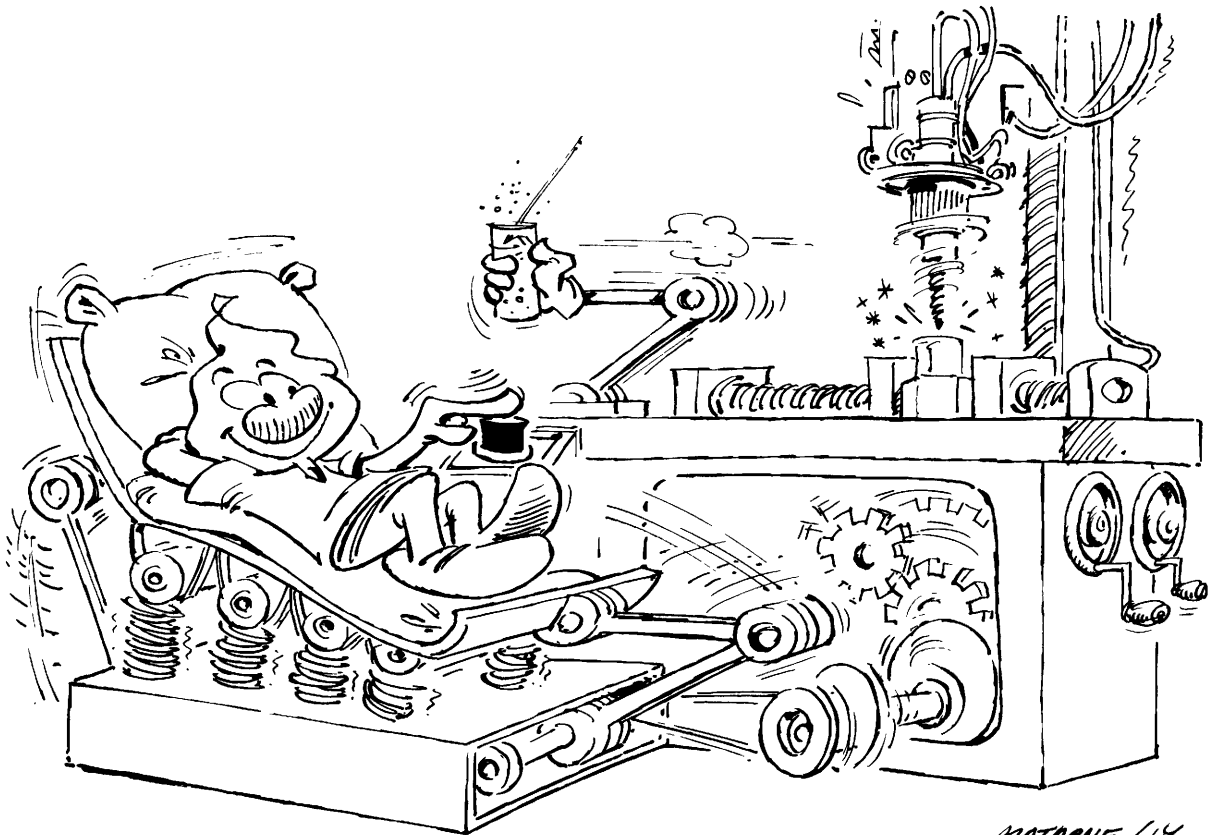


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NATAGNE/14

The improvement of living and working conditions has become a key issue in our "push-button" society.

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** IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions bears an enormous responsibility in an area where science, society and the environment merge.

In ANNEX 1 Euroforum describes the function of the Foundation as defined in Dublin recently by Dr Hillery, Vice-President of the European Commission.

** COOL, CLEAR WATER ...

The prevention and reduction of water pollution is one of the priorities of the European Community's environment programme.

ANNEX 2 lists the various measures taken or being taken to guarantee Europeans a purer water supply.

** COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER STATES

In the five years between 1970 and 1974 the Six, and subsequently the Nine, received financial assistance to the tune of 19 000 million units of account from the European Community.

Full details are given in ANNEX 3.

** THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE

The European Community is to have a voice at the World Tripartite Conference being organized by the International Labour Office. The Conference will deal with employment, distribution of income, social progress and the international division of labour. The Community's Council of Ministers has stressed that it attaches great importance to the Conference, which will debate the problems of developing and industrialized countries alike, and it is already clear that the European Community intends to adopt a constructive, cooperative approach to the meeting.

** JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE: PROGRAMME 1977-80

Energy and the environment will absorb 70% of the programme to be carried out by the Joint Research Centre over the next four years. The cost of the entire programme is put at 373.4 million units of account (1 u.a. = approx. US \$1.11).

If the Commission's proposal is adopted, funds and staff (excluding 654 special and local staff) will be allocated as follows:

PROGRAMMES	Commitment of expenditure (million u.a.) ¹	Staff	
		Total	Research staff
I. Reactor safety	92.130	440	239
II. Plutonium fuels and actinide research	41.480	209	121
III. Management of nuclear materials and radioactive waste	34.380	161	97
IV. Solar energy	17.270	57	35
V. Hydrogen	16.460	78	50
VI. Conceptual studies on thermonuclear fusion	2.550	14	8
VII. High-temperature materials	9.190	51	36
VIII. Environment and resources	41.330	188	115
IX. Nuclear measurement, standards and reference methods (metre)	59.690	286	181
X. Services and support activities	59.910	221	116
TOTAL	374.390	1 705	998

¹Expressed in constant values as at 1 January 1977.

** CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

According to the most recent figures published by the Statistical Office of the European Communities the consumer price index stood as follows at the end of March 1976:

(1970 = 100)

	March 1976	February 1976	Change between February and March 1976	Change between March 1975 and March 1976
Germany	139.7	139.2	+0.4%	+5.4%
France	¹	161.0		
Italy	188.8	185.1	+2.0%	+13.9%
Netherlands	161.0	158.5	+0.9%	+8.9%
Belgium	159.5	161.0	+0.6%	+9.9%
Luxembourg	151.6	151.3	+0.2%	+10.3%
United Kingdom	206.0	204.8	+0.6%	+21.1%
Ireland		206.2	+7.3% ²	+16.0% ³
Denmark	167.0	160.0	+4.4%	+9.0%

¹Not yet available.

²Change between 15 November 1975 and 15 February 1976.

³Change between 15 February 1975 and 15 February 1976.

** MEDICAL TRAINING

The inaugural meeting of the Advisory Committee on Medical Training was recently held in Brussels. The Advisory Committee, which was set up by the June 1975 directives on freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services, groups experts from the medical profession, university faculties of medicine and the competent authorities in the Nine. The Advisory Committee will act on three fronts to ensure that the training of general practitioners and specialists alike is of an equally high standard throughout the Community. It intends

- . to compile comprehensive information on training methods and on the content, level and structure of theoretical and practical courses offered in Community countries;
- . to organize discussions and consultations with a view to reaching a consensus on training standards and, where appropriate, the structure and content of training;
- . to consider how medical training can be adapted to scientific progress and advances in teaching methods.

** AMARANTH: A TRICKY DECISION

Our readers will probably know that the use of amaranth was recently banned in the United States. The European Commission has however decided to take the advice of the Scientific Committee for Foodstuffs and retain an acceptable daily intake of 0 - 0.75 mg/kg body weight. The continued use of amaranth is justified for technological reasons: it is virtually irreplaceable as a colouring matter for certain foodstuffs. "Red 40 or "Red Allura", the substitute used in a number of countries including the United States, cannot be used in the Community because there is not enough toxicological evidence to justify its inclusion on the authorized list.

** INVESTMENT COMPANIES AND UNIT TRUSTS

If the proposal for a directive recently presented by the European Commission to the Community's Council of Ministers is adopted, investment companies and unit trusts in all nine countries may soon be subject to identical legislation. The new rules would cover approval, supervision, structure, functioning, investment policy and publication of information, the object of the exercise being to provide more effective safeguards for investors, to align conditions of competition and to encourage the free movement of shares or units in the broader context of the liberalization of capital movements.

** UNDERTAKING

Undertaking is a business like any other and as such is subject to Community legislation. This means that Community nationals are entitled to take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons in this business in a Member State other than their own under the same conditions as nationals of that Member State. Similarly, the directive relating to

the effective exercise of freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services applies to undertaking. This means that, once the time limit for its incorporation into national legislation expires, any remaining barriers resulting from differences in national legislation will disappear. However, there is nothing in either Article 52 of the Treaty of Rome or the directive to prevent Member States from introducing or maintaining a public monopoly or granting exclusive rights to private firms provided there is no discrimination on grounds of nationality. It is for national authorities creating a monopoly or granting exclusive rights to ensure that their action does not lead to exorbitant prices or improper practices.

