eastern Germany) increased somewhat, from 3% to 5%, while remaining low by west German and EC standards.**

A number of the programmes which have been mentioned in this report can be seen as having a strong inter-temporal dimension. Thus, for example, the French **Revenue Minimum D'Insertion**, as well as providing financial assistance and affiliating beneficiaries to health insurance cover, involves social and occupational "insertion contracts", by which recipients are given support to re-establish themselves at work and in the local community. So also, the Luxembourg guaranteed minimum income (RMG) was put forward as a "global" strategy to combat poverty, providing not only financial support but also opportunities for entry into

training and employment. (In the event, however, a majority of the beneficiaries have been released, in whole or in part, from these requirements, because of their family or personal circumstances). Panel studies of the RMG recipients will in due course enable systematic evaluation of the effects over time of this "global" strategy. And in Flanders, the **Weerwerk-actie** programme, started in 1989, and addressed to the long-term unemployed who are living on social assistance, involves a "reintegration protocol", under which a professional counsellor provides support to the client, within an agreed plan, from the initial identification of needs until after the person has secured employment. But of course, all of these schemes are limited by the employment opportunities that are available.

No less an inter-temporal dimension is evident in some programmes of community care, aimed at reincorporating people who have lived in institutions back into the community. The same goes for the strategies envisaged under the UK Children Act of 1989. This requires local authorities to plan for, and train, young people to leave their care and to become integrated into normal independent living; to this end, local authorities are now required to provide after-care to any young people ceasing to be looked after by them and to coordinate help from local housing, education and health authorities.

6.6. THE GLOBALISATION OF POLICIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Any new social policy is an attempt to create a new framework for cooperation. It offers incentives; it evokes moral obligations; it threatens sanctions.

The social and employment policies discussed in this report involve major stakes for employers and trade unions, organised welfare professionals, central and local government, etc. To engage their cooperation must be a priority for anyone seeking to correct the biases against more vulnerable groups which exist within our social welfare systems. The "globalisation" of policy can refer to the negotiation of a "contract" among as many as possible of those who are in a position to shape its implementation.

This seems to be the intention embodied in Poverty 3, with its funding of projects which are supported by coalitions of key local and regional actors. A similar stress upon "partnership" can be found in an increasing range of national programmes (cf Commission of the European Communities, 1990b). One example is the DSQ programme in France, discussed in Section 6.4 above. Another is the Social Development (SUM) Programme, initiated in 1988, has been giving support to 1700 projects over 4 years focussed on population groups such as children and young people, the elderly and disabled, those with low incomes,

immigrants and refugees. These projects are aimed at supporting local social networks and at establishing new partnerships among the public, private and voluntary sectors. Evaluation of this programme is currently under way.

In Italy, new laws during 1991 changed the whole framework for public/private cooperation at the local level and this is likely to promote a new welfare "mix" (see Chapter 3 above). On the other hand, by stipulating what sorts of organisations are eligible - and requiring them to be formally organised - the laws may discourage the involvement of the smaller innovatory projects which have been central to the European Commission's own programmes of action-research in the field of poverty and disadvantage.

On the other hand, within countries such as the UK, the government has been arguing that effective cooperation among different actors, in social policy as elsewhere, is best secured through the incentives and disciplines of the market place. It is these that ensure the most efficient production and the most appropriate allocation of resources; and it is by allowing the citizen-as-consumer to choose between competing providers of services that those providers can be made accountable to him or her.

However, it is not only the cooperation of these power holders that is significant for the implementation of policy. Recent policy initiatives in a number of EC countries aim to establish a "contract" with the intended beneficiaries of policy also. Such a contract, however, includes the duties and obligations of the recipient, as well as his or her rights.

Thus, for example, in a number of countries policy-makers have been affirming the obligation of able-bodied recipients of financial benefits to secure training or work. In Luxembourg, the recently introduced guaranteed minimum income (RMG) requires the recipient to take up vocational training and/or to move back into the labour market. In the case of lone parents with young children, these requirements are less stringent (and indeed, only a small proportion of those receiving the RMG are subject to the full rigour of the work and training requirements).

The enforcement of such obligations would be unreasonable if they can be discharged only with great difficulty. In Luxembourg, it is already apparent that lone parents face difficulty in managing this "re-insertion", in part because of inadequate public child care facilities inadequate. Very few have yet been incorporated into training schemes, because of barriers imposed by the traditions and practices of the education system; somewhat more success has been achieved in terms of re-insertion into the labour market, albeit into jobs which are precarious. In the UK, the government is awaiting the results of research into the

disincentives which lone parents may face to re-entering the labour market, before deciding what pattern of incentives and obligations to establish.

Public policy-makers have also been re-assessing the obligations of the recipient's family and local community to contribute to his or her welfare. In Germany, in the event that an absent father pays no maintenance, child welfare officers have recently been empowered to make a payment immediately: this lasts three years and is subsequently recovered from the father. In the UK also, the government has introduced legislation to compel absent fathers to provide maintenance for their children. In this way, government is intervening more actively in the informal web of ties and obligations among citizens, so as to ensure that citizens fulfil their duties, rather than just exercising their rights.

To repeat, any new social policy is an attempt to create a new framework for cooperation. In the 1990s, the actors to be brought into this framework and the stakes which they hold will, increasingly, be affected by processes of economic and political change at Community level. These include, first, the renegotiation of political powers between the EC institutions and the national authorities: a renegotiation which could involve their relationships with regional and local government also. Second, the development of the Single Market could also have a substantial impact on the interests and the relative weight of these different actors. In consequence, programmes launched under the auspices of the Community could be of particular significance in steering and stimulating new lines of cooperation and accommodation among these different social and political actors.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

The preceding chapters have shown that social exclusion and the denial of full citizenship rights threaten substantial numbers of people in the EC countries. They confirm the findings of previous EC studies as far as insecure incomes are concerned (Commission of the European Communities, 1990d; Room et al, 1990). But they also highlight the precarious conditions which are to be found in respect of housing, conditions of employment and fuel consumption, to name but three, and which rob the individuals concerned of social rights which most of us take for granted.

These chapters have also revealed a very uneven distribution of these insecurities. The young - especially those with only a school leaving certificate, or none - find that instead of moving easily through the transition to independence at work and at home, they are thrown back on the often reluctant hospitality of their parents or friends and obliged to pursue programmes of training which often have little content and future. Lone parents and people with disabilities are invited to move from reliance on welfare benefits to labour market incomes, but without the necessary bridges always being available. And half hidden in the background, those who do not share the colour, the language, the nationality of the majority are obliged to accept a status subordinate to that of citizenship.

This was the first task of this report: to study the policies which national governments are following and their positive and negative consequences for social exclusion. In doing so, a second task has also been accomplished, in part at least. The notion of social exclusion is both contested and vague. It was necessary to give it some precision, but in a way that was meaningful to the research community on the one hand, the policy community on the other.

Building upon these foundations, more intensive study of national policies could include three elements in particular. First, more detailed and precise study of the effectiveness of different policies. Second, illumination of the ways in which the political actors identified in Chapter 3 have been shaping the policy options which are being chosen. Third, recording the extent to which national governments are already looking at each other's experiences in this field, as they design their own interventions and as they seek to remove the barriers that produce social exclusion.

It is clear from the preceding chapters that many elements in the changing map of social exclusion have a particular interest for the EC institutions, notably in the light of the Single Market project, the Social Charter and the agreements at Maastricht. However, whereas the Charter is concerned with the social rights of workers, our work has been deliberately

broader, being concerned with citizens rather than workers and the risks of exclusion which they face. Increasingly, as the Single Market and associated political developments gather pace and re-shape national policy agendas, our observation of those agendas will require us also to monitor relevant developments at Community level.

It will remain the prime purpose of the Observatory to illuminate for policy-makers the ways in which different national authorities are seeking to tackle similar problems. But its work may also have a broader and theoretical interest. At various points, for example, this report has pointed to contrasts between the welfare systems of the different countries of the EC. As yet, our work has not advanced sufficiently to be able to judge which of these different systems is more prone to generate social exclusion: or, rather, which forms of social exclusion each of them will typically generate. But such assessments should become possible as the work proceeds.

However, in all of this, it is evident that the work of the Observatory cannot be better than the quality of the data which are available: data in regards to patterns of social exclusion but also, of course, in regards to the effectiveness of national policies. And, while it is beyond our task to undertake improvements in the available systems of data collection ourselves, we expect that our work will enable us to offer a number of recommendations to the relevant bodies at Community level as far as improvements in these systems are concerned.

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CURRENT ISSUES ON THE NATIONAL AGENDAS

BELGIUM

In 1991 the two most important political debates in Belgium were concerned with policies on immigrants and political refugees. At the same time, unemployment and poverty continued to receive a lot of attention. Housing and homelessness, vagrancy, the subsistence income, social security, illiteracy, indebtedness and suicide were other points of interest in public and political discussion.

The parliamentary elections of November 24th 1991 were an enormous success for the extreme-right "Vlaams Blok". The successes of these extreme-right parties are mainly due to their views on immigrants: all non-European migrants should be sent back to their "countries of origin". Since 1985 the extreme-right parties have been successful and have won every election on this topic.

The Royal Commissioner on Migrants' Policy was installed in 1989 as a reaction against earlier successes for the "Vlaams Blok". The office produced several very detailed reports with analyses and recommendations. Nowadays we see that other parties are adopting several extreme-right views on immigrants. These political developments can lead to a growing exclusion of migrants. In the migrant population fear has been growing since the last elections.

The status of political refugees is very different from that of migrants (and migrant workers) but the public does not conceive of them as different groups, nor does it treat them differently.

Belgian legislation on political refugees was changed in 1991 in order to reduce the delays in the procedure. At the same time, the chances of obtaining refugee status were reduced.

In many municipalities refugees are not welcome. The local population and/or the local politicians, try to keep them out of the municipality. Under the pressure of local sentiment, national politicians are discussing the possibilities of reducing the number of refugees coming to Belgium. The new legislation has already been criticised by the organisations working with refugees and by Amnesty International (see Belgian national report part 3, 6.1). Solidarity with refugees is diminishing on the local as well as on the national level.

The discussion on poverty policies until 1991 was mainly a Flemish matter. This debate was activated by the creation of the so-called poverty funds. These funds were meant to finance projects for the integretion of the poor and of migrants in all the Flemish municipalities (see report part 3, 1.6-1.8).

Combatting poverty at a local level was seen as the task of the Public Centres for Social Welfare. This "monopoly" changed after the creation of the funds. Partnership was needed on a local level and resulted in agreements between the local authorities and the NGOs. In fact, poverty was rediscovered on a local level. These discussions have lead to a new interest in poverty in Flanders.

Another debate has been concerned with long-term unemployment and the exclusion of the "abnormally long term unemployed". These are defined as "being unemployed twice as long as the average for the category to which the unemployed person belongs". It can lead to a system of definitive exclusion from unemployment benefits. The new increase in the number of unemployed in 1991 has led to new debates about unemployment policy.

Finally, in and around the cities a lot of people face the problem of social dislocation. The debate on housing and social dislocation was stimulated by the new rent regulations (see report part 3, 3.1), which provide insufficient protection for deprived groups on the housing market.

DENMARK

The political debate and the social policy debates of recent years have been concerned with the increasing marginalisation and exclusion of persons from the labour market. Fom 1986 to 1991 the number of registered unemployed increased by 36%, representing 80,000 people.

"Activation" and education have become the keywords for the labour market and social policy, and have led to legislative initiatives and experiments in new policy methods carried out in local projects. The aims are that, on the one hand, persons receiving benefits (unemployment benefits or social assistance) must make an active contribution and that, on the other hand, benefits must be used to promote initiatives.

At the same time, these keywords form the basis for the debate about new political initiatives for the labour market and social policy, in regard to cash benefits, the financing of the unemployment insurance system, mechanisms for entry into the labour market, activation initiatives (especially for young people) education for young people and adults, barriers in the welfare system between state and local funds and possibilities offered by voluntary social work.

Two committees, one representing political parties and the other representing experts and labour market organisations have been working to develop new initiatives for activation and education. The Zeuthen committee (an expert' s committee) has at the same time been looking at the financing of the unemployment insurance system.

