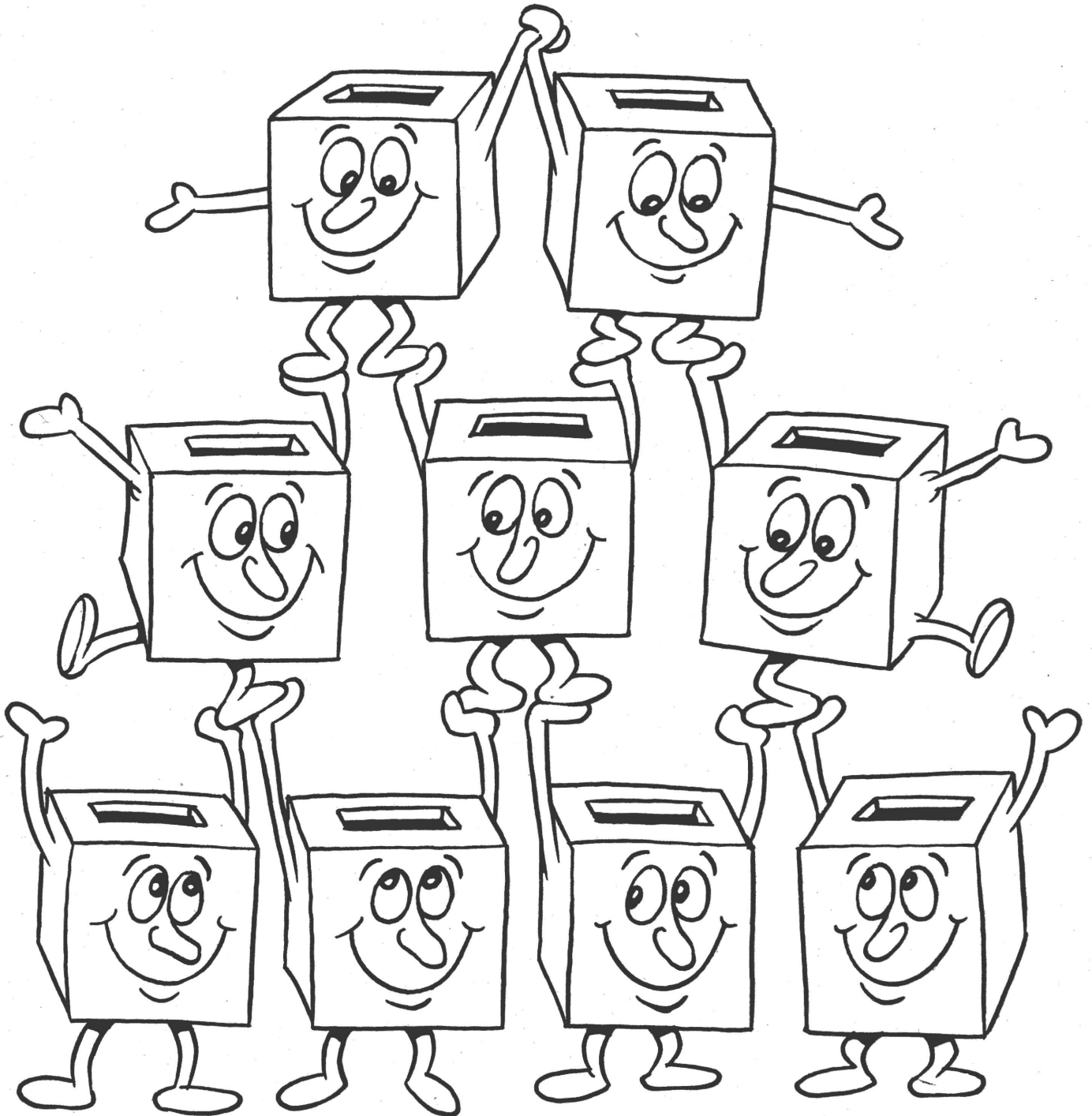


# Euroforum



First Euro-vote countdown begins. See page 3.

# Euroforum

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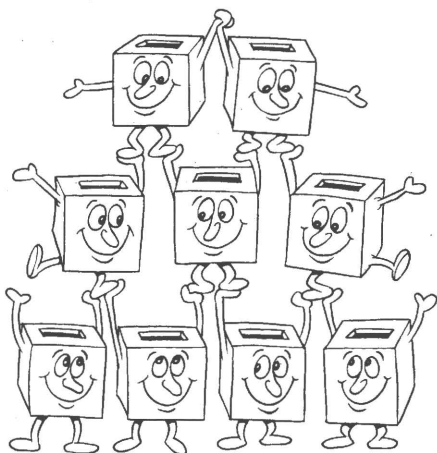
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Editor-in-chief: Peter Doyle

## EUROPEAN ELECTIONS



### Parliament in focus as first Euro-vote countdown begins

Things will never be the same again in Europe in a fortnight's time after millions of voters in the nine countries of the European Community have together elected members of the same Parliament for the first time.

The voting for the first directly-elected European Parliament, which will take place between June 7 and 10, will mark the climax of a long and unprecedented political campaign that has thrust the much neglected Parliament into the forefront of the debate about Europe and its future.

Hundreds of candidates from both major and small new political parties have been building up to the four-day election period when 180 million voters will have the opportunity to have a direct say in who they want to represent them in the decision-making that will shape this future.

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By June 12, when the full results of the Community-wide poll are likely to be known, a subtle but profound change will have taken place which has been years in the preparation.

The European Parliament, since its inception an appointed body with only limited powers, will be transformed into a vehicle for the direct expression of the will of the people on matters ranging from consumer to international trade and the development of nuclear power.

Henceforth, the political parties and, in particular, the elected Parliamentarians, no longer mere nominees of the national Parliaments, will have to face the European public and answer to their constituencies for the stands they take in the Parliament.

The transformed Parliament will meet for the first time in Strasbourg on July 17 when the new breed of European politician will be sworn in. What will happen next is still an uncharted area and is, in fact, still the subject of intense debate in some of the national campaigns for the Parliament elections now being fought.

How will the new Parliamentarians behave? What powers will they have in relation to the former unelected body? Who will be the most notable voices among this corps of 410?

Although no-one knows for certain, because the new Parliament must draw up its own rules and working procedures, it is expected that, on the opening day, the dean of the Parliamentarians will take over its leadership temporarily. Then the process of organising the Parliament will begin.

A President will have to be elected. Committees will be formed. Chairmen of these committees and of the political groups will be selected. And the work of reviewing the pending policies and proposals of the European Commission will also be prepared for the first actual working session in Strasbourg in September.