**** EUROPE'S CONTRIBUTION TO UNESCO'S BUDGET**

In 1975 the nine Community countries provided 24.49% of UNESCO total budget. Their contributions were as follows:

	(in dollars)
Belgium	810 000
Denmark	483 000
France	4 525 400
Germany	5 483 000
Ireland	117 000
Italy	2 781 000
Luxembourg	31 150
Netherlands	950 000
United Kingdom	4 105 000

**** PROTECTION OF FARM ANIMALS**

Farm animals must not be restricted in a manner which causes unnecessary suffering or injury; lighting, temperature and ventilation must be compatible with their physiological and ethological needs; feeding and watering must be painless; animals on "factory farms" must be inspected at least once a day: this sums up the main provisions of a European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes, drawn up under the auspices of the Council of Europe, which the European Commission intends to submit for signature by the European Community and its Member States.

This is not the first time that the Community has acted on animal welfare. A number of regulations are already in force in this area, including provisions on the official control of feedingstuffs and the use of additives and undesirable substances and products.

**** FOODSTUFFS**

The European Community's rules on the various products used in the manufacture of foodstuffs are becoming more and more detailed. Three new items - the sodium derivative of methyl p-hydroxybenzoate, potassium nitrite and potassium propionate - have just been added to the authorized list of preservatives. It seems that these can be used to advantage as substitutes - or partial substitutes - for methyl p-hydroxybenzoate, sodium nitrate and sodium propionate. In addition an earlier directive has been amended to include specific purity criteria for a total of eleven recently approved preservatives.

IMPROVEMENT OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions bears an enormous responsibility in an area where science, society and the environment merge. This was the main theme of an address given by Dr Hillery, Vice-President of the European Commission with special responsibility for Social Affairs, at the recent inaugural meeting of the Foundation's Administrative Board in Dublin. Extracts from his speech are given below.

Research and information

"If the social sciences are to make an adequate response to the problems of society, they must have an increasingly wide range of support. Greater international cooperation and a broader diffusion of the knowledge and insights deriving from research findings are also a necessity. This Foundation will give the Community a new research capability and a centre from which the better dissemination of information can be assured. These are much-needed resources which must be put to good use. The need for more research must never be allowed to become an excuse for postponing action on pressing social problems. At any given moment there is a great deal that can be done to improve existing economic and social conditions by the more effective application of available knowledge."

A new approach

"The idea of the Foundation originated in the Commission's proposals for a European Institute for the Environment in two communications on the environment in July 1971 and March 1972. This idea was reinforced by a French Government suggestion for a European Foundation to study living and working conditions which was made at the Paris Summit Conference in October 1972.

"The Community climate at that time was one of optimism, marked by increasing acceptance of the need for a more dynamic social philosophy which would respect quality of life as an end in itself and recognize the claims of depressed areas and groups. This optimism, the product of an uninterrupted pattern of economic growth, was encouraged by the prospect of the enlargement of the Community.

"Enlargement is now successfully accomplished but the pattern of growth has been interrupted. New understandings of growth are emerging from the global effort to explain and master the present recession cycle. Common to these understandings is an appreciation that issues of quality of life may well prove central to future attempts to solve the structural problems of our struggling economies and cannot, therefore, be allowed to wait on the re-establishment of growth.

"Work, for example, plays such a dominant role in our society that it is extraordinary how infrequently it has been regarded as a vital part of the human condition we seek to improve. Profitability and expansion should not be the only criteria by which one judges an enterprise to be successful. New approaches to industrial health and hygiene should be pursued with the

same energy accorded, for example, to employment policy, vocational training and social security. Annual accounts highlight for the shareholder the financial progress of public companies. Perhaps we need something like an annual "social balance sheet" to highlight in the interest of industrial workers the importance of such factors as increase or decrease in accidents, the incidence of industrial diseases, trends in noise levels, rates of absenteeism, development in job enrichment, and so on.

"The importance of the environment must be made equally obvious. Every day brings evidence of its deterioration - a legacy of the unprecedented economic expansion of the last ten or twenty years. Europe's goal should still be expansion, but expansion which meets the real needs and aspirations of the men, women and children of the Community. A fundamental challenge we all must face is how to improve living and working conditions without either depersonalizing busy towns and cities or destroying their natural surroundings."

