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## COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

on family policies

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## INTRODUCTION

1. Varied approaches to the question of family exist in the Member States. Conception of the role of the public authorities with regard to the family also differs. However, by the slanting of diverse measures adopted in a certain number of areas such as social security, taxation, family law, etc. in all Member States, the public authorities are directing their attention to families' living conditions. Family policy conditions the sum total of these interventions.

2. In its communication "Problems of social security - areas of common interest" of 24 July 1986, the Commission analysed the implications of demographic trends in the Community, and proposed the organization of "concertation at the level of senior national officials responsible for the policies (family policy measures), as is already the case in the field of social protection". At the meeting on 27 May 1987, the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs welcomed this communication, which responded to the European Parliament recommendations (resolution of 9 June 1983 on family policy in the Community) and to those of the Economic and Social Committee (report on the demographic situation and report on the social aspects of the internal market) all adopted almost unanimously. On 22 February 1988, the Council on General Affairs adopted the following conclusions: "At the European Council in Copenhagen, the French delegation mentioned the disturbing demographic situation in Europe and emphasized that Europe could not retain its political, economic and cultural position in the world without a renewal of its demographic dynamism. The Ministers responsible for Family Affairs will meet to exchange information on their national experiences and will submit a report in 1989 on their discussions."

3. The aim of this communication is to submit to the Ministers for Family Affairs a draft report drawn up in conjunction with the senior national officials responsible for family affairs, in preparation for which the Commission organized a seminar on the implications of Community family policies (Frankfurt, 18-19 April 1989).

4. The following were stressed during the preparatory work:

- the disturbing demographic situation in Europe;
- the impact of social and economic changes on the family;
- the effects of Community sectoral policies on the family;
- the fundamental role of the family as the basic unit of society;
- the cultural and socio-economic role of the family, based on the transmission of values and inter-generational solidarity.

5. From this work, four main areas of common interest emerged:
- ways of reconciling work and family life and sharing family responsibilities;
  - measures adopted to assist certain categories of families;
  - consideration of the most deprived families;
  - impact of Community policies on the family, in particular the protection of children during childhood.

6. On this basis, the draft report in question, after describing the demographic, social and economic context of the family, and reviewing its impact on various family groups, concludes with an outline of a feasible approach to these questions.

7. Annex III, a working document prepared by Commission services, contains a description of national measures adopted in favour of the family, mainly relating to the above areas of common interest and based on information supplied by the Member States.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

### 1. DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

#### A. Main demographic indicators

8. Since the end of the 1960s we have been witnessing a reversal of demographic trends. The high birthrate, which had been characteristic of all European countries since the industrial revolution, declined at an increasing rate from 1965 onwards. Since 1980, no EEC country, with the exception of Ireland, has achieved full population replacement. Deaths outnumber births with a consequent standstill in population levels, and even a reduction within a few decades unless entries (births and immigrations) compensate for the losses.

9. This rapid fall in the birthrate since 1965 is remarkable not only because it occurred simultaneously in all the countries of Western and Eastern Europe, but because all strata of society have been affected, regardless of religion, social status and education and despite the economic growth rate of each of these countries, the proportion of women on the labour market or unemployment rates.

10. This decline in the birthrate is not an isolated phenomenon, but occurred in parallel with other factors, such as the decline in the number of marriages, an increase in the period of time between marriage and the birth of the first child, and a rise in the number of divorces.

11. In all the countries of the Community, marriage, often preceded by a period of cohabitation of varying length, is being entered into later in life and less frequently, so that between the beginning of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s the total number of marriages declined by 20%.

In other words, if the behaviour observed in recent years in various age groups were to be true of a whole generation throughout its life, marriage would lose its general and more or less universal character and be entered into by only half or slightly more of the population. However, it is likely that the present indices exaggerate the trend.<sup>1</sup>

12. Alongside the decrease in the number of marriages, there is an increase in the number of unions "by agreement" or "de facto" marriages which would account for the increase in the number of children born out of wedlock. While no Member State remains untouched by this trend, the relative scale of the phenomenon differs greatly from one Member State to another. With close to 40% of births being illegitimate, Denmark occupies an entirely exceptional position; the United Kingdom and France are in a similar situation (roughly 20% in 1985), followed by the Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, where the rate varies from 8% to 9%. In Greece, less than 2% of recorded births occur outside marriage (see Annex II, Table 4).

13. Since the mid-1960s and, above all, since 1970, there has been a very rapid rise in the divorce rate; the number of divorces tripled between 1964 and 1982. Divorce is not only becoming more frequent, but is occurring earlier in the marriage. The increase in the intensity of the phenomenon and the shortening of the duration of marriages ending in divorce combine to produce a veritable explosion of the divorce rate indicators (see Annex II, Table 3). In the light of the initial data available, the final proportion of divorced couples among those who married in 1975 will probably be over 1 out of 5 in France, over 1 out of 4 in England and Wales and close to 1 out of 3 in Denmark.<sup>2</sup>

14. Significant changes have also taken place in regard to the mortality rate. Whereas, at the end of the last century, the average life span in Europe was between 40 and 50 years, with an infant mortality rate of 10 to 20% ..., today, life expectancy is well over 70 years, coming close to or sometimes exceeding 80 years in the case of women; the infant mortality rate is under 1%.<sup>3</sup> This increase in life expectancy, combined with the fall in the birthrate, are at the origin of the ageing of the population (in other words the proportional increase of elderly persons in a given population) typical of Europe today.

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1 Burnel, Economic and Social Committee Report of 19 June 1985 on the demographic situation in the Community (ESC 602/84 SOC 80, p.9).

2 Burnel, op. cit., p.10.

3 G. Calot, "La fécondité en Europe: évolutions passées et perspectives d'avenir", in Symposium on Population Change and European Society, IUE, Florence, 1983.

15. The longer life expectancy of women (an average of 6 to 7 years) and a substantial drop in the mortality rate of the extremely elderly has accentuated the imbalances in the group of the elderly. The category of 75 years and more is becoming numerically and proportionately larger, and women are in the majority in this group (over two-thirds in 1985).

16. The combination of these various factors: a fall in the birthrate, increased life expectancy combined with a fall-off in the flow of immigrants since 1973, has had repercussions on all society's structures, especially the age structure of the population. Europe is ageing, and although this process is slow at the moment, the first signs can be seen in the distribution by age group of the population. This increase in longevity implies that in the long term the active population will be older, expenditure on health and pensions will be higher, and there will be an additional burden on families who have to provide for their older members. The fall in the marriage rate and the increase in the divorce rate have altered the family structure and increased the diversity of family models, phenomena which need to be confronted.

#### B. Changes in the family structure

17. In the course of time, the terms "family" and "household" have come to mean different things, depending on the country and region: this phenomenon persists today and is tending to become ever more complex as a result of current demographic trends. It should above all be noted that, whereas formerly a household was an economic unit, today it is rather a unit of consumption. Until the mid-century and still in certain regions of the south of Europe and rural areas, the family was a production unit where each member has an economic function. At the present time, following the expansion of paid employment, economic activity is carried on outside the family and the place of production are becoming disassociated from each other. Secondly, changes in the birth, mortality, marriage and divorce rates have had significant repercussions on the number, size, formation and composition of households. The household consisting of a married couple with one or more children is still the prevailing model, but it is not the only one. Other types of household have emerged and their numbers are far from negligible: reconstituted families (in other words composed of a new partner and

children of a former spouse, or including children from a former marriage of each partner), single-parent families, or unions "by agreement". There is a wide range. The average size of households has diminished in the last two decades and there has been a rapid increase in the number of households consisting of one person and single-parent families, to the detriment of large families.