Will the new President be Willy Brandt, Leo Tindemans or Simone Veil? The former German Chancellor who is the leading candidate of the European Socialist parties, the former Belgian Prime Minister who is the most illustrious candidate of the Christian Democratic parties, and the popular French Minister of Health who has

been prominently mentioned as the possible choice of the Liberals and associated parties, are all held to be frontrunners for the Presidency of the Parliament. Or it could be some dark horse?

The European public may also get to know the names of many of the Committee chairmen (currently numbering 12) as these specialist groups delve into the details of Commission proposals prior to examination by plenary sessions of the Parliament.

While it is unlikely that there will be any sudden change in the actual powers of the new Parliament, it is likely that the new members will be more vocal in pressing their views and the public's than in the past.

There may also be an increasing tendency to involve the public and outside experts in the Community decision-making process through greater use of open hearings. These have already taken place on such issues as maritime pollution and invasion of privacy by computers and will probably be a popular platform for additional views.

The rest is still for the future to decide. But the past has, in its own way, been dramatic. The evolution from the earlier European Assembly, which first met in Strasbourg on 19th March 1958 to this new Parliament in the same city has been, in historical terms, remarkably speedy.

In paying tribute to the outgoing Parliament at its last formal working session on May 5, the Commission's President, Roy Jenkins noted that it had taken 20 years to honour the Community Treaty's commitment to elect the Parliament. 'But direct elections to the United States Senate', he also observed, 'took 136 years to bring about. By that comparison we have not done too badly'.

### IN BRIEF

Corporation tax relief in the Community ranges from zero in the Netherlands to 100% in Germany.

Environment Ministers of Western industrialised countries were told at a recent Paris meeting that, without new controls, world-wide pollution may increase by one quarter by 1985.

## THE LAW

## Does the Community need to appoint its own Ombudsman?

The European Community comes in for its fair share of complaints. Action taken in its name may not always be reasonable. Yet there is little that people with a grievance have been able to do about it.

They often don't know where to go to lodge their complaints or even who is responsible. And while the European Court of Justice exists to ensure that Community law is observed, it can be both complicated and expensive to fight a case all the way to this level.

But the European Parliament hopes to change all that. A decision to appoint an Ombudsman who would be able to receive complaints and investigate them on behalf of individual Community citizens was taken by MPs at the last sitting of the old Parliament. More detailed work will be needed by the new directly-elected Parliament before an appointment can be made.

Community legislation increasingly affects Community citizens and is often a focus for complaints. Some people feel that many decisions taken are ill-judged because those taking them are not as well-informed as they might be.

Parliamentarians have received letters of complaint and enquiries from individuals about the operation of the Community as it affects them. Several people have complained, for instance, about social security arrangements when they have chosen to work in a Community country which is not their own.

The Parliament's Legal Affairs committee was of the opinion that an independent Ombudsman (or woman?), or Parliamentary Commissioner, could see that the law is justly applied and

would be able to advise individuals how best to follow through their complaints.

In the eyes of the Parliament's Political Affairs Committee, an Ombudsman would give the Community a more human face and would give each citizen the chance to establish personal contact with the directly-elected Parliament.

The number of Ombudsmen throughout the world has increased during the last 20 years. The first in a Community country was appointed in Denmark in 1954. Ombudsmen have since been established in the UK, France, Germany and Italy. There are proposals to set up similar posts in Belgium, Ireland and Luxembourg.

The idea of a Community Ombudsman has been supported by those Parliamentary Commissioners who have already been appointed in Community countries.

The office of Ombudsman reflects a growing recognition of the need to protect individuals against maladministration and unreasonable action by public authorities. It is a rapid, flexible and simple system of control.

But the question is, what kind of Ombudsman does the Community need? The Parliament has settled for someone to whom it would delegate powers. He would investigate complaints and report his findings to the complainant as well as to Parliament. If necessary, he could refer the complaints to national Ombudsmen.

Even if he did not have wide investigatory powers, it is difficult to see how the authorities he questioned would be able to refuse to give information.

It would be better, of course, to set up an Ombudsman who could investigate all forms of Community administration by both Community and national

authorities. But this would involve the creation of a new Community institution which would mean amending the Treaties on which the Community is based. As far as the European Parliament is concerned, this would take too long to set in motion.

However, it doesn't rule out the possibility of the Ombudsman himself recommending the establishment of such an institution at a later date.

The Parliament also recommended that Ombudsmen be set up in all the nine member countries so that all Community citizens would have the same opportunities for speedy and informal investigation of their complaints.

The Parliament sees this as a solution to the problem of the Community Ombudsman's jurisdiction overlapping those of his existing counterparts, although Sir Idwal Pugh, one-time British Ombudsman, warned of the dangers of a hierarchy of Ombudsmen. But the Parliament feels that this would at least go some way to providing equal protection for all Community citizens.

### IN BRIEF

The President of the European Parliament, Emilio Colombo, has called on the peoples of Europe to unite to combat terrorism. He launched his appeal on the anniversary of the murder of the kidnapped former Italian Prime Minister Aldo Moro.

Stocks of surplus butter doubled to 300 000 tonnes last year, Agriculture Commissioner Finn Gundelach has warned.

The European Parliament has come out in support of the Commission's proposals to ban unfair or misleading advertising.



## ENERGY

## How to meet those elusive energy-saving targets

The recent OPEC oil price rise announced by OPEC, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, has given the European Community's Energy Ministers another sharp dig in the ribs. Despite all the talk since the 1973 energy crisis the Community is still using a large amount of imported oil and as the Iranian cut-off shows it is still highly vulnerable to oil supply shortages.

When they met in Brussels recently the Energy Ministers had a long and serious discussion about how to cut down oil consumption. They discussed ways of achieving the target of 500 million tonnes of oil consumption in 1979 set at the European Coun-

that spring has begun there is no immediate danger but action must still be taken now in order to avoid severe problems next winter.

There are several ways of cutting down oil consumption:

Power-stations could be encouraged to switch to coal and other forms of energy. This could save between 5-10% of residual fuel oil consumption depending on how easily power-stations can switch to using other forms of energy to produce electricity.

Airline companies could also make substantial savings by cancelling near empty flights or combining them with others. Some oil companies have already reduced supplies of jet fuel.

The public services and armed forces could be obliged to use fuel more economically. This would set a good example for the private sector.

start to have an impact next autumn but it could save up to 5 million tonnes of oil in a year.

Stricter speed limits, though frustrating for motorway drivers, combined with a campaign for more economical driving could save about 2-3% of gasoline consumption.

Advertising and floodlight displays could be banned. Although this would make cities drab by night it could have a considerable psychological impact bringing home to the public the seriousness of the situation.

Another saving would be to reduce lighting on motorways. With lower speed limits there would not be the same need for such expensive lighting.

Gasoline deliveries to petrol stations and major consumers could be reduced. Experts calculate that a 5% reduction would cause neither excessive queues nor hoarding.