In May 1992 the political parties agreed on more than 25 different issues to activate and educate young people in particular. Among other things they agreed on extending the youth allowance programme. Until now this programme assured employment in local government within two weeks for all 18-20 year olds who apply for social benefits. These young people work an average of 20 hours a week for up to 5 months which they may thereafter supplement with further education. The programme have been extended to young people aged between 21-24 years, thus broadening the right to employment for a wider range of young people on social assistance.

Young people under 25 years old receiving unemployment insurance benefit will receive an offer of work after 6 months as compared to 12 months previously. It has been stipulated that they should be offered jobs that permit them to work for 30 hours and that the wages should be at least equivalent to unemployment benefit. This offer is however voluntary.

The Zeuthen committee finished its work in July 1992. One of the aims is to reform the financing of the unemployment insurance system, which today amounts to 35 billion DKK. At present, the employer and the employee pay a fixed amount to the insurance fund, which covers expenditures if unemployment does not exceed 4%. If unemployment is higher, the state pays the difference. With unemployment currently at more than 300,000 people, the state today pays two-thirds of unemployment insurance expenditure. The new proposal would divide the financing equally among the employers, the wage-earners and the state, regardless of the amount of unemployment. The Zeuthen-committee has also made proposals for activation and proposals for change in the unemployment benefit system according to the length of unemployment. They propose a new level for the long-term unemployed after some activities. The goal for the committee is to achieve a comprehensive basis for making decisions to solve the structural problems of the labour market.

In August 1991 the Minister of State appointed a Social Commission with the primary task of developing proposals as to how the social system could best strengthen human and economic resources. The Commission was to analyse the level of cash benefits and evaluate recipients' motivation to leave the benefit system and enter the labour market. On the basis of its analysis, the Commission was to consider and eventually propose changes in cash benefits. The Commission will present three reports in 1992 and the first report concerning the young (15-24 year olds) has just been finished.

The Commission proposes among other things:

- education for the young people (today one third of the young have no vocational education);

- a new vocationally based education for the less academically-inclined young people;

- rights for young people to be offered a change in activity when they become unemployed;

- a lower level entering the unemployment benefit insurance system;

- new levels of benefits for the young unemployed, according to the apprentice-wage in the labour market.

In the coming month the many proposals from the Zeuthen Committee and the Social Commission will be debated.

FRANCE

During the last few years the general trend of social policy in France has undergone an important change in a direction characterised, in particular, by the development of action based upon a new priority: the fight against the consequences and, occasionally against the causes, of the process of social impoverishment and exclusion.

From amongst the proliferation of public and private initiatives, three in particular are worthy of attention: the establishment of a minimum income, the development of insertion policies and of general urban policies (spatial, social network, environment, housing, neighbourhood). These actions are emerging in an institutional context which has been redefined by measures to encourage decentralisation and which has been affected by cuts in financing for social protection.

For several decades, the French system of social protection has included certain social minimum rates, targetting specific population groups such as the elderly, disabled, single-parent families, etc. Moreover, during the 1980s, some local communities established their own local minimum rates.

The fundamental reform is based upon the creation, in December 1988, of the "Revenu Minimum d'Insertion" (RMI). The RMI consists first and foremost of a differential allowance which operates technically on the basis of the principle of negative income tax. This allowance has almost entirely replaced the local minimum benefits, but remains complementary to other minimum benefits, which have not disappeared. Currently, some 500,000 people benefit from the RMI differential benefit, which represents a total expenditure of 13,000 million francs financed entirely through taxation.

The RMI has a second element: the opening up, or reinforcing, of social rights relating to housing and health.

Finally, it is designed to promote social and occupational insertion. The existence of minimum income levels is not enough to ensure the integration of people and households into society. Social exclusion, which often begins at the level of occupation, can spread into other areas of daily life through the cumulative effects of impoverishment. In order to avoid the disastrous consequences of social breakdown, insertion policies are being developed at every level. Moving from social assistance towards an increasingly global form of social action, insertion policies are mobilising all the social actors (elected representatives, associations,

users, taxpayers, etc.). Amongst these policies, the goal of occupational insertion remains a priority through the improvement of qualifications, new employment agencies and further research into adaptation.

Occupational insertion is also related to other aspects of integration, such as access to housing, to health servicesand to knowledge and information.

The effects of social exclusion and impoverishment are concentrated in certain geographical areas. Poverty is thus here highly visible due to its spatial concentration. Urban policy "Développement social urbain" - Urban social development acts upons this collective dimension of life in society as well as promoting the exercise of individual or family social rights.

These new policies are emerging within an institutional context characterised by a steady move towards decentralisation: a transfer of responsibility for social assistance to the **départements**; increasing the responsibility of the regions with respect to occupational insertion; commitment of towns to urban development policies; administrative devolution of State services. This decentralisation is taking place at a policy, administrative, technical and financial level.

More generally, the mechanisms for financing social protection are undergoing changes corresponding, on the one hand, to the willingness for increased responsibility on an individual basis (compulsory or voluntary insurance, financial participation in the use of collective services) and, on the other hand, to a concern for greater equity in its financing (wealth tax, generalised social contribution).

On the whole, these policies indicate a wish to avoid breakdown or social rupture in French society. Their principles also demonstrate a trend towards coherence in the aims and objectives which surround the notion of "new citizenship". In reality, the application of these policies is more problematic. To begin with, the outcome of certain policies is, at the very least, inadequate, particularly in the areas of employment and housing. Moreover, these policies have often been formulated as a short-term response to specific problems rather than with a view to overall coherency. The system, unquestionably rich and generous, still, however, appears relatively unstable.

GREECE

In the years ahead Greece faces important challenges with respect to social exclusion. Among the newest challenges ara those posed by the dramatic influx of repatriating Greeks from the Balkans and the former Soviet Union; the onset of regional decline caused by economic restructuring; and the reform of the social security system.

Recent developments in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have triggered a great increase in the numbers of Greeks from these areas emigrating to Greece. The settlement and social integration of these Greeks is no easy task. Language difficulties and vocational mismatch are among the most serious problems they face. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has set up a new institution that is responsible for the reception and settlement of the repatriating Greeks, and provides language courses, housing, vocational training, and subsidised employment. Not only has the great number of the Greeks arriving placed a serious strain on the state budget at a time of fiscal austerity, but the wave is expected to increase over the next few years. Pontian Greeks in the former Soviet Union are estimated as numbering between 600,000 and 800,000, and they are the main source of the flow. The Greek minority in Albania exceeds 400,000 and they constitute the second major source.

The process of macroeconomic adjustment that was experienced in other countries of the Community in past years is now well under way in Greece. The economic and social consequences of this restructuring are particularly striking in certain regions of Greece. Traditional regional industrial centres such as Lavrion and Evia have been subjected to massive plant closures. The global decline of a region offers few options to the local population and can easily lead to social exclusion. Regional decline is a new problem in Greece, and there is no experience with social policy in this area.

The reform of social security is another important issue at present. The reorganisation of the system is inevitable, given the huge deficits of the main social security funds, which are administered by the state. However, the question is which reforms will be made, and which social groups will bear the economic and social costs of these reforms. At present a new law is being formulated which will probably increase the retirement ages of men and women (which remain different), and change rates of contributions and levels of pensions. The proposed law will probably be presented to Parliament in the Autumn of 1992. Heated debate about the reform is already under way, and its presentation to Parliament will probably provoke social unrest and a wave of strike activity.

IRELAND

The main policy developments in Ireland since the beginning of 1991 which have to be taken into account in any consideration of social exclusion are as follows:

January 1991	**The Programme for Economic and Social Progress**
January 1992	The publication of **A Time for Change: Industrial Policy for the 1990s** ("The Culliton Report")
Early 1992	Speculation and proposals about changes in social welfare (income maintenance) policies
June 1992	The publication of **Education for a Changing World,** a Government Green Paper (i.e. policy discussion document)

I. THE PROGRAMME FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRESS (PESP)

By far the most important development in policy in Ireland during 1991 was the agreement and publication in January of the **Programme for Economic and Social Progress** (PESP). This is a policy programme for the nineties adopted by the Government following negotiations with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the representative organisations for industry and the employers. It was also agreed by the representative farming organisations. The key objectives of this long-term strategy for "economic and social progress" are set out at the beginning. They include major economic objectives, but also:

- "a major assault on long-term unemployment";

- and "the development of greater social rights within our health, education, social welfare and housing services".

Section IV of the **Programme**, which deals with Social Reform, or social policy, sets out policy proposals and commitments for, as it puts it, "major structural reform in particular in achieving greater social equity".

The PESP provides the framework for all policy developments in Ireland since its publication, including all social policy developments, or develpments which can be considered as contributing to the fight against social exclusion. There is certainly an attempt to give due emphasis to basic principles of social equity, but it can be read from the document that the social aspects of the programme are as much due to pressure from the unions as a concerted strategy from within Government itself. In fact it consists of a very limited number of fundamental initiatives, for instance in relation to social welfare payment increases and the "area-based response to long-term unemployment", and in addition a diverse collection of policy proposals under headings corresponding to the main social policy areas. For the most part these headings correspond to the responsibilities of particular Governement departments - social welfare, health, education, housing, justice - although there are also sections on gender equality and on "people with disabilities". The amount of detail varies from one section to another and the overall impression is of proposals being assembled in an ad hoc way rather than the working through of any overall strategy. In some areas on which the unions are strong, and on which they have done their research (e.g. education), the policy proposals are worked out in more detail. Education also, with social welfare, provides an example of an area where a commitment was made to initiatives for the most disadvantaged: there are a variety of proposals dealing with different aspects of education from this point of view.

Because of the importance the Government and the social partners attach to the PESP (there is a multi-lateral Central Review Committee which meets regularly to monitor progress in the implementation of policy) the poverty lobby, including the Combat Poverty Agency, and campaigners for special interests can use the PESP commitments as leverage in discussions of social issues.

A particular innovative initiative which was part of the PESP is the Area Based Response to Unemployment. This consists of initiatives in twelve pilot areas with high levels of long-term unemployment. In each area local companies have been established on a partnership basis, with equal representation of local employers, trades unions and community organisations. The objective is job creation; the intention is that partnerships should be able to adopt more integrated and effective programmes of action geared to local needs and in particular to the nature of local unemployment. Provision has been made for the evaluation these initiatives, but no findings are available yet.

II. THE CULLITON REPORT ON INDUSTRIAL POLICY

The Industrial Review Group was established by the Minister for Industry and Commerce at the end of June 1991 and reported six months later. It was asked to review industrial policy and make recommendations "with a view to increasing employment and wealth creation". It consisted of six business persons, a trade-union leader, an economist and the secretary, and a civil servant. It commissioned 16 reports from specialist consultants.

One of the report's points of departure is the "shocking level of unemployment which in 1991 has topped 260,000, and is still growing". Despite the fact that the stage has devoted a great deal of energy and investment to industrial development over three decades, and that there was a major review of strategy in the early 1980s, the Group found that "the execution of policy... still remains diffuse ... Policy measures have been adopted without adequate regard to consistency and without a clear and unified policy agenda". The group proposes such an agenda, and how it should be followed through. This includes recommendations about taxation, access to transport, education and training and the clarification and reallocation of functions between various public bodies.

In relation to unemployment the report is not optimistic. Unemployment will continue to increase. The Irish demographic profile is such that the labour force will increase by 20-25,000 per annum between now and the year 2000. As in the past unemployment growth will reduce net emigration and make little impact on the core of the long-term unemployed. "Unemployment is a problem to which the solution can only be a long-term and multi-dimensional one". Two things are important: better targetted education with more emphasis on technical training and "a redesign of the system of income support for the long-term unemployed, combining it with a more active retraining and job placement component".

In relation to training the report argues for making a sharp distinction between support activities for the unemployed and "industry relevant training"; the latter should be allocated more resources. This has been criticised as being likely to lead to the greater marginalisation of the unemployed. In addition fears are expressed about the overly "technocratic" approach to education. By July 1992 it was still not clear to what extent the Government would accept the report.

III. SOCIAL WELFARE REFORM

The new Minister of Social Welfare, who came into office in February 1992, has in the Dail (parliament) and on several public occasions voiced dissatisfaction and anxiety in relation to two main aspects of the social welfare (income maintenance) system:

1) the overall cost of the system and the difficulty, as the Minister sees it, of continuing to pay for it by increased taxation;

2) the administrative complexity of the system.