18. In Denmark, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany, one household in ten with a child under the age of ten is a one-parent family, the head of the household being, in most cases, a woman. Whereas in the past, widowhood was often the reason for setting up this type of family, today they are more generally the result of the higher divorce rate.<sup>1</sup>

19. The proportion of one-person households is on the increase throughout the EEC countries, with some difference between the north and the south. In the 1980s they accounted for about 30% of all private households in Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany, as opposed to about 12% in Spain, Portugal and Greece (see Annex 2, Table 5). Young people and elderly persons, including a large proportion of women, account for the majority of this category of households. On the other hand, the proportion of households of five people or more has fallen below 20% since 1980 in most countries, the lowest figure being 7.4% in Denmark and the highest being 32.3%<sup>2</sup> in Ireland.

20. It is still difficult to obtain statistics on reconstituted families; it is however estimated that in the United Kingdom 7% of children live in this type of family<sup>3</sup>.

21. It is therefore safe to conclude that there is a wider variety of households, with on the whole an increase in the number of small households (an average of less than three people; see Annex 2, Table 6). Of these, the reference persons are usually adults of 45 to 55 years who in many cases are women: single, divorced with children, or widows. This would seem to imply that households where two or more generations coexist are becoming rarer, but it also reflects significant changes in individual life cycle .

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1 EEC, Lone Parent Families in the European Community, Family Policy Studies Centre, January 1989 (V/545/89).

2 Council of Europe, Changes in Household Structures in Europe, Report of the Select Committee of Experts on Household Structures, Professor W. Linke, Strasbourg, May 1988, pp. 19 and 21.

3 Council of Europe, Recent Changes in Family Structures, Brussels, 19- 21 May 1987 (Doc. MMF(87)3).



Thus a child born today is, in the majority of cases, born in wedlock, but a child might also be born out of wedlock to parents who cohabit. A child might find himself in a single-parent family after the divorce or separation of his parents, then in a reconstituted family if one or other of them remarries or finds another partner. He could constitute a one-person household before he cohabits or marries himself. In future, this will mean that individuals may live in a series of different family structures.

22. Lastly, while a large part of the population still spends most of its life in a so-called "traditional" (couple with children) family, the emergence of other family models raises the question of the child's place in an increasingly mobile family context and the question of adapting current social legislation to new situations.

## 3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### A. Women and employment

23. One of the outstanding features of economic and social developments in Europe is the increase in women's employment. Although an increase in life expectancy is one of the factors accounting for the ageing of the population, the decline in the birthrate is generally linked to women's emancipation, their access to the labour market, availability of contraception, and the phenomenon of the consumer society. In the last thirty years there has been a rapid increase in the female working population (see Annex III, Table 7), and more recently, according to Meulders and Plasman, married women have accounted for the greater part of this increase, both in countries where growth is rapid and in those where it is slow.<sup>1</sup> Whereas, previously, activity rates were higher among young women (under 25 years) and those aged 40 years and over, at present there is a certain tendency for the rates for the different ages to even out.

24. At the same time, the long-term unemployment of women, their departure from the labour market as a result of discouragement, and the continuation or reintroduction of segregation at work, are phenomena which still too frequently accompany the increase in women's employment. Secondly, in the context of the economic crisis, insecure employment for women has become more widespread.

Women's employment is affected by the growth of part-time work, temporary work, homeworking, training periods, etc. For example, in the Netherlands the creation of part-time work for women has entirely absorbed the increase in employment (see Annex II, Graph 1).

1 D. Meulders and D. Plasman, Women at Work, Seminar to evaluate Community policy on equal opportunities. Future prospects in the light of 1992, p.5.

25. Lastly, the continuing difference in pay for men and women workers, largely due to the concentration of women in certain occupations and certain economic sectors and the negative impact taxation can have on women's employment,<sup>1</sup> are factors which should also be taken into account when considering the subject of women's employment. Depending on whether a person is married or single, a given income is subject to different rates of taxation. Similarly, there is a difference between the rate of taxation of a couple where both spouses are engaged in an occupational activity and one where only one spouse works. These differences can have repercussions on certain behaviour: discouragement to marry when single people pay less tax than married people, disincentive to offer work to married women.<sup>2</sup>

26. In connection with women's employment, attention should be drawn to the link between economic and social circumstances. The increase in women's employment is beneficial for the economic system, for it tends to lower the age structure of the working population. In a shrinking pool of workers women represent a potential source of labour. At the individual level, women's work is often a necessity for couples, or a guarantee of security for women in case of divorce or separation, or if they remain single. This change in their situation raises the problem of a double day's work for women and consequently the question of sharing family responsibilities, and it accentuates the difficulties of reconciling work and family life.

#### B. Social and economic change

27. The development of women's employment, briefly described above, is only one element in the economic process which has marked the last two decades. Profound demographic changes, as well as economic changes, have taken place. The difficult economic context of the last two decades has forced firms to adapt, particularly to maintain their competitive edge. Adaptation has taken the form of an increasing use of technology, more flexible structures or decentralization (subcontracting, homeworking), and increased flexibility as regards organization of production (reorganization of working time, greater mobility, flexible pay structures) and has led to a change in working conditions. These changes have also led to diversification of the forms and status of work, reorganization of working time, use of new technologies and consequently the need to acquire new skills, and employment relationships have become more individual.

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1 D. Meulders, op. cit., p.33.

2 D. Meulders, idem, pp.33-34.

28. The status of some workers has become more insecure and that of others more marginal: long-term unemployment and early retirement have accompanied the changes in the forms of production. In future, a certain discontinuity is likely to be an increasingly common characteristic of both working life and family life; there will be some discontinuity. Periods of full-time work will be followed by periods of part-time work, training, unemployment or career breaks for family reasons. These are the new features of many careers.

29. The trends that have been underlined will be either reversed or strengthened by the realisation of the internal market, which will be characterised principally by freedom of movement of goods, capital, services and persons. The dynamic impulse of these four freedoms will bring about further economic restructuring, changed working conditions, new demands for mobility and training not to mention environmental repercussions ... all these factors indirectly affect family life. Families themselves will benefit from the improvement in living standards and from the decrease in unemployment resulting from these economic impulses but the initial foreseeable difficulties justifying appropriate accompanying policy measures for the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

30. It would therefore seem advisable to examine the effects of different forms of work organization and the status of workers on their family and social life, in particular on the balance between work and family life. The problem of sharing family and occupational responsibilities and the care of children, particularly in connection with the integration or reintegration of people who have left the labour market, will also become more acute.

#### C. A key component of family policies : childcare facilities

31. The need for appropriate childcare facilities, in particular for those whose parents work is fundamental is clearly shown by the report completed for the Commission by the Childcare Network. "This report deals with the most important matter at the social and economic and demographic level, that is to say the relationship between the childcare, equality between men and women, and the inequality for employment"<sup>1</sup>.

As a matter of fact, the increase in the female employment rate and the contribution of the women to the economic life, account taken especially of the demographic trends, make the problem particularly acute.

Policies directed towards a more systematic development of childcare facilities have been carried out in certain countries (it is especially the case for Sweden), which are experiencing at the same time an increase in birthrate and a particularly high female employment rate<sup>2</sup>.

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1 P. MOSS, Who cares for Europe's children?

2 S. GUSTAVSSON, Cohort Size and Female Labour Supply, in Symposium on Population Change and European Society, I.U.E., Florence, 7 - 10 December 1988, p. 23.