There are just some ideas which may be taken up by the Member States. On their own they have limited impact but multiplied by nine the effect would be important.



cil in March. This would involve using 25 million tonnes less oil than previously planned.

They have set general guidelines on the basis of which each Member State will take its own energy-saving measures. Next time the Energy Ministers meet they will compare the success of their measures and discuss ways of coordinating and bringing them closer together.

How can the Community use less oil this year? Although oil product prices have risen by 8-10% since mid-December, this alone will not be enough to dampen demand. Now

For instance, there would be savings of up to 2% if offices were not heated above 18°C or cooled below 25°C. Heating and air-conditioning should never operate at the same time. That is sheer waste.

Houses, factories and offices could be better designed to keep heat in and cold out. Roofs, windows, walls and floors could be better insulated.

More publicity could be given to encourage people to be more economical in the home by switching lights and heaters off in empty rooms and shutting doors so as to keep the heat in. Such a campaign would only

## Team of experts to help tighten up nuclear security

In the wake of the Three Mile Island nuclear accident, the European Commission has decided to appoint three independent experts to improve nuclear safety in the Community.

As we reported in the last issue of *Euroforum*, the Community already has a number of safety programmes in operation. But, following the American accident, on which it received a detailed report from experts it sent to the scene, the Commission felt the need to appoint a team of independent, high-level advisers.

Their task will be to monitor protection measures in the Nine Member States so that the best methods can be adopted by all. This could be brought about by more exchange of information.

The three experts, who have yet to be named, will also promote better training for personnel working at nuclear installations, as well as greater research into nuclear security.

## HEALTH

## Improving the system of organ transplants: can the Community help?

The trend towards transplants of human organs is increasing. But demand for these human 'spare parts' far outstrips supply. A shortage of donors combined with a shortage of organ banks and inadequate coordination between those that do exist is standing in the way of progress.

The European Parliament is pressing for a major change in policy towards donors that could help overcome the shortage. In the absence of express opposition, MPs want doctors to be able to remove certain organs from a potential donor, on his or her death, for transplant purposes.

This differs from current practice in Europe—except in France—which forbids the removal of organs without the prior consent of the donor.

The 'absence of opposition' formula has been applied in France since December 1976 and aims to offer the greatest possibility for saving human life while providing full protection for the wishes of the potential donor whenever they have been expressed.

Parliament has adopted a resolution inviting the European Commission to draw up a European directive along these lines. Its basic aim is to reach a situation where it is normal practice for the organs of a deceased person to be used to help living human beings.

Only France requires express opposition to donating organs. In other countries an organ may be removed from a dead body if the patient has previously given consent and if there is no parental opposition.

If the patient has expressed opposition, no organs may be removed under any circumstances. If a patient has not expressed himself either way, parents must be consulted.

But under the 'absence of opposition' system organs may be removed unless the person cannot be identified, or belongs to one of a number of specified ethnic groups and as long as parents do not object.

The Parliament recognises that moral objections can only be overcome progressively, particularly in countries which have no current legislation covering transplants. MPs conse-

quently want any European directive to be optional but supported by well-prepared information campaigns coordinated at the European level.

A European aspect to this system would be the creation of standard health files registering a person's opposition to organ removal. Part of the file would be in several languages to cater for travel abroad.

But the problems of saving lives through organ transplants are not only of a legal nature. More research is needed into the problems of tissue rejection.

And, to ensure availability of organs in the right place at the right time, computer networks should be used to record supply and demand factors.

As well as optional regulations authorising transplants, the Parliament has called for the creation of mobile medical teams to remove organs, the setting up of computer networks to keep a central register of available and needed organs, and greater coordination between organ banks.

It also envisages cooperation between organ banks and transplant centres within the Nine with those outside the Community, and has encouraged the European Commission to improve the distribution of information through computer networks and data banks.

But while the Parliament is resolutely in favour of the 'absence of opposition' system as used in France, MPs have stressed that the system should guarantee potential donors the possibility to express their wishes at all times.

Commission member Viscount Davignon told the Parliament that, following consultations, the Commission would decide if this whole subject should be considered as coming within the Community's competence.

### IN BRIEF

The European Parliament has called on the Commission to promote greater protection for citizens of the Nine against the growth of data-processing. The Commission is already working on the problem.

The Community is providing £195 000 for the relief of earthquake victims in Yugoslavia.

## THE ECONOMY

## Big Brother is spending more

General government expenditure has continued to rise in all European Community countries in recent years and now totals anywhere between 44% (Denmark) and 57% (Luxembourg) of a country's gross domestic product. Towards the top end of the scale are the Netherlands (56%) and Belgium (54%), while at the bottom are France and the United Kingdom on 45% and Germany with 46%. In Italy it is 48% and in Ireland 49%.

This expenditure comes from both central and local government, and certain members of the Nine place more emphasis on one than on the other.

In France, for instance, just under half (47%) of the £100 billion of public expenditure in 1977—excluding expenditure by public enterprises—was by local government.

In Germany, a country with a strong regional system of administration, local authorities accounted for 42% of the £140 billion spent in the same year. In the Netherlands and Luxembourg the figure was 46%.

But the financial role of local authorities is not as great in all countries. Despite the fairly strong regional influences in both states, in Italy they only provide 37% of the £55 billion and in Belgium 32% of the £24 billion represented by public expenditure.

The lion's share of public expenditure held by central government is in the United Kingdom (72% of the £66 billion spent) and Ireland 79% of the £2.4 billion.

The European Investment Bank, the Community's long-term finance institution, has granted a loan of Ir£5 million to the Industrial Credit Co. for onlending to industry.

Since 1975 the Community's Regional Fund has helped finance 170 port development projects to the tune of more than £300 million.

## CONSUMERS



## Veritas not always in the vino

Human ingenuity is a fascinating thing and history is littered with splendid examples. The wine trade is no exception, possibly because imaginations are often fuelled by the product itself.

Back in 1910 an American company manufacturing an alleged champagne decided to give its brand some glamour. What could be more prestigious, and profitable, than to use the name of the well-known French company, Veuve ('The Widow') Cliquot?

To do this it merely found a widow whose surname was Cliquot and appointed her President of the firm. But the French company successfully took them to court over this practice.

Now certain European producers are worried lest the proud name of 'Beaujolais' becomes similarly stained. The source of their concern is California where American producers market their potion under the name of 'Gamay Beaujolais'.

The name and similarity of labels make it likely that the unsuspecting consumer will confuse the American bottle with the real French stuff, say the European producers.

Surveys carried out in Britain and Belgium—the two countries where the

sales were alleged to take place—have failed to turn up any bottles of Californian wine being sold as real 'Beaujolais'.