In relation to the first, the Minister is concerned about the fact that the state pays IR143m a year to meet the 9% shortfall between social insurance contributions and social insurance payments. He is reluctant to increase the level of contributions overall. Instead he talks about "targetting benefits more effectively to ensure that they go to those who need them: this means in effect changing the rules so that people over a certain income do not qualify for benefits". Among the changes introduced or in train are:

"a minimum 30 per cent contribution by insured workers under IR 25,000 earnings towards the cost of most forms of dental treatment; restriction of the full rate of Deserted Wife's Benefit to women with earnings under IR 12,000 a year; removal of entitlement to disability benefit from people who had been unemployed for more than about for years; and removal of subsidised dental and other treatment benefits under the PRSI scheme to people who have been out of work, due to unemployment or illness, for more than about four or five years."

O'Morain, **Irish Times**, 16.07.92

Already, the rates of means-tested unemployment support for the long-term unemployed are higher than the rates of social-insurance based unemployment payments. The latest changes are criticised as undermining further the principle of contribution-related-eligibility in the social insurance system.

The administrative complexity applies mainly in the area of social assistance (means-tested payments) schemes of which there is a wide range with different rates of payment and regulations. The Minister proposes to replace them all with one single scheme. There are anomalies in the present provisions and any standardisation will mean that there will be winners and losers. However the main criticism made of social welfare is that rates of

payment in general are too low. Under the PESP there is a commitment to increase rates gradually over five years. Even this commitment may not be safe.

IV. GREEN PAPER: EDUCATION FOR A CHANGING WORLD

The Green Paper reviews the whole education system and all aspects of education policy including equity and access, Irish education in the European context, making the best use of available resources, the teaching profession and research and development in education. The introduction outlines the major challenges seen to be facing the Irish education system. A number of these relate to exclusion caused by the education system and exclusion from the education system itself, for example:

- the need to ensure that the handicap of social and economic disadvantage is alleviated rather than aggravated by the education system;

- the need to provide increasingly for "second-chance" education;

- the need to ensure gender equity throughout the education system.

Having identified the challenges facing the education system the Green Paper goes on to list some of the shortcomings of the present system. Of particular relevance here are the following:

- many disadvantaged children fail to enjoy the full benefits of education;

- a significant minority of children encounter basic literacy and numeracy problems, which handicap them in the education system and more importantly, for life;

- the current Senior Cycle is unsuitable for a significant number of students;

- there is frequent criticism (most recently by the Industrial Review Group) that education does not prepare students adequately for work, particularly in technology.

The six main themes of the Green Paper, expressed in the form of aims, are:

- greater equality;

- education for life, for work and for Europe;

- management and resources;

- teacher training;

- quality assurance;

- openness and accountability.

In relation to the second above the Green Paper follows the Culliton Report (see above) in proposing a greater emphasis on vocational preparation and on linking education and training more closely.

In relation to equity the stated aim is "to establish greater equity in education - particularly for those who are disadvantaged socially, economically, physically or mentally". Barriers to equality are listed; commitments to overcome them are spelt out. These include provisions for young people who need particular care, meeting the educational needs of Travellers, provisions for children with special education needs and the need for adequate second-chance and adult education. This document will be the point of departure for all discussion of education in Ireland for the foreseeable future.

ITALY

I. SOCIAL RIGHTS IN THE ITALIAN LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

According to the Italian Constitution, Italy is a republic based on work. Moreover, again according to the Constitution, Italy protects the family as a "natural society" (in defense of the unity of which even equality between the sexes might be superceded). Furthermore, it protects the right of workers to live according to their previous standard of living when old or disabled, while it grants to non-workers the minimum necessary for survival.

Full citizenship, therefore, is attained through work, but being employed is far from being a citizenship right.

The different rights between workers and non-workers set out in the Constitution find detailed application not only in the different pension rights of the elderly even at the minimum level, but also in the fragmented, discretionary protection granted to the non-workers.

Many different laws and practices have partly modified the constitutional script, enlarging the scope of social rights. Yet, as in most countries, for the most part they remain linked to one's work status: both to the status of paid (and within the official labour market) worker and to the specific location of the particular job held within the occupational structure and within the social securtiy system. Coverage (for unemployment, redundancy as well as for old age) differs depending on employment sector and on firm size. Not having a regular job constitutes **de facto** also a barrier to access to other rights: to public or subsidised housing, to low cost public loans, to family allowances and so forth. In particular, not having the social rights which are attached to a job - such as unemployment benefit, retirement pension and so forth - exposes an individual and a family to social assistance provisions calculated on a discretionary basis, to the different priorities and to the budget constraints of local social assistance laws.

Only two social rights are granted on a universal basis, not linked to work and non-categorical: health care and basic/compulsory schooling. Differences in access to these two rights, however, are not only linked to education and general social competence, but also to

geographical location: the quality and quantity of health services and schools can vary greatly across the country, irrespective of the number of potential beneficiaries. In this situation, lack of income has potentially further socially exclusionary consequences, since an individual or a family doesn't have the means to make up for deficient social services and imperfect social rights.

At the same time, one should point out that Italian social legislation is from many points of view very progressive, at least on paper. We may to cite just one maw: n° 180 which opened up psychiatric hospitals, giving back to the mentally ill their citizenship rights; the recent law on immigration which granted all non EC immigrants legally present in the country social rights such as health care. What is often lacking in this national context is a focus on, and attention to, both the organisational structures and personnel which are responsible for the implementation, and the implementation process itself. This lack of attention, together with a fragmentation of responsible actors at all institutional levels, is heavily responsible for the fragmentation and hererogeneity of social policies in this country.

II. INSTITUTIONAL ACTORS IN SOCIAL POLICY

The first distinction among actors is between state level ministries and institutions (with their laws and regulations) and local Governments, which can be further divided into regions, provinces and municipalities, each with different competences. In general, we might say that education and social security (unemployment benefits, including earning integration and special unemployment indemnity, retirement and old age pensions and pensions for the disabled, sickness benefits, maternity leave, health services) are state regulated and provided, while social assistance is delegated, by law, to local Government. This is only partly true, however, since within the pension system a number of totally or partially social assistance provisions are administered as well, such as pensions, invalidity pensions, and supplementary old age pensions. These are administered directly at the central level. At the same time, local Governments administer and provide services which can be defined as "social assistance" only in so far as this is a residual category with regard to social security: not only home help for the elderly poor and the "vital minimum" for individuals and families with inadequate economic means, but also childcare services, school cafeterias, after-school activities, maintenance of buildings for schools and health services - i.e. services for citizens in general. They also organise job training and implement national legislation in the area of employment policy.

Within this distinction between state and local administrations, further distinctions (and fragmentations) may be found at each level. Only with reference to regulations and policies concerning problems of social exclusion, we may mention that at the state level there is both a fragmentation and an overlapping among the Ministries of the Interior, os Social Affairs and of Migration.

At the local level, Law n.142, 1990 has definitively established that all "administrative functions in the area of social services concerning people living in the municipality should be allocated to the municipality", within the framework of national and regional laws. Therefor the overlapping and fragmentation between provincial and municipal responsibilities should be eliminated. Yet, at the same time, the possibility of diversification in provisions offered to citizens among municipalities increased, since municipalities define their priorities within the double framework of very general national and regional laws and budget resources which are allocated at the regional level. There may be, therefore, great variation in the balance of acknowledged social rights and/or needs. This is clear, for instance, wherever a "queue" towards a benefit is created (access to public housing, access to childcare services and so forth).

III. NON PROFIT AND VOLUNTEER AGENCIES AT THE NATIONAL AND AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Both at the national and at the local level, other actors are present as well, particularly in the area of solidarity towards the most marginal groups.

Trade unions are such actors, although they are usually not perceived as volunteer or non-profit associations. Besides protecting the workers' rights, trade unions as a matter of fact are vocal in a number of fields, from housing to health services, although they often (as in the latter case and generally when public services are involved) may represent within themselves divergent interest: those of citizens and those of the workers in that particular sector.

A part form trade unions, there is a number of institutions and organisations of more or less long history which organise volunteer activities and advocacy initiatives in the area of social marginalisation. Non-profit (religious or lay in inspiration) associations, volunteeer groups and self-help groups are particularly active in the areas of mental and physical handiap, of drug addiction and of Third World Immigration.

The presence and activities of all these non-profit actors in the various local contexts is as differentiated as that of the institutional actors. The availability, therefore, of the services they offer can make a crucial difference for the people involved, when and where an efficacious local public policy in these problem areas is lacking.

National Law n. 266, approved in August 1991 and national law n.381, approved in November 1991, now define the legal framework for the cooperation between local Governments and these non-profit or volunteer associations in the provision of services to those who are socially excluded or at risk of being so -therefore they delineate the new welfare mix which is being developed in the Italian context. The laws are too recent to be evaluated. Observers, while pointing to the positive features of a nationally defined framework as well as of an official acknowledgment of the role played by these actors in the area of social welfare, point also to dangers of further fragmentation and local differentiation in social provision. They also point to the paradox of a state which, while it reduces its responsibility in granting social rights, encourages and even creates a publicly-financed non-profit and voluntary sector, which becomes dependent on public money.

IV. SYMBOLIC AND PRACTICAL PRIORITIES IN POLICIES AGAINST SOCIAL EXCLUSION

If one looks at social expenditure, it is apparent that the elderly are by far the main category of potenially socially excluded which is taken care of by the state, as well as by local Government. Drug addicts and the handicapped follow at a distance.

Yet, if one looks at public debates, to recent social policy legislation at the national and regional level, as well as to volunteer and non-profit initiatives, the picture is somewhat different: although the elderly poor or disabled remain a high priority, drug addicts and Third World immigrants seem to be perceived as the most acute social problem - probably because they are perceived only (or first and foremost) as a question of social order, not only os social rights. At he other extreme, children living in stressful situations, multi-problem families, and even more "ordinarily poor" families and adults, school drop-outs and inadequately educated and skilled young people, with no behavioural "problems", are much less visible. Although specific cases, particularly those involving children, might fire public debate, they do not succeed in developing a sustained and systematic public interest.

LUXEMBOURG

I. INTRODUCTION

One can hardly draw a picture of political austerity in Luxembourg: fiscal reform, reform of pensions and modifications to the RMG (guaranteed minimum income) of 1989, as well as changes contained within the reform plan, investment in the public housing sector and tentative attempts to slow down the escalating costs of health care show that we are still able to go further, even though we should be asking ourselves questions about how the cake should be divided and about its long-term financing.

Subjects such as income policies, family policy linked to demographic considerations, reform of the sickness funds, housing and education (albeit less obviously) are on the agenda and relevant within this context.

II. THE FAMILY

For decades the family has been among the favourite topics of political debate. These preoccupations are linked with a significant demographic shortfall which only immigration has been able to rectify to a certain extent. The introduction of generous family benefits has been a characteristic of family policy since the 1970s (family benefit itself dates from 1947). The "back to school" allowance - not found in other EC countries - serves as an example of the effort various Governments have made in this area. Despite a slight rise in the birth rate, it has not met the target rate hence continued investment in this area:

- an increase in benefits (Government announcement: April 1992); together with a reduction in the limit of tax allowance per child, Cf. below;

- an increase in "back to school" allowance;

- an increase in education benefit and an extension of the period over which education benefit is payable, etc.

As critics (eg the Economic and Social Council and others) have pointed out for some time, financial support perse will not resolve the situation and will not improve family life. Should we not increase financial support for the infrastructures necessary to create a lifestyle which is better adapted to the needs of children and their parents?

In this context the Ministry of the Family's increased investment in childcare facilities should be noted. However, this effort is being made rather late, and since it is starting from scratch, which means that childcare facilities are still poor.

Other modifications (in urban development, extension of the length of maternity leave, changes in school hours) which have an impact on family life and on the professional lives of women - especially those women who have to go out to work - also require urgent attention and cannot be achieved through monetary allowances alone.

In the case of Luxembourg, a clear trend can be seen: family benefits are preferred to the distribution of differential allowances which are targetted in particular on the integration of socially excluded groups.

For example, by increasing in family benefit linked to a reduction in the limit of tax allowance per child, it is hoped that an improvement in the situation of low income households will be effected.