32. The provision of childcare facilities within the Community is variable. Emphasis has been placed on the role of the State, of local authorities or, in many cases, of the family themselves. In addition, companies have sometimes tackled this problem. But in every case supply does not match demand, and families, often of the more disadvantaged kind, have to resort to other solutions, the quality of which is unproven and uneven.

33. It should be emphasized that while the provision of care for children of less than three years of age is a priority, the need to tackle the problem of gaps and ill-adopted schedules in structures of care for children aged from three to ten years, constitutes a complementary approach.

34. It should be emphasized that even if care of children of less than three years of age is a priority, inadequate schedules are also a problem and the inadequacy and timetable structures of care facilities for children aged from three to ten years, also prove a problem that has to be tackled.

35. Finally, the cost of childcare facilities is often raised at national and local level as well. This question should be examined in all its aspects. In particular, the cost of filling quantitative and qualitative gaps in the childcare facilities should be analysed from an economic as well as social and family points of view.

36. Briefly, the matching of childcare facilities to the needs is essential. This implies a development of structures at the disposal of the families at both quantitative and qualitative levels, including the taking into consideration of staff status, broadening to include children aged up to 10 years and an objective analysis of economic and social costs and advantages.

### 3. CONCLUSION

37. The changes occurring in society today are of two kinds, on the one hand we find new social and economic circumstances, brought about mainly by changes in labour market structures, and on the other demographic changes and their impact on the social fabric, especially with respect to family structures. These changes therefore place the family in the forefront in that it is the area most sensitive to economic and social repercussions. According to the Council of Europe report, while the family is the place for the creation of new generations and for initial education, it is also part of the economic sector, for it raises future producers and is a unit of consumption. It also depends on social protection because it receives benefits, it affects women's employment since the woman is generally the member of the couple who brings up the children and cares for the elderly and also pursues an occupation. The family is linked to the environment and to education. As children are becoming more rare, the demographic future of Europe rests with the family<sup>1</sup>. In conclusion, the family assumes essential role and place in the cohesion and the future of society. Therefore it should be protected and specific measures adopted in recognition of the services it renders society.

To date, how has the role of the family been perceived? How has the family been defined? What measures have been adopted in its favour?

## II. RECOGNITION OF THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY AND ACTION IN ITS FAVOUR BY THE PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

### 1. AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

38. The paramount role of the family is stressed in all major treaties, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, ILO Convention No 102, and the European Social Charter, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1961. In the UN Declaration the family is defined as "the natural and fundamental group unit of society ... entitled to protection by society and by the State". The ILO Convention, however, does not assign priority to the family, but does refer to it explicitly in the context of social protection and family benefits. The European Social Charter stipulates that "the family as a fundamental unit of society has the right to appropriate social, legal and economic protection to ensure its full development". The Contracting Parties to the Charter undertook to promote that protection "by such means as social and family benefits, fiscal arrangements, provision of family housing, benefits for the newly married, and other appropriate means".

<sup>1</sup> Council of Europe, Report on social security in a changing society, Professor GILLIAN, Strasbourg, April 1988 (Doc. MSS-4-HF(88), pp.27-28).

39. Finally, the European Code of Social Security, which also lays down minimum standards of protection, allowing the Contracting Parties to opt for different "branches" of protection, includes the "family benefit" branch. Ten countries have ratified this option.

## 2. AT NATIONAL LEVEL

40. Although the role of the family is broadly recognized in the Member States, recognition takes different forms in each of them. Family rights are enshrined in eight national constitutions. Four of the twelve countries (France, Luxembourg, Portugal and the Federal Republic of Germany) have a Minister for the Family, as do the three Belgian communities and some of the German Länder. In a number of countries, responsibility for the family rests with both central authorities and local or regional authorities.

41. As at Community level, concern for the family is expressed in various other contexts: economic, financial, social and cultural.

42. The national attitudes in the various Member States to the very principle of a family policy can be grouped into three approaches, ranging from no official family policy at all to an explicit family policy as a keystone of society.

43. Quite apart from these approaches and the reasons for these attitudes (solidarity and redistribution, demographic objectives), all the Member States clearly undertake various measures in their concern for families' living conditions: social benefits, taxation, family law, protection of children, protection of mothers and infants, reception facilities and family services, education for parenthood, the family environment (housing, transport, leisure, holidays, etc.)<sup>1</sup>. However, whatever the fundamental approach adopted, there can be no doubt that, despite the wealth of these different policies, they are relatively slow in adapting to the pace of change in family structures and of the consequent needs resulting from the overwhelming changes in its external environment.

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1 See Annex: Inventory of measures taken in support of the family.

44. At least in most countries, family support policies - as far as the benefits provided for families are concerned - have tended to mitigate these effects, in the sense that family policy has not been undermined; benefits granted to families have in fact been improved, with an increase in the numbers of practitioners involved, particularly in the cities.

### 3. AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

45. The principals and basic rights including these relating to the role, and protection of the family, as recognised at both national and international level, constitute a community heritage as confirmed in the joint declaration (Parliament, Council, Commission) of 5 April 1977, the Preamble to the Single Act and the Declaration of Fundamental Rights and Liberties of the European Parliament on 12 April 1989<sup>1</sup>.

46. Free movement of persons, equal opportunities for men and women, equal treatment within the area of social security, social and professional insertion of the handicapped have also a family dimension. It is equally important in other areas such as education and training, agricultural and the development of SME's, consumer spending and the media.

47. In addition to these, the need for a more global Community approach has been repeatedly stressed. In its resolution adopted in 1983 on Mrs Cassamagnago Cerretti's report on family policy<sup>2</sup>, Parliament considered it essential to identify and take account of those aspects of Community economic, social and cultural policy which relate to the family. It called on the Commission to draw up an action programme in conjunction with the European organizations representing the family to promote the launching of family policies in the Member States and, if appropriate, to harmonize policies at Community level. In its Communication of 24 July 1986<sup>3</sup>, the Commission responded by highlighting the need to gather the necessary information, draw up an inventory on the measures and provisions in effect, organize concertation at senior national level, and undertake a programme of studies on long-term population trends and their consequences. The Social Affairs Council held in late May 1987 took note thereof.

1 Art. 7: "The family is protected economically and socially.

2 OJEC n° C 184 of 17.11.83.

3 Problems of social security - themes of common interest.

48. The Economic and Social Committee has also looked into the situation of the family in several reports, including one on demographic trends (Burnel report) which stresses that European citizens should be made aware of the need for a family policy<sup>1</sup>. In a recent report on the social aspects of the common market, Mr Beretta also emphasized the importance of the family and called for "support measures to help safeguard family unity and family values, which can be beneficial to society as a whole"<sup>2</sup>.

49. Lastly, the network of experts known as the European Observatory on Family Policies, which the Commission set up early in 1989, should prove a useful tool in examining the development of the family situation and family policies in the Member States.

### III. CONCLUSION

50. The last decades have been marked by profound demographic and socio-economic changes, from which no Community country is immune, even if the changes take place with certain time delays and at different rhythms.

51. In short, the demographic trend is characterised by a lower fertility rate, an increase in life expectancy resulting in an ageing population, which will decline in the medium-term. This change in age structure of the population will be accompanied by a change in family structure, a result of the decline in marriage and of the increase in numbers of divorce. The restructuring of the labour market, changes in working conditions and increase in female labour participation are the principal factors in this new economic landscape.

52. In view of the impact of these economic and demographic changes in the family, it is important to pose the question as to the nature of the prospects and the objectives to pursue. The legitimacy of Community interest is based not on ideology but on acknowledgement and methods of a Community action at family level; the appropriateness of such Community interest is based less on ideological grounds but more on such objective facts as the economic role of the family, the importance of family as the touchstone for solidarity between generations, the irreversible desire for equality between men and women and the wish of women to have complete access to working life". Community action will have to be pragmatic in order to respect the special features of different national policies already created and the varying socio-economic contexts in which such policies play a role.