However, the European Commission is aware of the need to prevent any future confusion between the two in the interests of both the producers and the drinking public. It has ruled that 'Gamay Beaujolais', which indicates a certain type of wine, cannot be sold in the Community as it might be confused with real 'Beaujolais'.

The labelling of wine is a touchy business and an example nearer home has led the mayor of a small French town to put pen to paper in a letter to a Belgian consumer magazine.

In particular, he criticises the marketing of wine under duly registered trade marks, but using the names of fictitious firms. One of these firms, Ets Gaston Lacelle & Co. of Santenay, prompted the mayor of the commune to comment: 'I regret to inform you that we have absolutely no knowledge of any Mr Gaston Lacelle in Santenay'. Again, he considers the practice is harmful to both the product and the consumer.

His criticism is supported by the Commission, on whose initiative a considerable body of Community legislation exists governing the labelling of wines which is designed to give the customer more information and more protection.

The name or business name of the bottler and the commune in which he has his head office must be indicated on the label. The only exceptions to this rule are sparkling and semi-sparkling wines and liqueurs which are not yet covered by Community legislation.

The same legislation bans the use of brand names using words likely to give a false impression of a person, in particular the bottler, involved in the process. As such, the Commission considers that the practice complained of by the mayor of Santenay is incompatible with the law.

## Parliament backs Commission's move on faulty goods

The variety of laws governing product liability in Europe are not only confusing but they give the consumer inadequate protection against material loss or bodily injury.

Manufacturers also face different cost factors depending on the severity of the legislation in their own country, and this can distort competition in the Community.

In order to introduce greater clarity into the legislation, the European Commission has come forward with proposals for Community-wide measures on product liability. It has proposed that the producer of an article shall be liable for damage caused by a defect in the article, whether or not he could have known of the defect.

The producer's total liability for all personal injuries from articles with the same defect should be £ 16 million, it considers.

Members of the European Parliament have now given their backing to the Commission's proposal, although they have introduced provisos that favour manufacturers.

They feel that the producer should not be considered liable if he can produce evidence that the article was not considered defective in the light of scientific and technological knowledge at the time it was put into circulation.

Secondly, European MPs support the view that a product should only be seen as defective if, when being used for the purpose for which it was apparently intended, it does not give people the safety they are entitled to expect.

## ENVIRONMENT

## Cleanliness need not be closer to joblessness

Despite what short-sighted or tight-fisted critics may say, modern society does not have to choose between safeguarding or creating jobs and improving the environment.

Since the 1973-74 oil crisis and the ensuing economic recession many industrialists and government officials have claimed that industries in the midst of an economic and investment downswing just cannot bear the additional burden of having to pay for new, sophisticated anti-pollution equipment.

As a consequence, they say that environmental control and legislation should be relaxed rather than tightened. Otherwise, jobs might have to be sacrificed to achieve the cleaner air and water the public wants.

But there really is no choice to make, according to the European Commission's environmental experts. On the contrary, the emerging anti-pollution 'industry' may create more jobs than are lost because of new environmental restrictions.

In addition, environmental controls, except for a few polluting industries, face a relatively marginal effect on total costs and are hardly ever a reason in themselves for industrialists to change a decision on investment or a choice on how to process a product.

It is significant that there is no evidence of major relocations of factories from countries adopting strict anti-pollution controls to more indulgent States or even 'pollution havens'.

The investments required for anti-pollution equipment increasingly

required by national and Community law are hard to evaluate but they are not that important when a company calculates all its bills. A report to be published shortly by the Commission's Environmental Protection Service says: 'It is clear that the relatively modest total investment in pollution control involved is not responsible for the "investment anaemia" which is one of the characteristics of the current economic situation'.

Nor should it be forgotten that an unhealthy environment imposes a considerable burden on social and health costs and can harm certain industries such as tourism, fishing and other leisure pursuits. Such sectors would probably benefit and increase in job-creating potential if there were less pollution of the sea, the beach or the countryside.

But in addition to these counter arguments, economic research tends to point to more jobs as a result of a stricter environment policy. The construction of sewage works, treatment plants, the production of air-pollution filters and the design of newer, more efficient equipment all create work for more people.

An estimate in Germany for the period 1975-79 indicated that on average the anti-pollution industry would provide at least 370 000 jobs in that country as against an estimated direct loss of less than 7 000 jobs.

Another study for Germany, which considered only the employment impact of investment in pollution control equipment, indicated that some 140 000 jobs were created in 1975, hinting at the possibility that this industry was a definite growth sector rather than a drag on the economy.

A study by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics has also come to

roughly similar conclusions, with the positive job-creating effect of environmental measures far outweighing the negative factors.

## 'Small is Beautiful', say ecologists in search of EP seats

The European Ecological Action Group Ecoropa, which is contesting next months European Parliament elections, is campaigning on the ticket of reversing the Community's economic expansion.

In a campaign document, the ecologists also came out strongly in favour of conservation and in opposition to nuclear power.

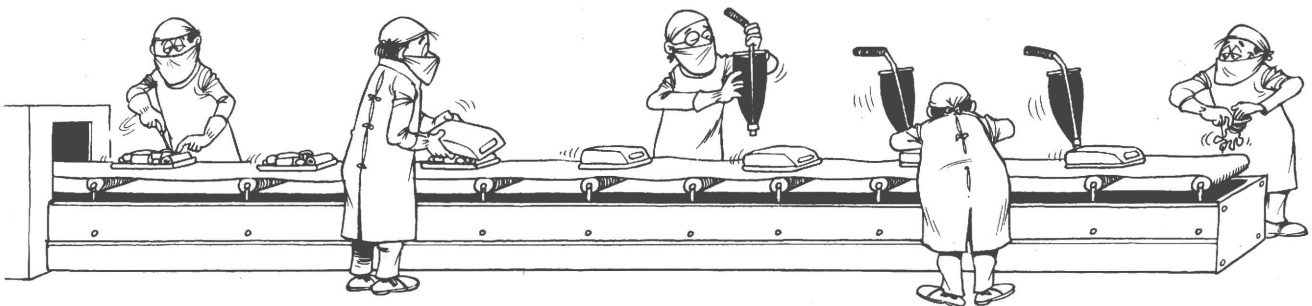
Among personalities who signed the document were the violinist Yehudi Menuhin and the Nobel Prize-winning novelist Heinrich Böll.

## Control of aerosol use may help to combat cancer

One of the most controversial—and confusing—environmental issues of recent years has been the stripping away of the earth's protective ozone layer by the widespread use of certain types of aerosols.

Some scientists have warned that, unless checked, this action in outer space will lead to an excess of ultraviolet rays which can produce skin cancer among humans.

While these charges have been rejected as grossly exaggerated by other experts, there has been a growing tendency toward limiting or banning the use of certain chlorofluorocarbons in





such products as aerosols and cooling systems.