The Foundation's work

"The approach to this challenge must, I believe, like the institutional framework and organization of the Foundation itself, be flexible, multidisciplinary and down to earth. As a centre for reflection largely independent of the Community institutions, the Foundation will have considerable freedom and its Board and staff will, I hope, share the creative stimulus that should be a natural part of any organization made up of different nationalities and varied governmental and social partner interests."

The Irish experience

"Just as it is at last becoming accepted doctrine that social and economic progress requires the consensus support of social partners, national governments and the Community institutions, so I believe the application of research must become accepted as of the same concern to the consumer, whatever his or her status, as it is to the specialist whose concept it is. The structure of the Foundation is intended to encourage an applied approach to its work and I hope it lives up to expectations.

"It is envisaged that pilot projects, conferences, symposia and seminars will be an important part of the work of the Foundation and an essential part of its impact in the Community. With this in mind, I believe Ireland provides an ideal site for the Foundation, the first Community body to have its headquarters here since Ireland joined the Community in 1973. While economic growth must be an essential part of Ireland's future, Ireland has to date been spared the worst effects of industrialization - largely because of its low population density and relatively late development. The Irish experience may, therefore, prove an important comparative or control element in the work of the Foundation. Monitoring the effects of economic and social change on Irish behaviour and environment may offer useful clues to the solution of problems elsewhere in the Community. By the same token, should the Foundation's work in pursuing ideas affecting the medium- and long-term improvement of living and working conditions prove effective, Ireland may be given a great opportunity to learn from the

mistakes of other countries and preventive measures can be taken. Not only is prevention far more effective, it is also far less costly than a cure."

The tasks of the Foundation are "to develop and pursue ideas on the medium- and long-term improvement of living and working conditions" and to advise the Community institutions on objectives and guidelines.

The Foundation will deal more specifically with the following issues:

- . man at work;
- . organization of work and particularly job design;
- . problems peculiar to certain categories of workers;
- . long-term aspects of improvement of the environment;
- . distribution of human activities in space and time.

Community's social policy

The main value to the Community of the first Social Action Programme introduced following the accession of Denmark, Ireland, the United Kingdom has been that almost every initiative taken is likely to suggest or provide a basis for the further development of the Community's social policy. The same will undoubtedly be true of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

COOL, CLEAR WATER ...

Modern life ... Enormous industrial complexes ... Chemicals and waste of all sorts discharged into seas and rivers each day ... in short, pollution.

The prevention and reduction of water pollution is one of the priorities of the European Community's environment programme (see Euroforum No 3/76). The Community has already adopted a number of stringent directives as part of this programme and is in the process of drafting others.

The first of these directives was adopted in June 1975 and deals with the quality required of surface water for the abstraction of drinking water. It specifies that unless the physical, chemical and microbiological characteristics of surface water conform to mandatory limiting values fixed for 45 different parameters it cannot be used for the abstraction of drinking water.

The directive also defines standard methods for transforming lower quality water into drinking water and has now led to a new proposal on the quality of water for human consumption. The new text is even more stringent in that it fixes limiting values for no less than 62 parameters ranging from calcium to parasites.

The second directive adopted by the nine Community countries deals with the quality of fresh water and sea water for bathing. This requires them to analyse water samples at regular intervals, the actual frequency being specified in the directive itself.

The samples must, of course, be taken in the most popular bathing places.

The Nine have ten years to fulfil their obligations under the directive. The average bather may feel that this is rather a long deadline, but governments have to be given time to adapt to Community regulations which have no national equivalents.

The third directive adopted by the Community deals with pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment. It contains two lists of particularly dangerous substances - one "black" and one "grey".

In an attempt to prevent or at least reduce this form of pollution the directive requires governments to issue a special permit before these toxic substances can be discharged into Community waters.

Pollution from paper pulp factories

Europe has more than 200 paper pulp factories which of necessity use a lot of water. Waste from these factories can contain large quantities of suspended particulates and pollutants; these can affect the oxygen content of watercourses, often discolouring them.

For this reason the European Commission has just presented a proposal for a Community directive to harmonize national legislation in the matter. It contains various suggestions for reducing this form of pollution: changes in manufacturing processes, treatment of effluents during or after the manufacture of pulp, and so on.

Here again, firms would be given ten years to adapt to Community standards.