1 DOC (ESC) 602/84 Soc 80.

2 ESC Report concerning social aspects of the internal market, 17/9/87.  
DOC ESC 225/87 Soc. 184.



53. Account taken of the above, the following activities could be envisaged in so far as they are not already undertaken:

1. Continuation of actions seeking to inform and to increase awareness, particularly through the production of regular information on demography and measures concerning families (for example, household structure, female activity rates, trend in birthrates, etc. ...) using to that effect the network of experts already set up by the Commission as well as thematic studies.
2. Taking into account the family dimension in the establishment of appropriate Community policies, for example: in the freedom of movement of persons and equality between men and women.
3. Regular concertation at Community level, principally within the framework of Articles 117 and 118 of the EEC Treaty:

3.1 which would centre on the four following principal themes of common interest:

- the impact of other Community policies on the family, notably on child protection;
- reconciliation between professional life, family life and the sharing of family responsibilities;
- measures taken in favour of certain categories of family, notably single parent and large families;
- attention to most deprived families;

3.2 attaching particular importance to:

- the intensification of current work relating to the "Childcare Network";
- questions raised by job flexibility and notably by the development of atypical working timetables and job status, also by the provision of adequate basic infrastructures (working hours of public and private services, transport);

3.3 taking account of activities taking place within the Council of Europe and other international organisations, more particularly concerning:

- the International Year of the Family;
- the International Convention on the rights of the child;

3.4 drawing support principally from:

- the establishment of a consultative structure for family organisations at Community level.

## ANNEXE I

### LIST OF SENIOR OFFICIALS PARTICIPATING IN PREPARATORY WORK

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- Madame VAN LOON, Direction de coordination de la politique d'égalité des chances, Ministère des Affaires sociales.
- Madame TYBOUT, Service des relations internationales, Ministère du Bien-être, de la Santé et de la Culture.
- Mr. WHITE, Chief of the International Relation Division, Department of Health and Social Security.
- Mr. O'NEILL, Principal Officer, Department of Social Welfare.
- Madame THIEBAUT, Directora, Centro Estatal de familia y convivencia, Direccion general de accion social, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad social.
- De Heer Direkteur generaal HERTECAN, Administratie gezin en Maatschappelijk welzijn, Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.
- Monsieur WANLIN, Direction générale des Affaires sociales du Ministère de la Communauté française.
- Mr. VORRE, Kontorchef, International Kontor Social Ministeriet.
- Madame LECLERCQ, Division des Relations internationales, Ministère des Affaires sociales et de l'Emploi.
- Monsieur LAROCHE, Sous-directeur de la famille, Direction générale de la Sécurité et de l'Emploi.
- Monsieur NEYENS, Conseiller de direction, Ministère de la Famille, Logement social et de la Sécurité sociale.
- Madame RAVASIO, Dirigente, Division VI, "Tutela della Famiglia", Direzione generale Rapporti di Lavoro, Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza sociale.
- Madame PINTO, Sub directora general da Família, Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Sécurité sociale.
- Dr. GREIB, Ministerialrat, Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie, Frauen und Gesundheit.
- Madame ALMEIDA, Direction générale de la Famille, Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Sécurité sociale.

ANNEXE II : Table 1.

Total Fertility Rates, EEC 12, 1960- 1986.

COUNTRY	1960	1970	1980	1986
Belgium	2.6	2.2	1.7	1.5 (a)
Denmark	2.5	1.9	1.5	1.5
Fed. Rep. Germany	2.4	2.0	1.4	1.3
Greece	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.6
Spain	2.9	2.8	2.2	1.5
France	2.7	2.5	1.9	1.8
Ireland	3.8	3.9	3.2	2.4
Italy	2.4	2.4	1.7	1.4
Luxembourg	2.3	2.0	1.5	1.4
Netherlands	3.1	2.6	1.6	1.5
Portugal	3.0	2.7	2.2	1.6
United Kingdom	2.7	2.4	1.9	1.8

SOURCE : EUROSTAT, Demographic Statistics, 1988.

(a) Cfr. VAN DE KAA, "The second Demographic Transition Revisited : Theories and Expectations", in Symposium on Population Change and European Society, 7- 10 décembre 1988, IUE, Firenze, p. 30.

ANNEXE II : Table 2.

Total Marriage Rates, EEC 12, 1960- 1986.  
( 2 )

COUNTRY	1960	1970	1980	1986
Belgiume	7.2	7.6	6.7	5.8
Denmark	7.8	7.4	5.2	6.0
Fed. Rep. Germany	9.4	7.3	5.9	6.1
Greece	7.0	7.7	6.5	5.8
Spain	7.7	7.3	5.9	5.2
France	7.0	7.8	6.2	4.8
Ireland	5.5	7.0	6.4	5.2
Italy	7.7	7.4	5.7	5.2
Luxembourg	7.1	6.3	5.9	5.1
Netherlands	7.8	9.5	6.4	6.0
Portugal	7.8	9.0	7.4	6.8
United Kingdom	7.5	8.5	7.4	6.9

SOURCE : EUROSTAT, op. cit., 1988.

ANNEXE II : Table 3.

Total Divorce Rates, EEC 12, 1965- 1985.  
(divorces per 100 marriages)

COUNTRY	1965	1970	1980	1985
Belgium	8.3	8.7	21.8	32.0
Denmark	15.7	26.2	51.4	49.1
Fed. Rep. Germany	11.9	17.2	26.6	35.1
Greece	4.3	5.2	10.7	11.9
Spain	-	-	-	9.5
France	10.1	9.9	24.3	39.9
Ireland	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	-	3.7	5.3
Luxembourg	6.7	10.1	27.1	33.9
Netherlands	5.7	8.3	28.5	41.1
Portugal	0.9	0.6	8.1	13.1
England and Wales	9.6	13.4	38.2	44.6

SOURCE : EUROSTAT, Statistiques démographiques 1989.

ANNEXE II : Tableau 4.

Illegitimate Birth Rate , EEC 12, 1965- 1985.  
(Illegitimate Births as a Percent of Total Births)

COUNTRY	1965	1970	1980	1985
Belgium	2.4	2.8	4.1	-
Denmark	9.5	11.0	33.2	43.0
Fed. Rep. Germany	4.7	5.5	7.6	9.4
Greece	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.8
Spain	1.7	1.3	3.9	-
France	5.9	6.8	11.4	19.6
Ireland	2.2	2.7	5.0	8.5
Italy	2.0	2.2	4.3	5.3
Luxembourg	3.7	4.0	6.0	8.7
Netherlands	1.8	2.1	4.1	8.3
Portugal	7.8(a)	7.3	9.2	12.3
United Kingdom	7.3(a)	8.0	11.5	18.9

SOURCE : VAN DE KAA, op. cit., p.33.

(a) cfr EUROSTAT, Statistiques démographiques 1989.

ANNEXE II : Table 5.

Proportion of one person households and proportion of households consisting of 5 or more persons EEC 12, 1950- 1980.