A number of international conferences have been held to discuss the latest scientific knowledge in this field and examine what political steps should be taken as a result.

In response to requests from the Nine's Environment Ministers, the European Commission in Brussels is recommending that the Community's member countries reduce the use of chlorofluorocarbons F-11 and F-12 in aerosols by 30% by 1981.

This latest action, which will have to be decided upon by the Ministers themselves, is the result of their demand last December for a planned reduction of these products throughout the Community. Some member countries at that time also announced that they would move independently to cut back on aerosol uses.

All during 1978 the Commission and institutions in the member countries had been examining the available scientific data on the effect of these products. The officials involved also wanted to study the impact of any restrictions or bans on the producers and users throughout the Community.

Part of this process has been to encourage all aerosol and plastic foam industries using the products to intensify research into alternative products and to promote development of alternative methods of application.

In addition to seeking a reduction of 30% in the use of fluorocarbons in aerosols by 1981, the proposal would also provide for review after that date of the need to make additional restrictions.

In the meantime, the Environment Ministers have also decided that the Commission should study a programme that would help this and other heavily-polluting industries to plan and finance a cleanup and orderly conversion to less dangerous production.

The next time the subject will be discussed will be during the meeting of Environment Ministers in Brussels next month.

## Mapmakers' projections may help preserve ecological balance

Since the days of the great medieval map-makers like Mercator, there have been vast improvements in this important craft. No longer are large hunks of the planet marked 'terra incognita' and the details on maps are growing more and more sophisticated.

One of the latest and most ambitious map-making projects in Europe is now on the drawing boards in Brussels. Just as the breakthroughs in discovery and charting of the unknown parts of the globe in the 15th and 16th centuries revolutionised society, this new project could affect the daily lives of all 260 million inhabitants of the nine European Community countries.

The dramatic undertaking aims at developing a thorough map of the ecological and environmental makeup of each square kilometre of the entire Community. From the semi-arid zones of Southern Italy to the storm-washed Scottish Islands and from the Atlantic beaches of France to the towering Alps, the air, water and soil pollution levels of each community will be the subject of a giant inventory.

This exercise, which will probably require several years to complete, is not just idle curiosity or a make-work project for topographers or map-makers. It has an extremely important role to play in a number of key areas.

For instance, the European Community Commission's 'State of the Environment' report, which explains this planned operation, cites one example.

Suppose a major American company wants to establish a plant in a region of high unemployment. After all the necessary engineering site surveys and legal and financial preparations are done, the plant is built.

But, as the report notes: 'Afterwards it turns out that the new factory's wastes are just sufficient to unsettle the ecological balance of the river, because the absorptive capacity of its water is already heavily strained by a paper pulp factory a mile upstream; also, the prevailing wind is just such as to afflict a nearby village with the harmless, but unpleasant odours given off by the process used and it turns out that the factory site represented one of the last areas of high-grade, agricultural land in the region'.

Probably, with the best of intentions, no-one could have known how calamitous the new plant was destined to be.



### IN BRIEF

Industrial production in the European Community rose by 2.3% last year, compared with a 2.2% rise in 1977.

The Commission's environmental mapping project hopes eventually to avoid a repetition of these all-too-frequent disasters. It wants to gather enough detailed computerised data from air, water and other ecological monitoring stations to produce this environmental survey of the Community.

That way the impact of every new major construction project or manufacturing change can be gauged against existing conditions in the surrounding area.

Otherwise, there might be no advance clue for the industrial, administrative or environmental planners that a new, subtle change in the environmental characteristics of a region will tip the scales towards an ecological accident or deterioration of life there.

The new Community map may never rival the £350 000 price fetched recently by an original work of Mercator. But, in human terms, its value could be incalculable.

## PUBLICATIONS

'Eighth Report on Competition Policy' (£5.70) and 'Report on the Development of the Social Situation in the European Community in 1978' (£3), both from Government Sales Offices (Addresses Back Cover).

'The European Community's Budget' is the latest in the European Documentation Series available from the Office for Official Publication (see our back cover), price 50 pence. Catalogue No CB-NC-79-001-EN-C.

## TRANSPORT

### More cooperation to set our railways on the right track

Most people have a soft spot for railways. Romantics or those with long memories immediately conjure up visions of being transported safely and rhythmically in trains pulled by gleaming engines gushing forth steam and smoke. Others like them for their comfort and general reliability.

Yet, despite their attraction, railway companies in every Community country are losing money. This is mainly due to strong competition from other forms of transport.

More people are now flying in Europe than ever before and the number of registered motor-cars is also rising. A lot of goods traffic also tends to go by road as well.

Attempts to reverse this trend are being made, since trains are an economical and efficient form of transport. After all, they are low on energy consumption and thus less directly affected than the motor car by increases in the price of oil. They have a good safety record, protect the environment and help regional development.

The Nine's railways already cooperate in a number of areas in an effort to reduce costs. The use of rolling stock is shared and EUROP, with its

headquarters in Berne, is a joint organisation operating a pool of more than 300 000 goods wagons.

Ways of extending this cooperation are examined in a recent report prepared by the European Commission. Although recommending more sharing of resources in a number of areas, the report rules out any idea of trying to merge all the national companies into one European venture.

Encouraging the use of fast, modern and comfortable trains between Western Europe's major cities is one area where the report considers railway companies should get together. These already exist under the heading of TEE trains (Trans Europ Express). By the year 2000 it is estimated there will be a network of 3000 miles for such trains with passengers travelling at speeds of up to 180 miles an hour.

Another area pinpointed is greater use of combined road-rail transport with containers being easily transferred from trains to lorries or ships.

Finally, the report recommends that the Nine should examine the whole question of their long-term transport infrastructure needs to ensure that national decisions also take the Community's interests into account.

This is a subject which the European Commission is currently working on and where it will set out its ideas in a Green Paper to be published this summer.



## Employers' go-slow on longer holidays

By now the concept of the 40-hour work week and the four weeks annual paid holiday should have been fully implemented throughout the European Community.

The nine Community governments agreed as far back as 1975 that both ought to be applied from the beginning of this year. However, implementation of a recommendation to this effect which was issued by the Council of Ministers is not compulsory.

While the 40-hour week has now been virtually universally adopted, according to the European Commission, there are a few small firms and agricultural employers who do not observe it.

In addition, the Commission recently reported that the progress achieved in getting the four-weeks' paid holiday accepted has not been completed in all the Community Member States nor in all sectors of the economy.

## Community funds can help women in search of jobs

There are over 130 million women in the European Community. In each of the Nine Member States, except Ireland, they make up more than half the population. Yet, despite this numerical superiority, women come across numerous instances of discrimination.

It was in order to put men and women on a more equal footing that the European Commission, prompted by the former Irish Commissioner in charge of Social Affairs, Patrick Hillery, pushed through legislation a few years ago on equality of pay and job opportunity.