In addition, the "rent" allowance, subject of debate during the last few months, is no longer an issue for consideration; as a differential allowance, it met with a lot of scepticism concerning possible abuse. On the other hand, are we prepared to give generous and universal subsidies to assist access to home ownership, equally to households of low and medium income levels?

III. INCOME POLICIES

Fiscal reform is, and was, certainly at the centre of public interest.

"Fiscal reform incontestably leads to a marked improvement in the standard of living. However, it cannot change the situation of non-taxpayers; it follows that the real situation of these households remains unchanged, but that their relative situation deteriorates..." (Calot, 1991: IV.16.)

Through this reform, the concept of the family was redefined in relation to the old system which favoured the traditional family with only one "breadwinner"; the new system, however, penalises single-parent families (separated, divorced or widowed) who had "profited" from the former system.

By means of the above-mentioned modifications, an attempt is being made to compensate for the relative loss incurred by non-taxpaying households.

Pension reform involves reconciling the two systems which operate in Luxembourg (the contributive and non-contributive systems) and by measures in favour of small pensions. The considerable gulf between the two systems has fuelled political debate for some years.

With respect to the RMG, what is planned is a generalisation of the "rent" deduction, a relaxation of the conditions relating to rehabilitation and the introduction of an "insertion allowance" to compensate for the sometimes inverted difference between the RMG and the minimum social wage (SSM). The overall concept has not been questioned, with strict conditions governing eligibility.

The increase in the minimum social wage (SSM) gave rise to an often controversial debate, with the RMG allocations, which take into account family make-up, being compared to the SSM which involves only two separate amounts relating to persons "with" or "without" a dependent family; there was criticism of the fact that a family with numerous beneficiaries of the RMG "gains" far more than the same type of family receiving the SSM.

The values of the two systems have also been compared:

- a disincentive to work became apparent;

- it was proposed that SSM should be discontinued in favour of a general introduction of the RMG for people receiving low incomes.

This debate will certainly be taken up again when one of these two systems is modified.

The RMG is also considered as a point of reference (as was the SSM for a long time).

IV. EDUCATION

The most pressing problem concerns the children of migrants who have to learn four languages with, before 1989, no real help at school.

Since then, the attitude of the Ministry has changed considerably: in the face of a century of immigration and very serious problems, the Ministry has, for the first time, introduced both compulsory and non-compulsory measures (particularly with reference to areas where local communities participate in the organisation of schools).

In general, the reforms planned are distinguished by proposals:

- to drop bilingualism (German/French) at school in favour of monolingualism;

- to introduce radical reform into complementary education (the 3 years after primary up until the end of compulsory schooling) which was considered as a "dead end";

- to privatise certain areas of education, such as vocational training; the privatisation would apply to salaried workers, not the unemployed and recipients of the RMG.

On the whole, education produces a number of failures due to overloading in language tuition and to a certain degree of inflexibility which it is hoped will be overcome by the reforms now being prepared.

Some reform proposals have already provoked hostile reactions from teachers. As parents are not well organised, their impact is minimal, but for the main part, the changes tend towards easing the burden on the pupils.

V. HEALTH

Reform of the sickness funds has been the subject of debate for several months. It is necessary to slow down the increase in expenditure and divide the financial burden in a more equitable manner among those benefiting from care, the insured and the State.

An initial draft bill was withdrawn following a strike by doctors, who objected to the introduction of a global package limiting the remuneration for treatments.

A second bill was brought in which introduced the idea of increased payments on the part of the insured - by means of increased contributions and paying more towards the costs of medical care. The idea of a global package for doctors had been abandoned. According to its critics, this bill ran the risk of moving away from a liberal and non-stigmatising form of health care (all of those receiving health care face the same tariffs) towards a two-tier system, with public and private sectors.

A new bill found consensus among a number of people (employers, trade unions and doctors) who had categorically rejected the previous bill.

At the present time, this compromise seems to have avoided the danger of a two-tier health system, but it is still difficult to foresee how this reform will work out in the long-term. The present situation has provoked some unusual coalitions and inconsistent objectives; it appears hardly likely that the Government will be able to satisfy all these divergent demands.

THE NETHERLANDS

Longitudinal research on poverty, insecurity of subsistence and relative deprivation in the Netherlands shows that for most persons poverty is transitory. Only a very limited amount of poverty appears to be structural. This suggests that a specific and multidimensional poverty policy is feasible, if it is accompanied by a broader employment and social security policy. In fact, the Dutch government follows these three tracks to reduce social disadvantage. The first track is the increase of labour market participation. Income policy and social security constitute the second track. The Social Renewal Policy is the third track.

The Dutch government acknowledges that the issue of social and economic disadvantage is a relative matter and may be described by different concepts, such as (new) poverty, social exlcusion, insecurity of subsistence or marginalisation. However, the government itself explicitly uses the more general phrase "situations of disadvantage" to denote unfavourable positions that people may take on and which have various dimensions, such as income, education, health, etc. These situations of (cumulative) disadvantage involve more than financial problems and often lead to (prolonged) welfare state dependency, which is considered to be both socially and economically undesirable. The government emphasises that situations of disadvantage are not restricted to people without employment, but can be found among the economically active as well.

Economic growth and an active labour market policy are considered the two main preconditions for an increase in labor market participation. An increase in participation is expected to reduce social disadvantage, because employment provides the individual citizen with an adequate income to enable his or her social participation, and creates the basis for financing social security systems. One of the major developments within the active labour market policy of 1991 was the enforcement of the Labour Provision Law, making the social partners responsible for the provision of employment.

According to the Dutch government the social security system has two main functions. One is to serve as a safety net. It should guarantee an income level covering the essential costs "necessary to enable the individual to live a life worthy of a human being" for persons who are unable to work and for persons who are allowed not to work, such as the elderly. This also applies to persons who are available for the labour market in principle, but do not succeed in finding a job despite all efforts. The second main function of the social security system is to serve as a trampoline: it should contain incentives for people to find and to keep paid employment.

Four developments in 1991 should be mentioned in this restpect. First, the Adaptation Mechanism Act, linking the minimum wage and social security benefits to the average wage level, was reinstated in January 1991. However, the Adaptation Mechanism Act was replaced by the Adaptation Mechanism Act with Possibilities of Deviations in January 1992. Because of the unfavourable ratio of economically inactive to economically active income recipients expected in 1992, adaptation was suspended.

Second, the budgets for Special Assistance, to be used by the municipalities to give financial support to individual households in special circumstances, were increased and decentralised. Third, the Youth Employument Guarantee Act, offering work experience and training to unemployed youngsters, was carried into effect in a number of municipalities. Its national enforcement took place in January 1992. Fourth, the government made a number of proposals on the reduction of occupational disability in the Reduction of Occupational Disability Bill. Most of thse proposals entered into force in March 1992.

The third track of the government's policy aiming at the reduction of social disadvantage is the Social Renewal Policy. A central element within the Social Renewal Policy is the direct approach to the individual citizen at the local level. For that purpose, responsibilities are being transferred almost completely to local authorities and institutions. The central government only sets the general framework within which the local authorities can take measures to battle against social disadvantage according to their own opinions and priorities. In 1991 the number of agreements between the municipalities and the central government on social renewal has grown to about 500.

PORTUGAL

Although the political debate on social exclusion is still new in Portugal, it has been gradually introduced into the political agenda. The rather progressive character of the Portuguese Constitutional Law as far as social rights are concerned contrasts with the evidence of the non-realisation of many of these rights by large segments of the population. Social exclusion, as a multi-dimensional and cumulative phenomenon, is a high priority problem in Portugal, more and more recognized as such in the public debate.

Low income is by far the most relevant factor of social exclusion. And Portugal has the highest poverty rate in the EC. Low income households form a heterogeneous group, so that the causes have different forms if we consider, for instance, urban as opposed to rural areas. In rural areas, low income is associated with thee low productivity of agriculture, for an aged population which relies, to a great extent, on social security pensions as a secure source of income, in spite of the low levels of these pensions. But in urban areas, low income is mostly associated with low skill levels, and corresponding to low wages, long-term unemployment, precarious jobs and, for the elderly, very low pensions.

As far as the labour market is concerned, although the rate of unemployment has declined in Portugal as a result the economic growth of recent years, situations of exclusion still occur: coverage for the unemployed is inadequate; unemployment is more serious for some population groups, as in the case of women and young people; the precarious nature of jobs that affect some categories of workers is more seriously felt in those sectors which are undergoing restructuration; the existence of a high percentage of unskilled workers in the labour force, with very low level of education and professional training, facing serious difficulties of adjustement to structural changes in the productive structure of the country. Some employment and training programmes have been implemented to deal with this problem.

Poverty is also associated with the low level of minimum income guaranteed to citizens, both those who are working (minimum wage) and those who are retired (pensions). Social protection is far from satisfactory. These are the aspects of social policy generally discussed in the country. Portugal is one of the few EC countries that does not have a Guaranted Minimum Income and it is surprising that such a policy is neither discussed nor proposed by political parties or trade unions.

The Government, for its part, seems to be aware of the fact that, although there has been a high level of economic growth in the country since the late 1980s, poverty has not been eradicated. Indeed certain categories of the population are hearily offered by poverty. Some programmes geared towards fighting poverty have been forwarded, some of them financed by the European Community. The creation of Commissariats to coordinate such programmes mirrors the importance of the problem and the attention given to it by the Government.

The effects of low income are evident in the access to goods and services required for a decent life, like housing, health and education, and by the inefficiency of the public services in the provision of such services. Poverty is seen to affect the social fabric, such as prostitution, delinquency, drug-addiction, crisis in the ethical values of the family. All these are matters of major concern for trades unions and are raised by opposition parties in Parliament.

Housing is a social problem in Portugal. The high prices of housing, the scarcity of housing for rent coupled with the high level of rents lead to poor housing conditions for a significant percentage of population, or a high financial burden for those who do manage to secure access to housing. The difficulty of access to decent lodging is a serious problem for poor households, and housing policy has not adequately responded to such needs. Meeting these needs is considered, the role of social housing.

Education is also important in social exclusion: either in school failure, or the early dropping out of school by some population groups. The phenomenon of child labour has reached significant proportions in recent years, in some regions and sectors of activity. The existing programmes introduced to deal with this problem, while based on sound principles, may nonetheless fail if the financial situation of the households do not improve significantly.

SPAIN

The main problems currently under political debate in Spain in relation to social exclusion policy are the following:

1. First and foremost the **precariousness of new jobs** created from 1986 onwards. The instability that this generates - around 32% of the working population are in temporary jobs - is the highest in the EC. This social fact is disrupting the contribution record in relation to social security, especially for young people and unqualified workers. This high turn-over disrupts the integration of young people into the productive system, causing many anxieties and new types of entrepreneurial control. The new regulation on unemployment protection (introduced in April 1992) aims to limit this process, by not allowing job contracts of less than 12 months.

2. The second problem is the real difficulties in developing schemes of **minimum income for integration** in the Regions, in spite of their formal legal development during 1990-91. The main problem is not financial, but instead the real capacity to implement viable programmes of social integration. The present debates is concentrated on how to coordinate the different administrative authorities: central, regional and local. It is widely recognised without such coordination it will be impossible to generate the synergy is necessary in order to promote social integration.

3. The last debate is very new and is examined more thoroughly in the 1992 national report for Spain, but it can be briefly mentioned here. In April 1992 the Government passed a new law on **employment protection**, reducing access to social protection for unemployed people. This law was not negotiated with the trade unions, giving rise to very widespread and angry debates between unions and Government. As a consequence, on 28 May the unions held a general strike of half a day.

This law enlarges the minimum contribution period that is required in order to obtain protection and reduces the period of benefit. Although the law may be modified, for the immediate future relations between unions and Government have turned sour at a time when economic convergence within the EC needs some kind of agreement between the principal social actors.

UNITED KINGDOM

In the months leading up to April 1992, all discussion of policy in the UK was coloured by the imminent prospect of a General Election. As usual, the key issue was seen to be the extent to which either main party could manage the economy. Maastricht assumed temporary significance, and defence was still important; but on the whole, foreign, European and defence policy were secondary. Inflation, unemployment, the continuing, deep recession; - these were the issues which hit the headlines and engaged the electorate. In the social policy field, the future of the National Health Service, the standard of education offered to British children, and homelessness - the visible homelessness of young people on the streets of London, as well as the serious problem of families made homeless through mortgage default- were all questions which generated concern.