COUNTRY	Proportion of one person households (%)				Proportion of households of 5 persons or more (%)			
	Around				Around			
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1950	1960	1970	1980
Belgium	15.8	16.8	18.8	23.2	14.9	16.0	16.1	11.4
Denmark	-	19.8	20.8	29.0	-	14.8	12.7	7.4
Fed. Rep. Germany	19.4	20.6	25.1	31.3	16.1	14.3	12.9	8.0
Greece	8.7	10.1	11.3	14.6	39.1	31.6	22.1	16.5
Spain	-	-	7.5	10.2	-	-	33.5	26.4
France	19.1	19.6	20.3	24.6	19.1	20.1	19.1	11.9
Ireland	-	12.6	14.2	17.1	-	35.3	35.2	32.5
Italy	9.5	10.7	12.9	17.8	33.3	27.0	21.5	14.9
Luxembourg	-	11.5	15.7	20.7	-	18.7	17.1	12.1
Netherlands	-	11.9	17.1	22.1	-	26.7	20.4	11.7
Portugal	7.6	10.8	10.0	12.9	35.8	29.1	27.3	20.7
United Kingdom	10.7	13.4	18.1	21.7	18.2	16.1	14.5	11.4

SOURCE : COUNCIL OF EUROPE, Changes in Household Structures in Europe. Report of the select committee of experts on household structures, by Prof. W. LINKL, Strasbourg, février 1989, CPDO (89) 2, p. 19.



ANNEXE II : Table 6.

Average composition of households, EEC 12, 1950- 1980.

COUNTRY	AVERAGE COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN ABOUT			
	1950	1960	1970	1980
Belgium	2.97	3.01	2.95	2.87
Denmark	3.10	2.90	2.76	2.40
Fed. Rep. Germany	2.99	2.88	2.74	2.45
Greece	4.11	3.72	3.39	3.12
Spain	-	-	3.81	3.53
France	3.07	3.10	3.06	2.70
Ireland	-	3.96	3.93	3.66
Italy	3.97	3.63	3.35	3.01
Luxembourg	-	3.21	3.07	2.79
Netherlands	-	3.58	3.20	2.76
Portugal	4.08	3.72	3.67	3.35
United Kingdom	3.41	3.21	2.91	2.72

SOURCE : COUNCIL OF EUROPE, op. cit., p.20

ANNEXE II : Table 7.

## Nombre de femmes dans la population active

COUNTRY	Average annual growth rate of the female working population		Number of female workers in thousands		Percentage of female workers in the total working population	
	1971	1981	1971	1981	1971	1981
Belgium		1.0	145		44.0	38.5
Denmark		2.7	75		33.5	34.5
Fed. Rep. Germany		0.7	75		49.0	30.4
Greece (1977-85)		4.0	35			41.8
Spain (1976-85)		1.1	104		32.4	33.6
France		1.8	100		31.0	33.0
Ireland		2.0	49		34.5	36.6
Italy		2.6	79		34.6	41.0
Luxembourg		2.0	200		38.5	43.2
Netherlands		3.9	76		31.0	41.2
Portugal		2.1	71		37.5	37.2
United Kingdom		1.4	84		35.1	38.1
EEC 12		1.6	82			

SOURCE : EUPOSTAT et OCDE, Perspectives de l'emploi.  
Cité par MEULDERS, D., et PLASMAN, J., Les femmes dans l'emploi, Séminaire d'évaluation de la politique communautaire en matière d'égalité des chances, Perspectives futures en liaison avec 1992, p. 4.

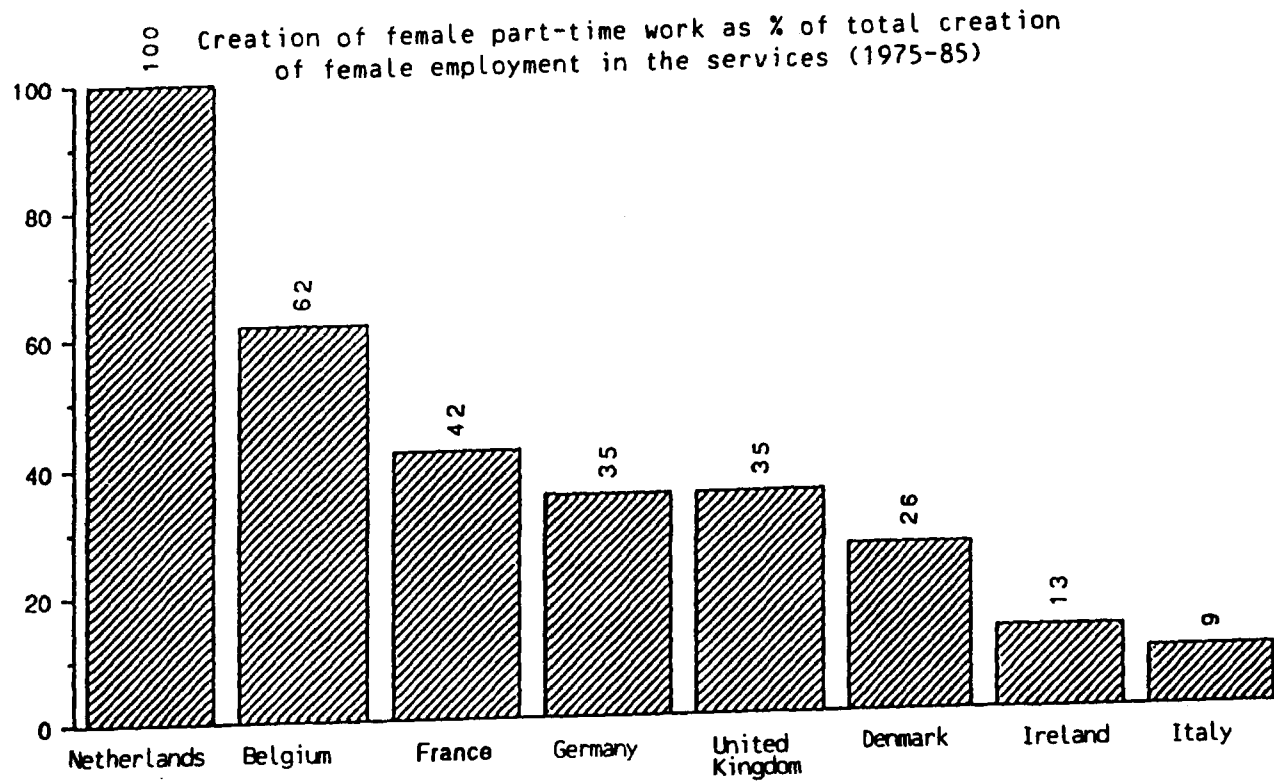
Table 8: Taxable unit and method of taxation in force in the Member States of the European Community

Country	Taxable unit	Method of Taxation	Special arrangements
Belgium 1989	household	aggregation	For households with two employment incomes, including replacement incomes, separate assessment is applied at the appropriate rates. A spouse's quotient is applied to families with a single income: 30% of the working spouse's employment income (pension etc.) up to BF 270 000 is apportioned to the non-working spouse and each of the net incomes is then taxed at the appropriate rate. Where more advantageous than separate assessment, the system is applied to households with two incomes. The spouse's quotient is granted to all households which have only one income, irrespective of level, but only on that portion of the earnings not exceeding BF 900 000.
Germany 1988	household	apportionment	The spouses may choose between apportionment and separate assessment. Apportionment is always more advantageous.
Denmark 1988	individual	separate assessment	
Spain 1988	household	aggregation	No special arrangements. Straight aggregation.
France 1988	household	family quotient	Where there are no children, "spouse's quotient" is the term used, which is the same system as apportionment.