As we explain in Focus on Page 15, the Commission continues to monitor the implementation in all Member States of this legislation.

But efforts have not stopped there. Recently the Commission began to allocate a considerable amount of money which is geared exclusively to tackling the special problems women face in finding employment.

These can range from a lack of knowledge of the labour market, to out-of-date qualifications or a lack of self-confidence. Such handicaps are likely to be especially prevalent among women over 35 who stopped working to have a family and now wish to look for a job again. In many cases they may also face the hostility of their families.

Technically, it has been possible since 1972 to give money from the European Social Fund to help overcome these difficulties. The criteria that needed to be satisfied, however, were very difficult to meet.

To overcome this, the Community's Heads of State and Government meeting at the Rome Summit in 1977 decided to ease these restrictions.

Now young women facing unemployment or those over 25 with either inadequate or no vocational qualifications, those already unemployed or wishing to go back to work after a long break are eligible for aid.

In 1978—the first year money was made available—over £5 million was paid out to 15 projects in every member country except Luxembourg. This year the Community budget has set aside some £12 million, a significant part of which still remains to be allocated.

The projects fall into one of three categories. They either prepare women for predominantly female professions (secretaries, shop assistants) or for traditionally male jobs (middle management) or for 'mixed' jobs (catering, tourism).

Italy, for instance, last year received £1.3 million for two 'mixed' projects. These included general training and information to help women get jobs in work cooperatives looking after the old or handicapped.

France, which has its own Minister for women's affairs, has been the most enthusiastic towards this new Community initiative. The six projects it put forward last year received financial support totalling £3 million. One of these, a regional programme run in

Lyons is training women for the post of management assistants in small and medium-sized firms. Another is geared for interior designers, while a third is giving women a more technical background so that they may get jobs as personal assistants to engineers.

£4 600 was given to Ireland for a course in Dublin providing women with basic management skills, while in Germany £43 000 is being spent on preparation for the more traditional female jobs of secretary and shop assistant.

In the Netherlands (£200 000), Denmark (£300 000), Belgium (£4 000), and the United Kingdom (£12 500), the Community money is being used for more general courses.

For the projects to qualify for aid they must satisfy three criteria. They must include a preparation stage, vocational training or retraining and measures to ease the re-entry of women into the labour market to jobs corresponding to their training.

The Commission estimates that 12 000 women, 30% of whom are unemployed, will benefit from the various schemes being supported by 1978 payments from the Social Fund.

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## EXTERNAL RELATIONS

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### Parliament urges stronger stand on South Africa

Proposed changes in South Africa's labour laws, announced recently by the Pretoria government following a report by a Commission of Inquiry, are a step in the right direction as far as the European Commission is concerned.

For a number of years the Nine Member States have taken an increasingly strong line against the South African government's apartheid policies.

The legal recognition of black trades unions which was recommended by the Wiehahn Commission and which has been accepted by the South African Government, had been one of the Community's main demands.

Although black unions are not illegal they are not officially recognised which has meant a weakening of their bargaining position.

One serious omission in the proposed changes is that migrant black workers will apparently still not be allowed to join unions. This means that most African workers are excluded, especially those in the mining industry.

In September 1977 the Nine adopted a Code of Conduct for Community firms in South Africa. The code stressed the need to recognise and negotiate with black trades unions and to ensure that wage rates are at least above the poverty line. The code also asked European companies with subsidiaries in South Africa to give African employees fringe benefits such as unemployment benefit and medical insurance.

Firms were also asked to abolish segregation in canteens and work places. They were asked as well to provide training facilities so as to give African employees the chance of gaining better jobs.

The European Parliament recently produced a report examining how effectively the Code was being observed. The author of the report Pierre Lagorce, a French Socialist, regretted that the code was not compulsory and that there were no penalties for those who did not observe it. He admitted that it was extremely difficult to assess what impact the code was having.

Many members of parliament wanted the code to be made compulsory so as to make it more effective. In addition they wanted it to be supported by economic sanctions and possibly by an economic boycott.

During a discussion of the report, the French spokesman for the Council of Ministers, Pierre Bernard-Raymond, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was more cautious. He pointed out that some firms had not yet submitted their reports on the operation of the code and that it was difficult at this stage to make any assessment.

Claude Cheysson, European Commissioner responsible for the Third World, pointed out that the Community was providing economic and political support for countries suffering from South Africa's apartheid policy.

For instance it had provided aid for neighbouring Botswana and Lesotho which had both suffered severe economic pressure from South Africa.

## AGRICULTURE

### Variety is the spice of life

The European Community is the world's largest food producer and is self-sufficient in most of the products it is able to grow. In some cases it is more than self-sufficient and, is therefore a major exporter of food as well.

But, in view of the all-too familiar stories about wine lakes, butter mountains and large amounts of surplus meat in cold storage, it may seem surprising that the Community is also the largest single importer of food in the world. Indeed, it imports more than it exports.

However, a more detailed look at the kind of products we buy shows that in many of these areas our production is either low or non-existent. In 1977, for instance, we imported some £2 billion worth of oilseeds.

In the strictly edible line, fruit and vegetables cost us £3.5 billion in foreign exchange—a little less than double the £2 billion we spent on cereals.

In the same year the Community's expenditure on imported food was almost £15 billion out of a total import bill for all agricultural products of £25 billion.

Some of the other major items were timber and cork £2.7 billion and natural textile fibres £1.6 billion.

Despite the high level of food imports the Commission does not consider it either possible or desirable to favour a policy whereby all agricultural imports are replaced by internal production.

Imported food gives the European consumer a much wider range of products from which to choose in the shops. There aren't many bananas, pineapples or mangos grown in Europe.

In addition, the Community has trade agreements with a number of developing countries in particular which allow them to export food products to the Nine. Although we produce nearly all the beef we need, Botswana for instance sends in a small amount each year. Any attempt to limit these imports would seriously damage that country's economy.

### Stiffer measures needed to reduce milk lake

'Drink a pinta milka day' is a well-known advertisement in Britain. What is perhaps less well-known is that this and similar campaigns in other European Community countries encouraging people to drink milk have received almost £18 million from Community funds, while, as we mentioned in our last issue, another £10 million is being used to subsidise cheap milk for school children.

These are two of the major projects the European Commission is sponsoring in a bid to reduce milk surpluses in the Nine. Overall, some £80 million has been spent since September 1977 and this is likely to be increased by another £60 million by the end of this month.

The wide range of programmes includes projects to improve the quality of milk, £16 million, butterfat for ice cream £20 million and market research within the Community, £2.6 million.