Quality objectives for water

The European Commission is now working on another series of proposals for submission to the Community's Council of Ministers in the near future. These deal with quality objectives for water for other uses, e.g. for agriculture, fish - and shell-fish breeding, and so on.

Community cooperation for the protection of international waters

The European Community is participating in its own right in negotiations on the Convention for the Protection of the Rhine against Chemical Pollution (see Euroforum No 15/76).

The Community has already signed the Paris Convention for the prevention of marine pollution from land-based sources and is taking part in discussions relating to the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the Mediterranean marine environment against pollution (see Euroforum No 8/76).

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE TO MEMBER STATES

In the five years between 1970 and 1974 the Six, and subsequently the Nine, received financial assistance to the tune of 19 000 million units of account from the European Community. A breakdown of this figure is given below.

The current (6 May 1976) value of one unit of account is as follows:

Belgian and Luxembourg francs	44.4163
German mark	2.81642
Florin	2.98918
Pound sterling	0.608825
Danish kroner	6.70957
Italian lira	989.786
French franc	5.20224
Irish pound	0.610029

I. Breakdown by type of aid

	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	Total (in million units of account)
1. Loans granted and guarantees given by the European Investment Bank	339	469	506	653	831	2 798
2. Loans granted by the European Coal and Steel Community (under Articles 54 and 56 of the ECSC Treaty)	32	112	189	286	378	996
3. Aid to research:						
A. Contracts signed under Article 55 of the ECSC Treaty	13	13	15	5	22	68
B. Other research contracts	10	3	56	15	11	95
4. Social aid:						
A. Aid from the European Social Fund:						
1. Old fund (payments)	37	56	55	61	53	262
2. New fund	-	-	47	240	302	589
B. Readaptation (under Article 56(2)(b) of the ECSC Treaty)	25	16	15	43	45	144
5. Agricultural aid:						
A. Expenditure under EAGGF (Guarantee Section)	2 545	1 569	2 446	3 614	3 099	13 273
B. Expenditure under EAGGF (Guidance Section)	201	242	168	182	257	1 050

II. Loans granted and guarantees given by the European Investment Bank

(in million units of account)

Country	Year					
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	Total
Belgium	22.0	-	14.4	-	16.1	52.5
Denmark	-	-	-	6.8	19.6	26.4
France	61.4	124.5	144.9	170.6	193.7	695.1
Germany	46.1	61.9	130.4	240.5	96.1	539.0
Ireland	-	-	-	22.6	46.4	69.0
Italy	205.2	274.9	216.2	181.8	278.0	1 156.1
Luxembourg	1.0	-	-	-	-	1.0
Netherlands	2.8	8.0	-	-	31.9	42.7
United Kingdom	-	-	-	67.1	149.5	216.6
Total	338.5	469.3	505.9	653.4	831.3	2 798.4

III. Loans granted by the European Coal and Steel Community

(under Articles 54 and 56 of the ECSC Treaty)

(in million units of account)

Country	Year					
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	Total
Belgium	2.90	19.93	16.53	1.34	10.28	50.98
Denmark	-	-	-	7.81	0.27	8.08
France	7.88	45.78	63.24	106.78	84.77	308.45
Germany	10.0	38.88	71.90	164.73	150.06	435.57
Ireland	-	-	-	-	-	-
Italy	6.00	1.60	25.73	1.77	65.18	100.28
Luxembourg	2.00	-	0.29	-	0.41	2.70
Netherlands	2.88	6.00	10.81	3.98	1.85	25.52
United Kingdom	-	-	-	-	65.05	65.05
Total	31.66	112.19	188.50	286.41	377.87	996.63

IV. Aid to research
(excluding ECSC contracts)

(in million units of account)

Country	Year					Total
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	
Belgium	0.365	0.381	1.883	0.027	0.360	3.016
Denmark	-	-	-	0.223	0.465	0.688
France	3.240	0.487	15.717	1.508	1.991	22.943
Germany	3.638	0.818	22.459	0.379	5.152	32.446
Ireland	-	-	-	-	0.076	0.076
Italy	1.325	0.508	8.034	2.154	1.636	13.657
Luxembourg	-	-	-	-	-	-
Netherlands	1.476	0.963	7.362	0.110	0.379	10.290
United Kingdom	-	0.007	-	10.326	0.859	11.192
Other	-	0.046	0.165	0.270	0.021	0.502
Total	10.044	3.210	55.620	14.997	10.939	94.810

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