Table 8 (continued)

Country	Taxable unit	Method of Taxation	Special arrangements
United Kingdom 1988	household	aggregation	Husband and wife may request separate assessment of the wife's earned income.
Grand Duchy of Luxembourg 1989	household	family quotient	Apportionment is applied to married couples without children.
Greece 1987	individual	separate assessment	
Ireland 1988	household	apportionment	Spouses may choose between separate assessment and aggregation. Where they opt for aggregation, the tax bands are doubled; the effects on progressivity are identical to those of apportionment which is always more advantageous than separate assessment.
Italy 1989	individual	separate assessment	Income legally deemed to arise from joint sources and the incomes of minors are split equally between the two spouses.
Netherlands 1988	individual	separate assessment	The employment income of the wife is assessed separately. Her remaining income is aggregated with her husband's.
Portugal 1988	household	aggregation	No special arrangements. Straight aggregation.

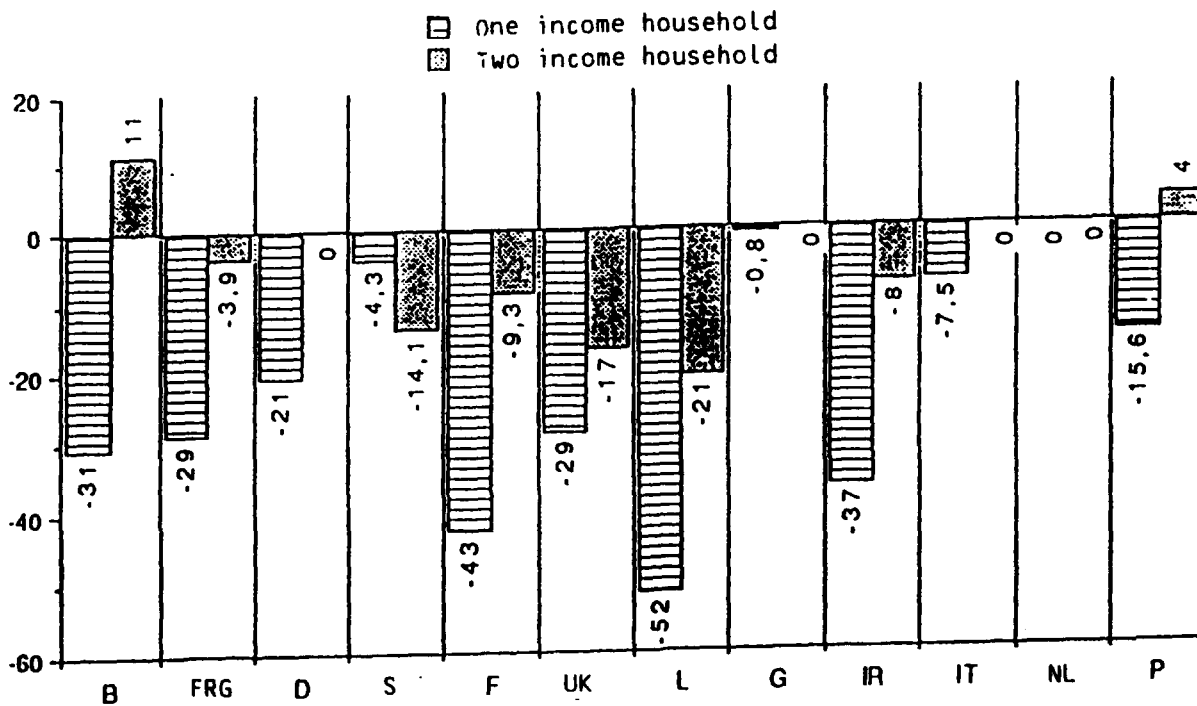
Graph No 1



Source: EUROSTAT figures,  
in MEULDERS, D., op. cit., p.16

Graph No 2

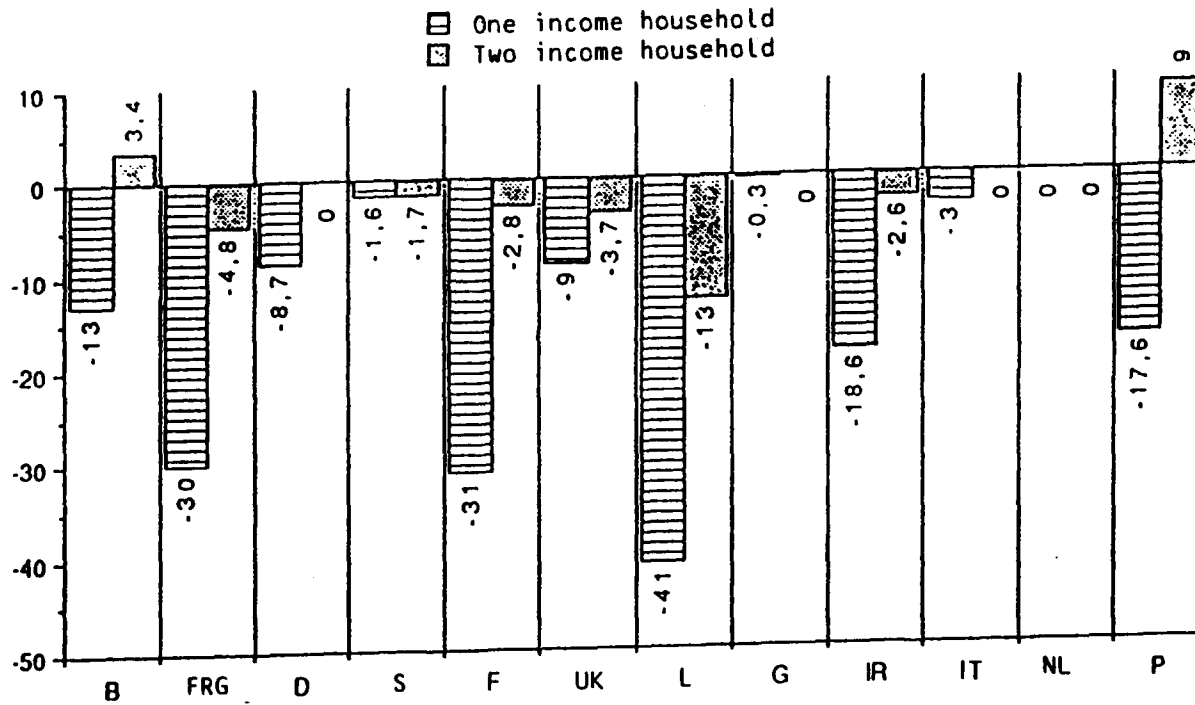
% CHANGE IN TAXATION IN THE EVENT OF MARRIAGE  
(total income ECU 18 600)