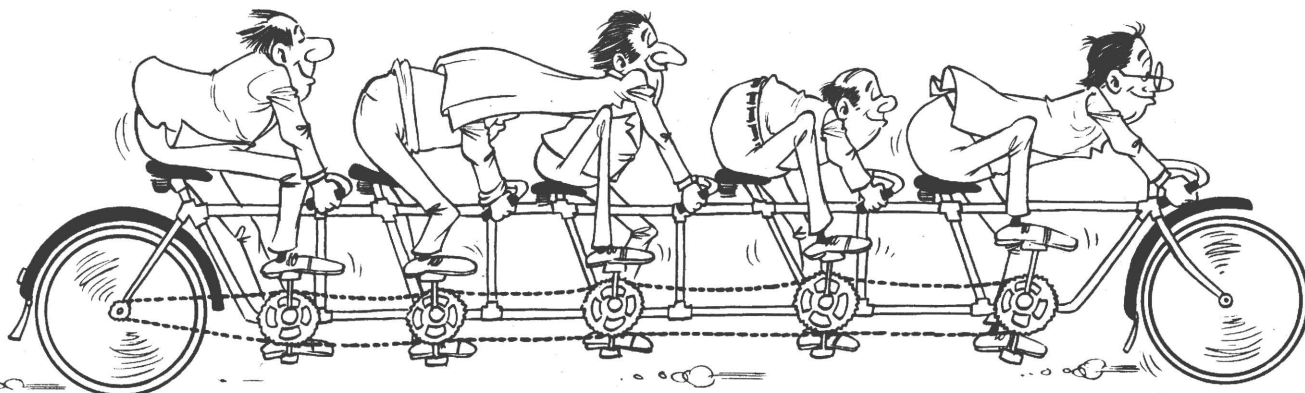
The money comes from a so-called coresponsibility levy paid by milk producers. The present rate is just over 50p per tonne of milk delivered to the dairy.

The levy's aim is to cut back surplus milk production and provide finance for increasing the number of uses to which the milk may be put. In order to strengthen its deterrent value, the Commission is recommending that the levy be increased to at least 2%.

### IN BRIEF

The European Commission is to give emergency aid worth £67 000 to help victims of floods in Portugal in February and March.

Male unemployment began to level out in the European Community last year but unemployment among women continued to rise. In the last quarter of the year the rate for men was 5% and for women 6.6%.



## Earning a yellow jersey on behalf of a greener Europe

After the hikers (Euroforum 4/79) it is the turn of the cyclists to do their bit for a green and united Europe.

On June 5—World Environment Day—about 40 intrepid cyclists will wheel off from Paris on a 4 000 mile (7 000 km) tour lasting four months.

Inspired by the staging of the first European elections this summer they have given up plans to do an ecological cycle tour of the Mediterranean and tour Europe instead. They will arrive in Strasbourg, one of the seats of the European Parliament, on June 10—European election day in France.

Clad in symbolic green T shirts, one of the main aims of the cyclists is to draw attention to the need to protect nature, not only from motor car fumes which are particularly annoying for cyclists, but from all the ravages of modern, consumer society.

The cyclists will be out to show that it is still possible to live simply in a material age. No 5 star hotels or smart restaurants for them. Instead they will mainly be camping and doing their own cooking. Moreover, the tour is not a commercial gimmick. No public or private financing; no inscription costs—the cyclists pay their own way.

Their route takes them through Switzerland, Italy, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to Austria. They will arrive in Vienna on August 20—the day the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development opens.

The return journey passes through Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. The cyclists will even make a brief sortie across the Channel to London before winding up their marathon in Paris on October 7.

During their tour the cyclists plan to meet the Pope in Rome and members of the governments of 11 countries. They also intend to put over their views on radio and television.

Anyone who shares their views and feels sufficiently fit to take part in all or part of the tour should write to: Georges Krassovsky, Les Cyclo-Ecologistes Réunis, B.P. 164, 75664 Paris—Cedex 14.

## New steps to make toys safer

Despite the many hours of pleasure they can bring—often to adults as well as to children—toys can be lethal. A fluffy teddy bear may be highly inflammable, electric motor cars may give a rather nasty electric shock and a child's seemingly endless wish to put toys into its mouth could lead to poisoning.

Aware of all these hidden dangers, the European Committee for Standardisation has been working steadily to make toys safer.

Standards on the flammability and physical and mechanical properties of toys were approved last year. The Committee is now working at the request of the European Commission on similar guidelines concerned with the electrical and chemical safety of toys.

To give these standards more teeth, the Commission is now preparing legislation which, when adopted, will require the nine Member States to incorporate them in their national law.

The beneficiaries would be not only children, but also their harassed parents, who will be more confident that everything is being done to protect their offspring.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

### European Parliament urges citizen's rights charter

So much publicity is given to violations of human rights in certain African, Latin American and Asian countries as well as the USSR that the situation here in Europe is sometimes overlooked.

Both the European Commission and European Parliament have recently given the matter some attention. Both have come out in favour of the Community joining the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights.

In a memorandum sent recently to the Council of Ministers, the Commission says that the rights of Community citizens should be improved. It argues that they should be protected against abuses by the Community institutions. In developing European law, care must be taken to safeguard the rights of the individual. European integration must not lead to a reduction in personal liberty.

At the moment the Community is associated only indirectly with the Convention through its Member States. Full membership would help consolidate democracy in Europe, says the Commission. However, the Convention would have to be changed to allow regional bodies as well as national states to join.

The European Parliament wants to draft a new European Charter on citizen rights to fill a gap in the Council of Europe's Convention. The Commission supports this idea, noting that the Council of Europe has been unable to adapt its Convention to take account of the new situation resulting from the creation of the Community.

The Parliament also wants to include in the Community Treaties the right of citizens to petition against abuses in Community law. It would like to give individuals the opportunity to appeal directly to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg. The Commission is not in principle, opposed to these ideas but thinks they need to be defined more precisely and their consequences examined more closely.

Community membership of an European Convention on Human Rights would provide a political as well as a legal guarantee for its Member States. This would be important for the three countries which have applied to join the Community—Greece, Spain and Portugal. It would show them that the Community deals with human as well as economic problems.

The Council of Europe's Convention was adopted in 1950 before the Community was formed and has been ratified by all its 21 member countries except Spain and Lichtenstein. Unlike the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights it has set up bodies to make sure that its provisions are observed. In this respect it is more effective.

## LIFESTYLE

### Little wonder they call Luxembourg the Grand Duchy

There's no point in keeping up with the Joneses any more: they've fallen too far behind. The people to keep up with, if you can, are the Schmidts—the Luxembourg Schmidts, not the ones from Germany.

This useful piece of information was recently given by the European Commission to an Irish Member of the European Parliament, although not in these very terms, of course.

Mr Richie Ryan, who sits with the Christian Democratic European People's Party, wanted to know just how rich each of the nine Member Countries is, so he asked the Commission to work out their average *per capita* income (which is the international yardstick for measuring a nation's wealth).