Broadly speaking, it is fair to say that the Conservative party emphasized individual prosperity and responsibility, competiton and the free operation of market forces; the Labour party focused on redistribution, and the role of the state in promoting wealth for the whole of society. Critics of the former pointed to the casualties of 13 years of Conservative Government, and the progressive loss of a public ethic of generosity and concern for vulnerable members of society. The latter were attacked on grounds of cost, loss of individual liberty, and the lack of experience in Government of potential Labour Ministers.

There cannot in any real sense be said to have been a general public debate concerned with "social exclusion"; but there were elements in pre-Election controversies which relate to relevant policies. It became clear that even the supporters of the market-led approach, which has dominated policy-making in the UK for much of the last thirteen years, accept that there is a significant minority whom these policies leave behind. Part of the Government's response to this realization had been a conscious attempt to strengthen "consumers" rights in the social policy field.

In July 1991, the "Citizen's Charter" was presented to Parliament - a White Paper detailing the content of a strategy for improving the responsiveness of public services to the wishes of their consumers. The principles outlined in the paper summarize "what every citizen is entitled to expect": explicit standards of service; openness, and accountability; information in an accessible form; choice and consultation; non-discrimination and multi-lingual provision; convenience and accessibility; and redress - if only in the form of an apology or an explanation - for problems. Competition between services, wherever possible, will be the discipline which

promotes value for money. "The Citizen's Charter is about giving more power to the citizen": the power to know, choose, complain, and take your custom elsewhere.

This is a very important document, not only for what it offers in terms of improvement of services, but also for the definitions of citizenship and power it promotes. The "four main themes" of the document are listed as quality, choice, standards, and value; and if all of them recall the supermarket rather than the ballot box, presumably this is no accident. The social heritage which this interpretation of social rights draws upon is consumerism, the legitimate concern of the generally affluent with getting what they pay for.

Although it is obviously too soon to evaluate the success of failure of the whole strategy, some of the questions which need to be answered are already clear. How is power to be devolved to citizens? Part of the rhetoric of the Charter is that "people should choose for themselves"; that decision making should take place somehow in the community, and that big state monopolies should be broken up in favour of human-size institutions which will be responsive to local demand. Legislation restructuring local Government finance, as well as the delivery of education, health services, community care, and housing, has all been set in this apparently consistent ideological context. Yet some commentators believe that the parallel reduction in the power of local Government over the past decade or so may in fact concentrate power at the centre, leaving the individual citizen at an even greater remove from a significant say in policy.

Secondly, who sets the criteria for assessing "quality"? Many services are most heavily financed by those - top-rate tax payers - least likely to encounter benefit offices, or social services, or public health care. They therefore have less direct experience of the quality of service offered, and less direct self interest in seeing an improvement at the point of delivery. A strategy for improving services which depends on the self-interest of the "customer" will not work in a context which depends, to some extent, on a distinction between the burden of payment and the concentration of use. The encouragement which has been given to the growth of private provision in a number of policy areas reinforces this distinction.

How can access and choice be assured? Choice implies plenty; yet the application of market constraints to some services may actually reduce provision, or concentrate it geographically in the most profitable areas. Problems of access to services are of course related to the total supply - not just to information about distribution, or the right to complain about delays in provision. In a society where the citizen is consumer, the citizen with least resources has the lowest kind of citizenship. Yet these - the poorest and most vulnerable people - are the very people for whom many of the services have been designed.

The terminology of social policy in the UK has to be seen in the ideological context of the market, of individual responsibility for prosperity. But "exclusion" has certainly been of concern to policy-makers, although it may be described in terms of dependency, the cost to the state of benefits or institutions; "citizenship" is on the agenda, in terms of consumption of services; both social and economic integration are the object of policies in employment, social security, social services, and so on.

The key strategies include targeting the most disadvantaged groups and areas - positive discrimination, without the blank cheque; legal remedies for discrimination on grounds of sex, race and religion; and efforts to promote the reintroduction of excluded groups to full participation in social and economic life through coordinates, cross - departmental initiatives involving private and voluntary sectors as well as state services. Monitoring and evaluation, the development of performance indicators in the public service, and the issue of quality assurance have all been preoccupations of policy makers in the UK. what is missing from the official debate is discussion of the minimum acceptable standard of life for the people with lowest incomes, and its implications for citizenship, for the distribution of wealth in Britain, and for the total supply and quality and of services.

WHO DOES WHAT?

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Income & Consumption Social Security & Debt	Minister of Economic Affairs Minister of Social Affairs				The relations between the different actors have been changing during the 1980's. A first stage was the decentralisation of the fight against exclusion from the national level to the level of the regions and communities. This has nothing to do with priorities for a better poverty policy, but is the result of the federalisation process. During the last years the regions developed their own policies. Most new initiatives were realised in Flanders. Non-governmental organisations in Flanders have been increasingly important. These NGO's are increasingly accepted as full partners by the regional & local authorities. At a regional level legislation has been introduced leading to a better financial support for NGO's, allowing them to professionalise. In Wallonia the Public Centres for Social Welfare remained the most important actor on a local level. NGO's are less important.

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Education		Flemish Council: Minister of Education Council of the French Community: Minister of Education. Minister of Higher Education Council of the German Community: Minister of Education	Deputées responsible for the provincial schools Local councils responsible for the local public schools	NGO's providing educational support	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Employment & Vocational Training	Minister of Labour	Flemish Council: Minister of Employment Council of the German Community: Minister of Vocational Training & Adult Education Regional Council of Wallonia: Minister of Employment Council of the Brussels Region: Minister of Employment			

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Working Conditions	Minister of Labour				
Housing		Flemish Council: Minister of Housing Regional Council of Wallonia: Minister of Housing Council ot the Brussels Region: Minister of Housing Minister of City Renovation Minister of Social Housing	Local Councils and Public Centres for Social Welfare providing social housing	Regional housing societies representing the local housing societies	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Health	Minister of Social Affairs Minister of Public Health	Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare, Family Health & Institutions Council of the French Community: Minister of Social Affairs & Health Council of the German Community: Minister of Health Council of the Brussels Region: Ministers of Health Minister of Urgent Medical Assistance	Deputées responsible for provincial health care Local Councils and Public Centres for Social Welfare providing social care and neighbourhood support	Health insurance organisations	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Minister of Social Integration	Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions Council of the French Community: Minister of Social Affairs and Health	Deputées responsible for provincial social care Local Councils and Public Centres for Social Welfare providing social care and neighbour-hood support	NGO's (e.g. VIBOSO)	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			DENMARK		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Social affairs are responsible for laws of: - sickness benefits, - social assistance, - early retirement pensions, - old age pensions, - child benefit. Ministry of Labour are responsible for laws of : - unemployment insurance benefit, - early retirement pay. Ministry of education are responsible and administrator of: - the state education fund. Ministry of tax (finance) are responsible and administrator of: - the general family allowance. Ministry of Housing are responsible for laws of: - housing benefit,		The Municipalities are the administrator of: - social assistance - sickness benefit - early retirement - child benefit - old age pension - housing benefits	Union insurance system are administrator of: - unemployment insurance benefit - early retirement pay	Family allowance has been changed with the tax reform in 1987. The Ministy of Social affairs is still responsible for child benefit, while the Ministry of Tax (finance) is responsible and administrate the general family allowance

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			DENMARK		
Education	Ministry of Education have the overall responsibility for education Ministry of Culture: - folk high school	The counties are responsible for high schools (upper secondary schools)	The municipalities are responsible for public schools	Private schools public funded	
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Labour have the overall responsibility for employment and vocational training Ministry of Social affairs - extraordinary employment effort - youth allowance programme - rehabilitation	The counties administrate the rehabilitation	The municipalities are the administrator and responsible to find employment for especially hard-hit groups and can refer work to persons receiving social assistance		Transfers of more responsibility to local government (the municipalities) concerning the unemployment situation
Working Conditions	Ministry of Labour			Employees' health service	
Housing	The Ministry of Housing		The municipalities	Housing associations	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			DENMARK		
Health	The Ministry of Health	The counties are responsible for: - the National Health Service - Hospitals - Alcoholic clinic	The municipalities are responsible for: - visiting nurses for babies, - health care in schools, - medical examination of children, - pregnancy control and preparation	Family doctors (general practioners and specialist)	
Social Care Services & Neighbourhood Support	The Ministry of Social affairs	The counties are responsible for institutions for mentally and physically disabled	The municipalities are responsible for: - day care institutions, - residential institutions, - family care for children and adolescents, - nursing homes, - sheltered dwellings and day care centres for elderly, - home help, etc...	Private relief organizations (non-government-organizations) runs many institutions for children and elderly people but funded by the public sector	There has been a change in the social services away from the big institutions and in the direction of small institutions and individual solutions. Support to development projects in the local community as a strategy to improve and solve social problems

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Government: minimum income: RMI, old age benefit, single-parent benefit (API), etc Interministerial Group on the RMI (DIRMI) Secretariat of State for consumption Ministry of Social Affairs Social security funds: sickness insurance, family benefits and retirement funds National Inter-occupational Union for Employment in Industry and Commerce (UNEDIC)	State authorities, departmental authorities, over-indebtedness commission General Council (department): social assistance; personal insurance	Municipal Centre for Social Assistance (CCAS) Purchasing vouchers	Consumer associations Social assistance departments of the social security funds	The RMI replaced the local minimum income experiments

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Education	Government: Ministry of Education; operating finance (personnel); appointment of teachers; definition of curricula and diplomas	Regional council: financing of equipment and maintenance of secondary schools General Council (department): financing of equipment and maintenance of colleges	Municipalities: financing of equipment and maintenance of primary schools; maintenance staff	Associations to combat illiteracy	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Employment & Vocational Training	Government: Ministry of Education; secondary-level vocational training Ministry of Employment: employment policy National employment agency (ANPE)	Regional council: vocational training		UNEDIC Training institutions: apprentices, vocational training (AFP) Training funds (FAF) Businesses: learning tax; integration courses Chambers of commerce and industry	Strengthening of the region's role in vocational training

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Working Conditions	Government: Ministry for Employment: labour law Ministry for social affairs DIRMI	Department: departmental directorate for labour (factory inspectorate); financing of integration under the RMI Other institutions: industrial tribunals; departmental integration council; local integration commissions		Hygiene and safety committee Works committee Industrial medicine	
Housing	Government: Ministry of Housing Ministry for the City	Regional Council: financing of the social development of districts (DSQ) Departments: housing assistance funds (FSL)	Municipality: DSQ contract	Subsidised housing bodies HLM Caisse des dépôts et consignations PACT - ARIM Tenant association	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Health	Government: Ministry of Health Social security funds: sickness insurance funds	State authorities Departments: departmental directorate for health and social action General Council: social assistance service; health benefits	Municipalities: mother and child protection (PMI) Hospital; home care	Charitable health institutions Mutual benefit societies Research associations Associations of ill or disabled people	
Social Care Services and Neighbour-hood Support	Social security funds: Social action departments of the social security funds	General Council: general assistants Recognised mother's helps	Municipal centre for social action (CCAS)	Youth centres Social centres Old people's homes Home care associations Creche associations Works council	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Federal Ministry for Labour & Social Affairs (Social Security Systems) Federal Ministry for Family and the Elderly - old age income systems; pensions for war victims; unemployment subsidies; child allowance; housing allowance; social assistance; health insurance	Corresponding Ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Financing of social assistance Involvement in action programmes - social assistance; assistance for families in debt	National health insurance organisations (public & private) Federal office for labour (autonomous body, administered by the Government & social partners) Public insurance organisations for pensions (old age, invalidity) Welfare organisations assisting families in debt	Unification of Germany

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
Education	Federal Ministry of Education & Science (general coordination) Financial assistance for pupils & students	Ministries of Education - special schools for disabled pupils	Decision on the local supply of schools - assistance for homework	Welfare organisations to combat illiteracy & provide tuition in German	
Employment & Vocational Training	Federal Ministry for Labour & Social Affairs: Federal Ministry for Education & Science: promotion/financial assistance for further vocational training; unemployment benefits; financing of jobs for long-term unemployed; financing of jobs for disabled persons (40%-80% of the wage/salary)	Corresponding Ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Local employment offices	Federal office for Labour (labour exchange, unemployment insurance, vocational training) Job creation	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
Working Conditions	Federal Ministry for Labour & Social Affairs Federal Ministry for Economy - various regulations for job security; technical equipment; dangerous materials	Corresponding ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Factory inspectorates	Labour Unions Labour court Professional association	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
Housing	Federal Ministry for Housing & Urban Development - tax reduction for persons who build/buy flats/houses; housing allowance for low income families	Ministries for Housing & Regional Planning	Housing Office Department for Social Affairs (council flats, housing allowance) Department for urban development - modest flats for homeless people; rent allowance for families in debt		