SOURCE : MEULDERS, D., op. cit., p. 41

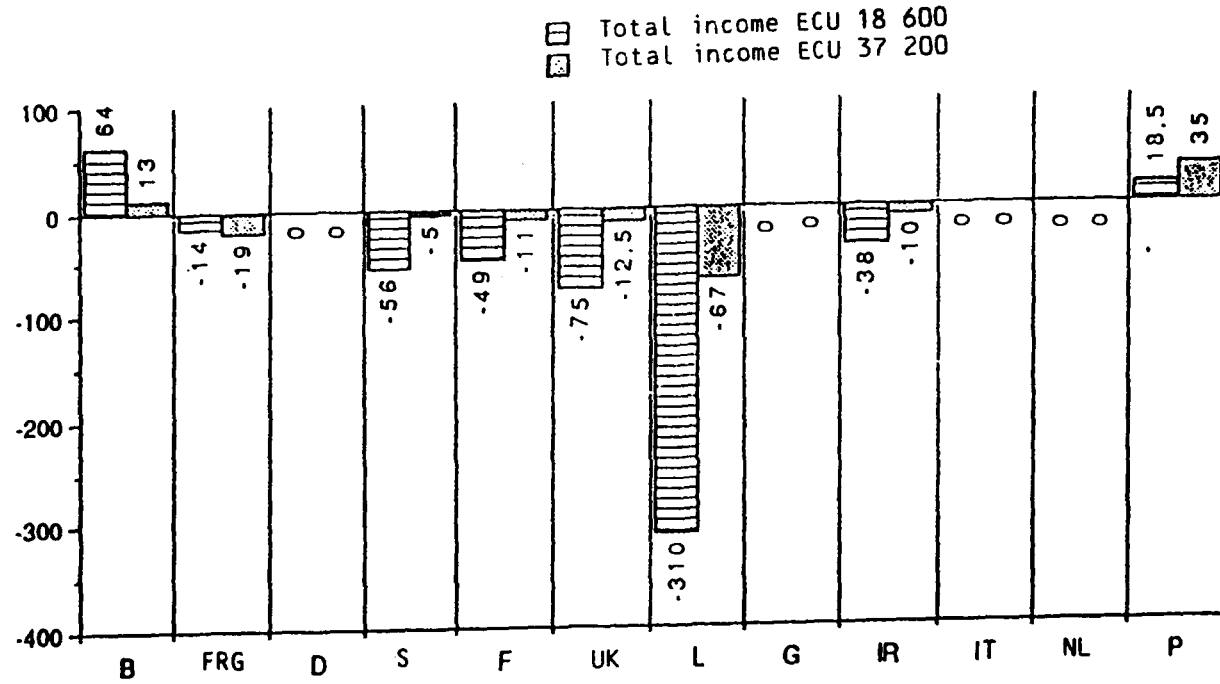
Graph No. 3

% CHANGE IN TAXATION IN THE EVENT OF MARRIAGE  
(total income ECU 37 200)



SOURCE : MEULDERS, D., op. cit., p. 42

Graph No. 4  
 DIFFERENCE IN TAX PAID BY MARRIED AND SINGLE WOMEN  
 (% OF TAX PAID BY A SINGLE WOMAN)



SOURCE : MEULDERS, D., op. cit., p.44



ANNEXE II : Table 9

This table contains relatively comparable data on de facto households in the various countries.

COUNTRY	Date of data	% actual households	Age groups most represented	Predominant civil status	Number of children
B. C. FI.	1982-83	3.5%(1)	30-35 years (1)	Separated-divorced	1 or 2 in 40% of cases
C. W.					
<b>DK</b>	1985-86	23%			
<b>D.</b>	1983	7.5%(2)	Under 30 years	single	17% have one or more children
GR.					
SP.					
FR.	1986	10%	2 households in 10 under 25 years 3 in 10 in towns		
IR.					
IT.	1985	4.5%	20-30 and 30-45 years	Separated divorced	40% have one child 20% have two
L.	1981		25-30 and  over 60 years	Separated-  divorced and single	
N.	1981	5.6%	Under 30 and 45-64	Single	have child or children
P.					
U.K.	1983-84	4%(3)			

(1) Women aged 20-45. (2) Or 1.5% depending on definition of de facto marriage. (3) Women aged 18 to 45.

SOURCE : COFACE, *Modeles familiaux et legislation sociale*, Decembre 1987, p. 26.

FIGURE 3.9

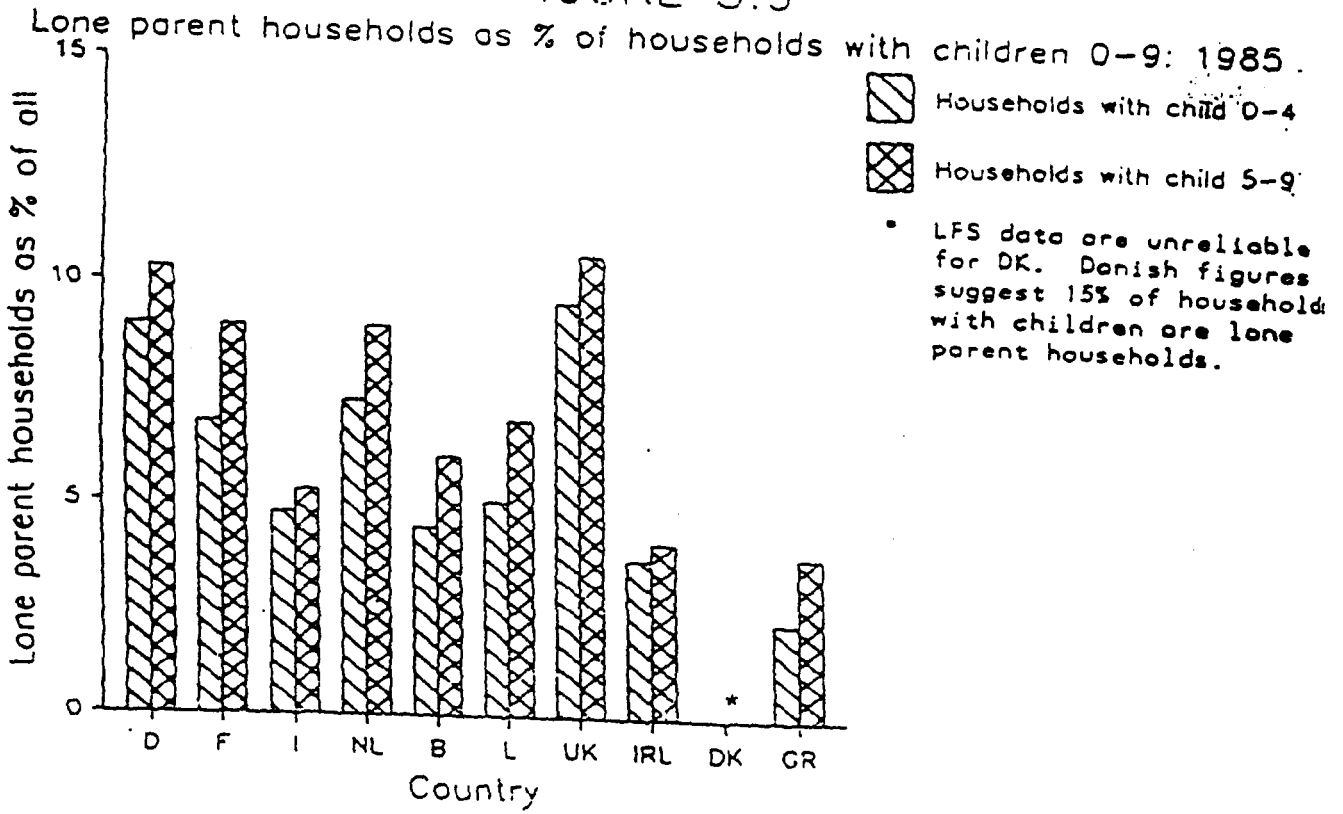
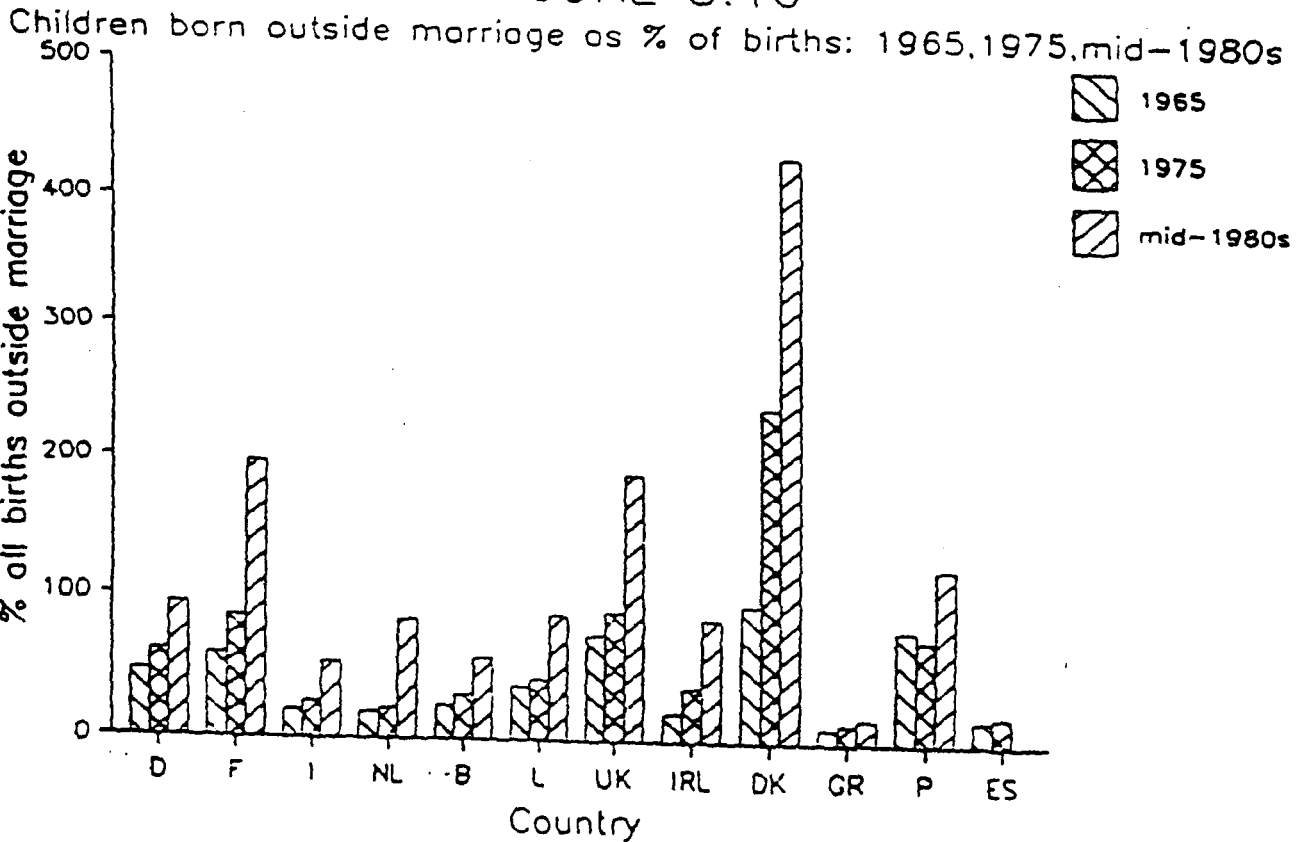