As you cannot compare Italian lira to the Irish punt, the Commission's experts first converted each national currency into European Units of

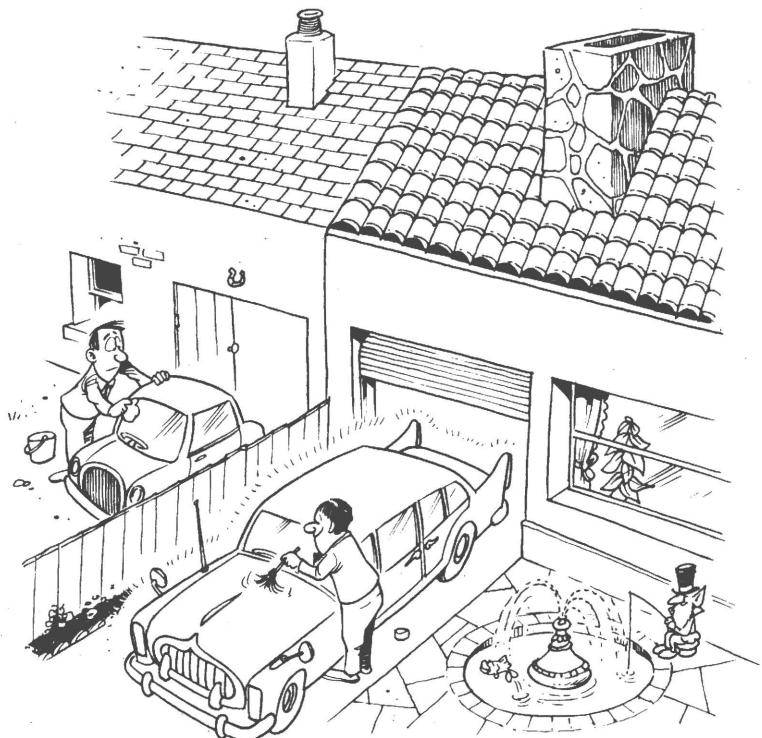
Account (EUA). Luxembourg led the list, with a *per capita* income in 1977 of 7 419 EUA. Bottom of the league table, and well below the Community average of 4 715 EUA, was Ireland with 2 533 EUA.

But the size of your income is less reliable for purposes of comparison than what you can buy with it. The Commission's experts therefore compared the Nine in terms of purchasing power standards also.

Luxembourg again led the list. But the differences were less marked. The spread between Luxembourg and Ireland was smaller, although the Community average remained virtually unchanged at 4 714 purchasing power standards.

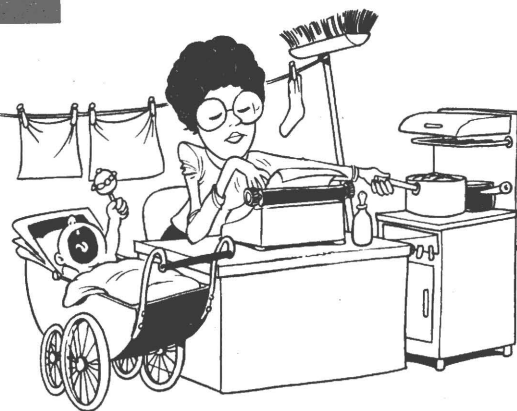
Here are the Nine as they ranked in terms, first, of purchasing power standards and then of EUA in 1977.

Luxembourg	6 603	7 419
Denmark	5 816	7 265
Germany	5 506	6 425
France	5 325	5 525
Belgium	5 319	6 316
Netherlands	5 197	6 083
United Kingdom	4 309	3 357
Italy	3 426	2 701
Ireland	3 227	2 533



## FOCUS

## Helping Europe's working women: a full-time job



Despite the fact that United Kingdom voters have recently elected the European Community's first woman Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher's success in what, until now, has been largely a man's world is not typical of the situation of the majority of Europe's women, and in their working lives at least, women are still not the equals of their male colleagues.

Their problems and disadvantages on the work front are many, and for this reason the European Commission has a special Bureau for Questions affecting Women's Employment. In addition, the Commission has established a special information service for women.

The bureau is headed by Jacqueline Nonon whose task is the coordination of Community action on behalf of women. She has worked for several years on women's problems, including a spell back in her native France in charge of government initiatives to better the position of French women in society, and is therefore all too familiar with the type of problems met by Europe's working women.

Women who want to go out to work face problems when it comes to finding (and paying for) child minders; problems with employers who are not convinced that a woman will stay in a job or who are unwilling to employ a mother who has not worked outside the home for a number of years; and, of course, problems

fitting in the unending round of household chores.

Once at work, women in general earn less than men because they are given the lower-paid, less skilled jobs: as shop assistants, assembly workers or typists. Even when doing equal work, a recent Commission survey found, women are often underpaid in comparison to men as a result of indirect discrimination which is present, for example, in job classification systems, or in the allocation of fringe benefits or of shift work.

Equality between men and women in their working lives is, however, a basic principle contained in the Treaty of Rome and, since 1975, the Community has pushed through three basic directives requiring Member States to accord equal status to women.

First, in 1975, came a directive requiring employers to pay men and women equal money for equal work. But equal pay is no use if you can't get a job in the first place. So in 1976, a follow-up directive was adopted guaranteeing women equitable working conditions, and equal access to jobs, vocational training and promotion. Finally, 1978 saw the adoption of a directive which will ensure that women are accorded social security benefits on the same footing as their male colleagues. The directive should be applied in all the Member States within six years.

The Commission has recently found, however, that the first two directives have not yet been fully applied in all Community countries and it has now begun the first stage of legal proceedings against seven of the Member States who have not yet faced up fully to their obligations towards working women.

Besides monitoring the application of legislation in the Member States, Mademoiselle Nonon's office also has the formidable task of coordinating other Community action taken on behalf of women in fields such as education and agriculture, or by the European Community's Social Fund which, since 1977, has been able to give special aids to projects to help women with no job qualifications or those looking for work after a break.

But Jacqueline Nonon believes that laws alone are not enough to improve the status of working women. Legislation can only provide the background against which people's fundamental attitudes to women within and outside the home must be changed. The people who can do most to help women are women themselves and, for this reason, Mademoiselle Nonon aims to stimulate women to think about their situation by means of films and written publications and by maintaining links with women's organisations trade unions and the press.

This task is aided by the work of the Commission's office for information to the women's organisations and press. This office has just produced a booklet, 'The European Community and Work for Women', which is available on request to *Euroforum* readers.

As far as the future is concerned, Jacqueline Nonon looks forward to the European elections next month in the hope that they will produce a strong contingent of female Euro-MP's, keen to push ahead with the work of unchaining Europe's woman from their kitchen sinks.

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