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
Health	Federal Ministry for Health - health insurance; income security in the case of sickness; rehabilitation of disabled people	Ministries for Health	Public health department	National health insurance organisation (public & private)	
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Federal Ministry for family & the Elderly	Corresponding ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Department for Social Affairs (administration of social welfare &, partly, social services)	Welfare organisations	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GREECE		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Finance Ministry of National Economy: taxation, incomes policy Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security: administration of main Social Security funds				Government controlled compulsory arbitration of earnings abandoned
Education	Ministry of Education organises, supervises & funds primary, secondary & tertiary education				
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Labour Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), manages unemployment benefits, employment subsidies & regulates EC funds for training	Regional Administration	Local Authorities	Greek Productivity Centre (ELKEPA) organises training programmes	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GREECE		
Working Conditions	Ministry of Labour sets minimum wage, regulations concerning working hours; responsible for safety enforcement; regulation of foreign labour				New legislation envisaging committee for working conditions
Housing	Organization for Workers' Housing (OEK) grants subsidised housing loans to workers				
Health	Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security: provision of public health care system				Introduction of the National Health System (ESY)
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security: responsible for wide array of services & benefits for children & families, the elderly & disabled as well as public assistance and social housing		Open care centres for older people (KAPI)	National Welfare Organization (EOP): operation of rural and urban community centres which provide services for children, the elderly and other groups. Greek Red Cross: help at home programme	KAPI appeared Private sector homes for the elderly increased dramatically

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Department of Social Welfare: overall responsibility for policy & administration, virtually all income maintenance services Department of Health: responsible for policy in respect of 3 minor means-tested health-related income maintenance services Department of Labour: responsible for minimum wages agreements for specific occupational groups	Department of Social Welfare has a regional tier of administration The Health Boards: administer the Supplementary Welfare Allowance Scheme, i.e. the residual public assistance, & the income maintenance services		The Credit Union movement and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul have co-operated with the Department of Social Welfare in relation to money lending and debt management	None except for certain administrative changes with the Department of Social Welfare
Education	Department of Education: overall responsibility for policy, funding, curricula and examinations	Regional Technical Colleges (RTCs) run by Vocational Education Committees (VECs) offer technical courses at second level Senior Cycle and third level	VECs, sub-committees, of local authorities, run RTCs Vocational second level schools and certain comprehensive schools called Community Colleges	Secondary Schools are independent but largely State funded Universities	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Employment & Vocational Training	The Department of Labour: overall responsibility for policy & funding including the administration of the ESP in Ireland FAS: the state Training & Employment Authority	FAS has a regional tier of administration		Employers (apprenticeship, day release courses)	The establishment of FAS, the State Training & Employment Agency, in 1987, following the amalgamation of AnCO (the training authority), the National Manpower Service (the placement agency) & the Youth Employment Agency
Working Conditions	Department of Labour: overall responsibility for policy & for inspectorate			Employers: Work Safety Committees	
Housing	Department of the Environment: overall responsibility for policy & funding		Local authorities are planning & housing authorities, with responsibility for developing & managing public housing, assessing housing needs & administering various grant & local schemes	Local voluntary housing associations are grant-aided	More emphasis on role of voluntary housing associations as envisaged in the Programme for Economic & Social Progress & "A Plan for Social Housing"

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Health	Department of Health: overall responsibility for policy and funding	Health Boards, funded mainly from central funds, responsible for administration of all health services		"Voluntary Hospitals" are independently owned & controlled but funded almost entirely by the State National & local groups concerned with health issues are grant aided	
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Department of Health: overall responsability for policy. Department of Social Welfare: responsible for the Community Development Programme (grants to approximately 20 projects). National Social Service Board: advice to & development work with voluntary bodies; accreditation of & backup to Community Information Bureaux	Health Boards employ social workers & minister statutory welfare services, e.g. in relation to childcare		A very wide range of national, regional and local groups get State funding for services provided. They can be differentiated as follows: a) Religious Orders and other voluntary bodies which run residential facilities	Assumption of role in relation to community development projects by the Department of Social Welfare The establishment of the Combat Poverty Agency in 1986

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Department of Justice: responsible for welfare policy relating to offenders; welfare service connected with courts & prisons Combat Poverty Agency: remit includes interest in community development. Legal Aid Board: provides legal aid in civil cases to low income applicants			b) National bodies concerned with specific problems e.g. Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children c) Regional (e.g. city-wide) & local bodies providing services to specific groups, e.g. aged, families under stress	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Labour: old age & retirement pensions, invalidity & handicapped pensions, social pensions, various forms of unemployment indemnity; responsible for financing local policies	Regional social assistance laws concerning Vital M. & various income support measures	Vital Minimum for the elderly & handicapped; various income support measures for individuals & families	National Social Security Institute (INPS) administers pensions & unemployment indemnities	Increased local responsibility for implementation, but no responsibility for financing (taxation)
Education	Ministry of Education: the public school system up to the university, part of kindergarten school system Ministry of University: public universities		Responsible for providing buildings & some extra activity in schools; for part of kindergartens & all public day care (for children under 3); some projects for children at risk in the school	Public financed private childcare services Trade Unions & non-profit assistance in adult education with public funding	Decrease in public (State) financing for local services

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Labour: funding of training & work projects & of specific ad hoc projects Reform of projects, etc Earning Integration; early retirement	Regional laws & projects: providing vocational training	Public works projects	Non-profit associations providing training with public financing Social Security Institute for paying unemployment indemnity & earning integration (through workers', employers' & State contributions)	Increased local responsibility in formulating policies Reform of Earning Integration & unemployment indemnity
Working Conditions	Ministry of Labour Ministry of Health - formulating policies; creating the Office for Supervising Work Health & the Environment			Local offices for supervising Work Health and the Environment	
Housing	Ministry of Labour Ministry of Public Works - funding (also through workers' contributions) Formulating policies		Providing some public housing	Public funding for Institution for building and letting (IACP)	

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Health	National Health Service: public funding (through taxation & workers' contributions) & regulation	Defining policies: priorities, distribution of hospitals & particular services within the region; implementation	Implementation: material organization of local health services (family doctors, etc...)		Increased distinction between health and social services
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support		Regional framework laws	Childcare services; day hospitals Home help services for the handicapped, drug addicts, mentally ill, etc	Voluntary associations & cooperation within local public funded contracts	Increased role of voluntary associations & cooperation after 1991 and 1992 laws

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			LUXEMBOURG		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Social Security: relevant bodies National social assistance service (SNAS) National solidarity fund	Social assistance service (SAS)	Social offices	Caritas associations	Introduction of the minimum income in 1986; SNAS & SAS
Education	Ministry of National Education (MEN)		Relevant municipal council School commission	Associations: educational support organisations	
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Labour; MEN; national and regional employment authorities (ADEM)	ADEM		Associations	
Working Conditions	Factory and working inspectorate				
Housing	Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Subsidised housing fund: public		Local authorities	Associations	New ministry established
Health	Ministry of Health				

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			LUXEMBOURG		
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity		Local authorities	Associations	
			NETHERLANDS		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Economic Affairs Ministry of Social Affairs & Employment Ministry of Finance	None	Municipal Social Services	Industrial Insurance Boards General Unemployment Fund Social Insurance Bank	In 1987 a new Unemployment Act was passed. Industrial Insurance Boards provide for unemployment benefits until the legal period expires (maximum period is related to the periods of employment); thereafter the Municipal Social Services provide minimum benefits

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Education	Ministry of Education & Science Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Conservation & Fisheries	None	Local Government: Burgomaster & Aldermen	As a result of the Pillarization process each group of citizens can found & manage a school for primary & secondary education. Private primary & secondary schools are dominant in the Netherlands' educational system & are financed by National Government which regulates the minimum numbers of pupils & teachers per school & total expenditure Local Government may also found public schools	From 17-27 years old a student can apply for a study grant. Administration of grants was privatised during the 80's & is handled by a former part of the Ministry of Education & Science acting as a private organization

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Social Affairs & Employment Ministry of Economic Affairs Ministry of Education & Science Central Manpower Board (CBA)	None	Burgomaster & Aldermen Municipal Social Services	Regional Manpower Boards (RBA) Local Employment Services Local educational & vocational training centres e.g. PBVE (Primary Vocational Adult Education), CBB (Centre for Occupational Orientation & Training) Job Pool organizations-cooperation between Regional Manpower Board & local municipalities	In 1991 RBA's were created replacing Local Employment Services (GAB) councils, with participation from Local Government, trade unions & employers' organizations. After 1985 the first Job Pool organizations were developed. Recently Local Government has become responsible for realizing the Youth Work Guarantee Plan providing temporary jobs for young unemployed. A number of municipalities have integrated these new tasks in the Job Pool organizatons.

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Working Conditions	Ministry of Social Affairs & Employment Labour Inspectorate	None	None	Trade Unions & Employers' organizations are represented in the Council on Working Conditions (ARBO-raad) acting as an advisory board for national policies on working conditions	None
Housing	Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning & Environmental Protection	Department of Housing Provincial Planning Service Regional departments of the Ministry of Housing (HID)	Local Government Local building inspection authorities	Housing Associations	Responsibilities and powers of Local Government have increased due to de-regulation and decentralization Financial budgets are allocated by National Government

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Health	Ministry of Welfare, Health & Cultural Affairs	None	Municipal Medical & Health Authority (GGD)	Health Insurance Funds: a large number of private organizations which implement the Health Insurance Act & the Exceptional Medical Expenses (Compensation) Act Health Insurance companies are actors with regard to the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act.	Responsibilities and tasks are shifting between the main actors. In 1991 a stage-wise implementation of financial restructuring of the health services began. Political debate on the results of this has not yet been concluded

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Health				National Council consisting of representatives of the Health Insurance Funds, health insurance companies & hospitals responsible for hospital planning	
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Ministry of Welfare, Health & Cultural Affairs	Department of Welfare of the provincial Government is responsible for the planning of homes for the elderly	Local Government is responsible for developing and implementing policies in the area of social services & neighbourhood support	A large number of local organizations in the field of welfare are subsidized by Local Government but have great autonomy	On a national level the District Nursing & the Home Help organizations merged in 1991 The development & implementation of policies in the area of welfare has been delegated to Local Government during the 80's The financing of Home Help & District Nursing organization is part of the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			PORTUGAL		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs: Institute of Financial Administration of Social Security; National Pension Centre Directorate General of Social Security Directorate General of Social Action Ministry of the Environment & Natural Resources: National Institute for the Defense of Consumers' Rights	Regional Social Security Centres (RSSC)	Local services (branches of RSSC)		Creation of the Directorate General of Social Action (1991) Agreements with municipalities for providing publicity and juridical assistance to consumers
Education	Ministry of Education: overall responsibility for policy, funding, curricula Institute of Socio-Educational Support (IASE); social action for students	Regional Departments of Education	Participation of local authorities in educational support initiatives & programmes		Education Law (1986) Implementation of several programmes after 1986 to combat school failure (PIPSE, PEPT, PEDI, etc.) involving several Ministries & local authorities

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS * SINCE 1980
			PORTUGAL		
Employment & Vocational Training	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs: Institute of Employment & Professional Training (IEFP); responsible for the design, implementation & evaluation of employment policies & professional training. Unemployment protection.	Regional Employment Services (IEFP)	Local Employment Services (IEFP)	Employers (apprenticeship & creation of jobs) Regional Social Security Centres (local programmes) Professional Schools (joint action with Ministry of Education) NGO's (job creation)	Great improvement of operational programmes (employment & professional training) since 1990, involving several actors in its implementation
Working Conditions	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs				
Housing	Ministry of Public Works, Transport & Communications: National Institute of Housing (INH): providing loans to finance social housing projects		Municipalities (promoters of projects for social housing)	Municipalities Housing Co-operatives	Creation of the INH in 1984, intended to promote housing at lower prices for population groups with scarce economic resources

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			PORTUGAL		
Health	Ministry of Health: Department for Research & Planning of Health Directorate General of Basic Health Care Directorate of Mental Health Services Centre for the Prevention & Treatment of Drug Addiction	Regional Health Administrations	Local Health Centres Local Mental Health Centres	NGO's	
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs: Directorate General of Social Action	Regional Social Security Centres (RSSC)	Local services (branches of RSSC)	NGO's (e.g. "Misericordias") Other Government departments (health administration, social action in various Ministries)	Creation of the Directorate General of Social Action (1991) Community development programmes involving several institutions (e.g. Emergency Plan for Setobal district, support actions for people from Timor, support actions for refugees, projects to combat poverty)

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (1)	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (2)	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			SPAIN		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	General planning Art. 149, 1, 13 Basic legislation & economic management Art. 149, 1, 17	Promotion & performance in the framework of national policy Management of social services			
Education	Basic legislation of primary & secondary school Academic degrees	Management of education services according to Regional Laws	Cooperation in management Participation in planning		
Employment & Vocational Training	Total competence Art. 149, 1, 7	Management of some programmes			
Working Conditions	Total competence Art. 149, 1, 7	Management			

(1) In order to promote the coordination between Central Government and Autonomous Governments, there are General Conferences (Conferençias Sectorales) contracting out agreements. The new Regional Agreement of 28 February 1992 increases the legal competences for regions other than the historical ones (Basque, Catalonia, Galicia) (the majority of them).

(2) According to the Law 7/1985, 2 April, the Municipalities can develop many competences delegated or agreed by Central and Regional Governments

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (1)	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (2)	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			SPAIN		
Housing	Coordination Financing	Competence in territorial & urban planning Total competence Art. 148, 1, 3	Promotion & management		
Health	Coordination Art. 149, 1, 16	Competence in health management	Development of basic centres		
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Promotion Coordination Concerted Plan for Basic rendering Social Services from 1989	Total competence Art. 148, 1, 29	Promotion Management of social services in towns of 20,000 inhabitants or more		

(1) In order to promote the coordination between Central Government and Autonomous Governments, there are General Conferences (Conferençias Sectorales) contracting out agreements. The new Regional Agreement of 28 February 1992 increases the legal competences for regions other than the historical ones (Basque, Catalonia, Galicia) (the majority of them).

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
		UNITED	KINGDOM		
Income & Consumption, Social Security & Debt	Department of Social Security (policy)	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland	Social Service Departments: some responsibilities in relation to Social Fund & debt	Benefits Agency (BA)	Introduction of devolved B.A., running local offices
Education	Department of Education & Science (national policy)	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland	Local Education Authorities (local policy)	Higher Education: University Funding Council, Polytechnics & Colleges Funding Council, Further Education Funding Council	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
		UNITED	KINGDOM		
Employment & Vocational Training	Department of Employment (Employment Group - policy)	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland		Training & Enterprise Councils (TEC's) Training Agency re-absorbed into D.E. National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ)	Establishment & increasing influence of T.E.C.s & N.C.V.Q.
Working Conditions	Department of Employment	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland		Health and Safety Executive	
Housing	Department of the Environment (policy)	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland	Local Authority Housing Departments	Housing Corporation	Housing Corporation has increasing influence

TABLE 1 : GENERAL POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
		UNITED	KINGDOM		
Health	Department of Health (national policy)	Regional Health Authorities	Environmental Health Departments Social Service Departments for Community care	N.H.S. Management Executive District N.H.S. structure - Family Health Service Authority Health Education Authority	N.H.S.M.E. Establishment of F.H.S.A.S
Social Care Services & Neighbour-hood Support	Department of Health (personal social services policy)	Equivalent Government departments for Scotland, Wales and N.I.	Local Authority S.S.D.s (purchasers & managers of services)	Private sector & voluntary sector contractors	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Women	Minister of Equal Chances for Men & Women	Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare & Family	Local positive action initiatives		
Elderly People	Minister of Social Affairs, Family & Disabled Policies; Minister of Pensions	Flemish council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions Council of the French Community: Minister of Social Affairs & Health Council of the German Community: Minister of Health & Family	Local policies for the elderly		

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
People with disabilities	Minister of Social Affairs, Family & Disabled Policies	Flemish council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions Council of the French Community: Minister of Social Affairs & Health Council of the German Community: Minister of Social Assistance & Disabled	Local infrastructure for the disabled		
Young People		Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions Council of the German Community: Minister of Youth	Local youth policy		

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Minister of Home Affairs & Foreigners; Minister of Social Integration; Minister of Justice	Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions	Local integration policies	Royal Commissionar on Migrant Policies	
Travellers & Gypsies	Minister of Home Affairs & Foreigners; Minister of Social Integration; Minister of Justice	Flemish Council: Minister of Welfare, Family & Health Institutions	Local accommodation		

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			DENMARK		
Women	The Equal Status Council placed in the Ministry of State				
Elderly People	The Ministry of Social affairs The Ministry of Health		The municipalities are responsible for care and treatment: - homehelp - nursing home, etc.	Private relief organization run institutions (nursing home) funded by the public sector	Limiting the number of nursing homes and instead trying to support the elderly in their own homes
People with disabilities	The Ministry of Social affairs	The counties are responsible for institutions for disabled persons with the view to vocational rehabilitation, assessment of working capacity and retraining	The municipalities are responsible to provied care and treatment for all groups of disabled people	Private relief organizations run institutions funded by the public	Tendensy away from big institutions to small local institutions
Young People	The Ministry of Education The Ministry of Employment The Ministry of Social Affairs	The counties are responsible for high schools	The municipalities are responsible for education, employment and housing and social assistance, child benefit and housing benefit		

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			DENMARK		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities				Danish Refugees Council	
Travellers & Gypsies					
			FRANCE		
Women	Secretariat of State Decrees and laws on equal treatment of women and men at work Widow's pension Single-parent benefit (API)	Official responsible for women		Associations for battered wives	
Elderly People	State: old age benefit Retirement funds: retirement benefit CNAF: housing benefit CNAM: 100% assistance Long-stay hospitals	Department: social assistance: housing; home care (tele-alarm)	CCAS Old people's home	Elderly people's clubs Retired people's associations Old people's homes	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLYCY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
People with disabilities	Disability benefit; cash benefits; financing by the State but provided through the CNAF-CMSA Secretariat of State Compulsory recruitment policy (quotas) Legislation on access to public services Legal protection of adults	Department: Compensating benefit		Powerful associations of paralytics	
Young People	Education authorities CAF: family benefits National sickness insurance fund (CNAM): guaranteed care	Social assistance for children	Municipality: local youth centres		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Integration policy Social action fund (FAS) Immigration office (OMI)			Associations	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLYCY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			FRANCE		
Travellers & Gypsies	Securing of the rights of travellers		Reception of travellers in equipped sites (water, electricity, space)		
			GERMANY		
Women	Federal Ministry for Women & Youth - old age incare system	Special department within different ministries	Frauenbeauftragte: persons responsible for ensuring that women are not disadvantaged in public administration & public life		
Elderly People	Federal Ministry for Family & the Elderly: old age incare system Federal Ministry for Labour & Social Affairs (pensions)	Corresponding ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Department for Social Affairs: institutions for the elderly; meals on wheels; organisation of meetings for the elderly; free/reduced tickets for public transport; home care	Federal insurance office for employees (national pension scheme) Welfare organisations	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GERMANY		
People with Disabilities	Federal Ministry for Labour & Social Affairs Federal Ministry for Family & the Elderly - tax reduction; rehabilitation centres; accident insurance (at work)	Corresponding ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Homecare Free/reduced tickets for public transport	Federal associations for rehabilitation of disabled persons	
Young People	Federal Ministry for Women & Youth	Corresponding ministry at Länder level (structure varies from State to State)	Youth welfare department Kindergarten		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Federal Ministry of the Interior Federal Ministry for Social Affairs - social assistance; institutions; German language tuition	Ministries of the Interior	Office for foreigners (registration; social integration)	Federal institute for refugees & asylum seekers	
Travellers & Gypsies	No special policies	No special policies	No special policies		

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GREECE		
Women	General Secretariat of Equality: responsible for implementation of policies promoting equality	Prefectural Committees for Equality (NEI's)			Foundation of General Secretariat of Equality (ITI) & of Prefectural Committees for Equality (NEI's)
Ederly People	Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security: management of income support benefits, funding & supervision of KAPI		Operation of open care centres for older people (KAPI)	National Welfare Organization (EOP) Greek Red Cross	Appearance of Open Care Centres (KAPI)
People with Disabilities	Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security: provision of income support & social services for disabled			Various Institutions supervised by the Ministry	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GREECE		
Young People	General Secretariat of Youth: social tourism Ministry of Health, Welfare & Social Security : family benefits, childcare, institutional care Social Centre of the Family and Youth : subsidised vacations National Youth Foundation (EIN) : housing & food for students Manpower Employment Organization (OAED): family benefits		Local Authorities engaged in vocational training & recreational programmes	National Welfare Organization (EOP) - childcare; institutional care Patriotic Foundation of Social Welfare & Security (PIKPA)	Foundation of the General Secretariat of Youth - involvement of local authorities

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			GREECE		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Ministry of Labour Ministry of Foreign Affairs: unemployment benefit for repatriating Greeks; responsibility for reception & settlement of repatriated Greeks including language courses, housing, vocational training, subsidised employment				
Travellers & Gypsies					
			IRELAND		
Women	Minister of State: Women's issues comprise part of the brief of one Minister of State Joint Parliamentary Committee on Women's Rights established in 1983 to examine the position of women in Irish society & to recommend policy & legislative changes which would improve the position of women	No responsibility	No responsibility	Council for the Status of Women: umbrella organization for women's groups which is almost entirely State funded. Lobbies the Government on women's issues.	The creation of an office of Minister of State for Women's Affairs in 1982, subsequently established, now amalgamated with other responsibilities

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Women (Contd)	Employment Equality Agency: State sponsored body which works to eliminate sex discrimination in the labour force; adjudicates on cases of alleged discrimination			Various local groups receive State funds to provide local programmes or services for women	
	Commission on the Status of Women: ad hoc body established in 1990 with a mandate to make recommendations to Government on women's full participation in Irish society	No responsibility	No responsibility	See above	See above

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Elderly People	Department of Health plays a lead role in relation to social policy generally in respect of the elderly, especially health and welfare services National council for the Elderly: established by the Minister of Health in 1981 to advise the Government on all aspects of policy for the elderly; commissions research, organises seminars & public events; relates to relevant international bodies.			Local Care of the Aged Committees & other voluntary bodies receive funds from the Health Boards to provide services such as meals-on-wheele & home helps.	Establishing of the National Council for the Elderly in 1981.

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
People with disabilities	Department of Health: plays a leading role in the provision of services for the disabled, including direct health care, a small number of cash payments (DPMA, Invalidity Pension) & training centres National Rehabilitation Board (NRB): Statutory body which advises the Minister of Health on all aspects of rehabilitation groups, initiates rehabilitation programmes & operates a vocational assessment, guidance & placement service	Health Boards have overall responsibility for services for the disabled at executive level	No responsibility	Rehabilitiation Institute: this institute organised nationally provides vocational training for the disabled in nationwide training centres; it receives some funds from local authorities and the ESF Other voluntary bodies organised on a regional basis which provide services for the disabled & many of which receive State funding	

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Young People	Deparment of Education: has a leading role through its Youth Affairs section which provides grants for youth groups & oversees the Disadvantaged Areas Programme		Comhairle le Leasoige: City of Dublin Youth Service Board, funded by the Department of Education & is a sub-committee of the City of Dublin VEC; provides educational planning & development	National Youth Council of Ireland: Has "Social Partner" status, is the co-ordinating body for voluntary youth groups & has the right to consult with Government on all youth issues.	Amalgamation of the Youth Employment Agency with other agencies to form FAS in 1987 (see Table 1: Employment & Vocational Training)

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Young People (contd)	FAS: State Training Authority Responsible for implementation of youth training policy through training courses & employment schemes Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sport		VEC's: a number of these contract voluntary bodies to carry out their youth services for them, financed by the Youth Affairs Section of Department of Education	National Youth Federation (NYF): provides support & training for youth leaders & members from over 400 Youth Clubs; receives funding from the Department of Education & the National Lottery. NYF is a federation of regional & local independent youth service organizations.	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Young People (contd)				Foroige: National Youth Development Organization: organises education programmes complementary to home, school & work for young people, & trains leaders & members of Youth Clubs and Groups. Other voluntary youth organizations which are grant aided	
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	None	None	Local Authorities: employ social workers & youth workers to work with travellers		

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			IRELAND		
Travellers & Gypsies	Department of the Environment: a lead role in relation to policy Committee to Monitor the Implementation of Government Policy on Travelling People: set up in 1984 & attached to the Department of the Environment, it comprises representatives of Government Departments, travellers & voluntary groups		Local Authorities: employ social workers & youth workers to work with travellers & are responsible for halting sites as well as housing	Dublin Committee for Travelling People: assists travellers in a variety of ways, including providing residential care for young travellers, a day care centre & training & education programmes	

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			IRELAND		
Travellers & Gypsies (contd)	FAS has a role in providing training courses specifically for Travellers			Dublin Travellers' Education & Development Group: works to provide travellers with self-awareness, skills & confidence & to provide youth & community projects within the travelling community, engages in public education & lobbying A variety of local training centres & traveller service groups which receive State funds	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Women	Maternity benefits & paid leave for working women; equal opportunity law & positive actions law; childcare services	Equal opportunity & positive action legislation; equal opportunity commissioner within the Regional Employment Office	Equal Opportunity Commissions, childcare services; counselling services; ad hoc re-training services		Positive Actions law in 1991
Elderly People	Old age, retirement and social pensions	Social assistance framework laws	Vital Minimum, home help, old people's homes	Non-profit assistance & cooperatives offer services with public funding	
People with disabilities	Pensions, accompanying personal indemnity, schools	Social assistance framework laws	Vital Minimum, home help, transportation, training	Voluntary help, cooperatives providing services &/or training with public funding	1991 & 1992 laws on voluntary and cooperative bodies as service providers & on rights of disabled people
Young People	Funding of training & employment projects; laws concerning youth employment	Regional laws supporting youth employment & training	Local youth employment projects; some funding for youth leisure activities		

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	1990 law concerning criteria for admission & rights (health care, unemployment indemnity)	Training, emergency housing, counselling, information	Emergency housing, information, various social assistance services, Vital Minimum, literacy classes	Voluntary assistance working with public funding	1990 law setting out rules for legalization & granting social rights
Travellers & Gypsies	Laws regulating their ability to move & settle; support services in school; health care	Laws implementing national ones	Allocation of space & services for camping		
			LUXEMBOURG		
Women	Ministry of the Family and Social Solidarity			Local authorities: Associations under contract to the Ministry of the Family	
Elderly People	As above			As above	
People with disabilities	As above			As above	
Young People	As above			As above	
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	As above			As above	
Travellers & Gypsies	None				

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Women	Positive action policy throughout all Ministries encouraging women to apply for vacant jobs General policy regarding sexual harassment in the workplace	See National Government	See National Government Measures to improve environmental safety Local Government subsidizes local advice and help organizations for women (e.g. Women at Work, Women's Refuge Centres) as part of the local welfare plan	The Ombudswoman	The number of non-governmental organizations increased during the 80's. Except for financial assistance, these are fairly autonomous bodies.

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Elderly People	Ministry of Welfare, Health & Cultural Affairs: coordinates the policies of National Government & monitors developments in living conditions of the elderly; presents a white paper every year concerning policies & their effects on the elderly Within a number of Acts the elderly are distinguished as a special category	Planning concerning construction and renovation of homes for the elderly is part of the provincial general policies on welfare	Construction of housing for the elderly Funds for specific provision of housing for the elderly have been transferred to Local Government control by decentralisation from the Ministry of Housing Local Government subsidizes welfare organizations concerned with the elderly as part of Local Welfare Plans	Housing Associations Local organizations concerned with the welfare & servicing of the elderly Local District Nursing and home help organizations Health Insurance Companies	Decentralization has led to a shift in responsibility from National to Local level & budgets have been transferred similarly

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
People with disabilities	Policy to encourage companies, by means of subsidies, to appoint people with disabilities; possible regulation concerning compulsory proportion of disabled employees per company Act on Working Conditions (ARBO-wet) aims at preventing job loss due to disability	None	Creation of workplaces for the disabled by municipalities as a result of the Sheltered Employment Act, under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs & Employment	Non-profit organizations can employ people who are employed under the Sheltered Employment Act & pay a contribution to the Sheltered Employment organization	National Government's influence on the number of people employed under the Sheltered Employment Act has been decreased in favour of Local Government's autonomy Local Government is responsible for supplementing budget allocated to local authorities for sheltered employment activities if there is a shortfall

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Young People	Many policies contain provisions for additional protection for young people with regard to working conditions, education, child abuse, etc. Special penal institutions for delinquents Outlines policies and stimulates research with regard to young people; implementation delegated to municipalities	Subsidize organizations which support local organizations with advice & training	Local Government implements national policies & formulates local policies, e.g. creates temporary jobs for youngsters unemployed longer than 6 months under the Youth Work Guarantee Plan; organizes activities to promote sports participation; subsidizes youth counselling organizations; provides subsidized public provisions for young people e.g. clubs	Local help & advice organizations such as JAC (Youth Advice Centre) Medical Consultation Bureaux for Alcoholics & Drug Addictsare part of the local youth care network subsidized by Local Government Local organizations to implement Youth Work Guarantee Plan	No major changes Traditionally the non-Governmental organizations are the prime actors in the field of policies in regard to young people.

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Ministry of Home Affairs : targets these population groups for special attention; Ministries encourage them to apply for vacant jobs; regulates immigration policy;	Migrants & ethnic minorities encouraged to apply for vacant jobs in provincial administration & public services	Migrants & ethnic minorities encouraged to apply for vacant jobs in local administration & public services Local Government responsible for reception of new immigrants & their integration through primary education & vocational training	Non-governmental organizations in many policy areas are involved with aspects of policies on migrants & ethnic groups	Policies with regard to migrants & ethnic minorities aim at reinforcing their position in the labour market; accordingly labour market organizations play an important part in this policy

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			NETHERLANDS		
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities (contd)	Provides training & integration programmes through established training centres; provides language & culture appreciation classes at primary school level (OETC) Regulation concerning groups seeking asylum	See above	See above	See above	See above
Travellers & Gypsies	No specific policies(1)	No specific policies(1)			

(1) The Ministry of Welfare, Health & Cultural Affairs formulated a planning policy in regard to the location of small caravan camps within urban neighbourhoods. Implementation of this policy is delegated to Local Government.

Until recently social work among caravan dwellers was a specialization within the social work discipline. Actual policy on caravan dwellers aims at their integration and so specific social work will become less important.

The National Assistance Act can provide a benefit for buying a caravan.

TABLE 2 : GENERAL POLICIES FOCUSSED ON SPECIFIC POPULATION CATEGORIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			PORTUGAL		
Women	Presidency of the Council of Ministries: Commission for the Women's Condition			The Commission for the Women's Condition works in connection with other Government departments to promote equality among men & women. Specific employment & vocational training programme (IEFP)	
Elderly People	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs: National Commission for the Elderly			Policy action of other Government departments (health, social security) Directorate General of the Family (specific programmes for elderly people) NGO's	Creation of the National Commission for the elderly (1988). Creation of the Directorate General of the Family (1982)

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			PORTUGAL		
People with Disabilities	Ministry of Employment & Social Affairs: National Secretariat for Rehabilitation			Policy action of other Government departments (health, social security) Specific employment & vocational training programmes (IEFP)	
Young People	Presidency of the Council of Ministries: Institute of Youth			NGO's (e.g. Institute for Children's Support, "Casa Pia de Lisboa", "Misericordias") Policy action of other Government departments (health, education, employment & vocational training, social security, justice) Specific employment & vocational training programmes (IEFP)	Creation of the Institute of Youth (1988)

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
PORTUGAL					
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Ministry of Internal Affairs: Consultive Commission for Refugees				
Travellers & Gypsies					
SPAIN					
Women	National Plan for Women	Regional Plan for Women	Some programmes	Conference of Women's Associations	
Elderly People	Gerontology Plan	Specific Programmes	Specific Programmes	Specific Programmes	Rise of NGO's
People with disabilities	Programme at National level	Regional Programmes		Coordination of NGO's	
Young People	National Plan for Youth	Some Regional plans		Conference of NGO's	
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities	Programmes for Refugees				
Travellers & Gypsies	Plan for Gypsies	Some programmes for Gypsies	Some programmes for Travellers	NGO's for Gypsies	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
		UNITED	**KINGDOM**		
Women	Inter-departmental Women's Committee		Possible Women's Committee	EOC	Inter-Departmental Women's Committee and Home Office (responsibility transferred to DE since the election) Possible Women's Committees Equal Opportunities Commission / EOC NI Inter-Departmental Women's Committee
Elderly People(1)					
People with disabilities				Disablement Income Group administered one benefit	
Young People					
Migrants & Ethnic Minorities					UKIAS (UK Immigrant Advisory Service) has lost responsibilities for integrating new migrants
Travellers & Gypsies	Home Office		Local authorities have responsibilities for sites	CRE	

(1) All subsumed within Health, Employment, Social Services and Education/Training policies

TABLE 3 : SPECIFIC POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			BELGIUM		
To combat poverty		Flemish Council: To combat poverty Integration of migrants			In Flanders at the end of the 1980's there was a further decentralisation to the municipal level. This development was stimulated by the introduction of the different poverty funds. Although these funds are controlled by the Flemish Government, they stimulated discussions & initiatives at a local level. In Wallonia, however, no special poverty funds have been created.
			FRANCE		
Social Development of districts (DSQ)	Negotiation of contracts Financing Projects	Region: contract negotiation; financing	Authority responsible for the social development of districts	Head of project Associations	

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
			ITALY		
Drug Addicts	Law punishing the use & granting assistance & re-education in ad hoc structures		Medical services, healing communities: public or funded with public funds, social services, Vital Minimum & Income Support	Non profit or voluntary assistance which takes care of drug addicts in accordance with courts & Local Government	Law linking punishment to cure & assistance
School Dropouts, Marginal People		Funding projects	Training, short-term jobs, literacy classes, funding of projects	Cooperatives offering training or jobs within public funded projects	1991 law on Social Cooperation
Mentally Ill	Legislation which should provide de-institutionalization & community services Social pensions	Regulations concerning the provision of services or protected housing or living communities	Protected housing, social assistance, organization of financed living communities	Cooperatives offering services or job insertion	1991 law on social cooperation promoting insertion
Children at risk	Law concerning adoption & fostering		Social assistance services helping families & mediating fostering, financing families who foster (not everywhere)	Local health services, foster families & their associations, Juvenile Courts, cooperatives	

TABLE 3 : SPECIFIC POLICIES

POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980 (1)
			SPAIN		
National Plan on Drugs	Coordination & finance	Management of regional plans on drugs	Some programmes on drugs	Coordination of NGO's Promotion Management	
Programme III Against Poverty	Coordination & finance	Management of programmes	Management in specific programmes	Promotion	
Second Plan FIP on Training (2)	Coordination Finance	Planning Management	Management in specific programmes	Promotion Rendering specific programmes	

(1) The main changes from 1980 have been the increasing role of NGO's & the crucial significance of coordination between different levels of public sector & the NGO's.
(2) Although the Plan FIP is a very general plan it is focussed in many ways on the social integration of excluded people living in poor rural areas or young people who have failed at school.

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POLICY AREA	NATIONAL GOVERNMENT	REGIONAL GOVERNMENT	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	OTHER ACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTING PUBLIC POLICIES	MAIN CHANGES IN CAST OF ACTORS SINCE 1980
		UNITED	KINGDOM		
Urban deprivation - targetting areas	Department of the Environment		Local Authority Planning Departments	Urban Development Corporations Task forces	Proliferation of mixed bodies incorporating private sector
Discrimination Policy	Home Office		Equal Opportunities Commission Commission for Racial Equality Fair Employment Agency for Northern Ireland		
Integration of frail, elderly & disabled people into the community	Department of Health, National Health Service Management Executive		Social Services Departments Health Authorities	Private Voluntary Sector	

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