FIGURE 3.10



SOURCE: MOSS, P., Childcare and Equality of Opportunity, April 1988, Commission of the European Communities, V/746/88- EN.

ANNEXE 11: Table 11

This table contains relatively comparable data on the one-parent families in the various countries

COUNTRY	Date of data	Number of one-parent families N	% of total households	Predominant civil status	% of women	Number of Children
B.	1981	250.000	1.7%	1) widow/widower 2) separated or divorced	80%	2/3 have 1 child 1/4 have 2 13% have 3 more
D. G.	1985	1.760.000		1) widow/widower		2/3 have 1 child 1/4 have 2; 30%, or more
GR. SP. FR. (1)	1982	887.040	6.8%		85%	55% have 1 child
IR. IT.	1981	1.230.000	6.5%	widow/widower	80%	60% have 1 child 25% have 2
L. H.	1981 1983	9.946 150.000		widow/widower 1) separated or divorced 2) widow/widower	80% 89%	
P. U.K.	1984	940.000	1%			1.6 on average

(1) De facto- excluding couples co-habiting.

SOURCE : COFACE, Modeles familiaux et legislations sociales, Decembre 1987, p. 28 bis.

TABLE 12

Maternity and Parental Leave

	Maternity Leave: Post-natal period (weeks)	Payment	Parental Leave: Period (months)	If can be taken part-time	Payment
D	8 (+4 for premature/multiple births)	100% of earnings	10	If employer agrees	Flat-rate for all until child 6 mnths (600DM/mnth: 1987); then income-related, so higher income families get less
F	10 (+8 for 3rd+ child: +2 for multiple births)	90% of earnings	24	Yes	None unless 3 or more children, when flat-rate (2400FF/mnth: 4/87)
I	12	80% of earnings	6 (to mother but can transfer to father)		30% of earnings
N	6	100% of earnings	None, but Government has proposed scheme which expected to begin in 1988 or 1989.		
B	8-14 (6 weeks can be taken before or after birth).	100% for 1-4 weeks; then 60%+20% for women with low earnings.	None - but has scheme for 'career interruption for family and personal reasons'.		
L	8 (+4 for premature/multiple births)	100% of earnings	None - but Government has proposed a scheme.		
UK	29 [NB Not technically leave.]	6 weeks at 90% of earnings, 12 weeks flat-rate. Part paid in pre-natal leave period	None		

TABLE 12 cont'd

Maternity and Parental Leave

	Maternity Leave: Post-natal period (weeks)	Payment	Parental Leave: Period (months)	If can be taken part-time	Payment
IR	4-10 (6 weeks can be taken before or after birth)(+4 if mother requests)	70% of earnings: 'additional' 4 weeks unpaid	None		
DK	14	90% of earnings	2½		90% of earnings
G	7	100% of earnings	6 (3 months per parent: 6 for lone parent)		None
P	8½-13 (30 days can be taken before or after birth)	100% of earnings	Upto 24 months	[Separate part- time entitlement]	No
ES	Total of 14 for leave before and after birth, to be taken as mother decides	75% of earnings	None - though employees may take 3 years break from employment, with preferential treatment when apply for re-instatement		

SOURCE : MOSS, P., Childcare and Equality of Opportunity, April 1988,  
Commission of the European Communities, V/746/88- EN., pp. 72- 73.

**ANNEXE III**

**INVENTORY OF MEASURES TAKEN  
IN SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY**

(Working document prepared by the Commission services)

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INVENTORY OF MEASURES TAKEN IN SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY

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## INVENTORY OF MEASURES TAKEN IN SUPPORT OF THE FAMILY

On the basis of replies to a questionnaire sent to Member States, the Commission has drawn up a brief inventory of measures taken in support of families. After mentioning the provisions on financial compensations for the cost of having children and those affecting the external environment of the family, the report will examine measures directly related to the four topics of common interest in greater detail.

### I. COMPENSATION FOR FINANCIAL BURDENS

#### 1. FAMILY BENEFITS

All countries share the overall goal of stepping up and improving the balance of family allowances in order to offset more effectively the cost of child rearing and improving the family's living standard.

All Community countries, then, pay family allowances to their nationals. The amount and the criteria for its award vary from one country to another, but in most cases allowances are increased in the case of large families or low-income families; they may also be increased where the head of household is unemployed or disabled, or where the child is an orphan or is handicapped. The age limit for the granting of family allowances varies from 16 to 25 according to the country (for more detailed information on the conditions for granting such benefits, see the comparative tables drawn up by the Commission).

To supplement family allowances, Luxembourg and Germany have, like France, introduced an education allowance. This is paid to parents when one is solely occupied with bringing up a child under the age of two. This measure came into effect in January 1989 in Luxembourg; it has been applied since 1986 in the Federal Republic of Germany. In France only families with at least three children are affected.

Other branches of social security also help to provide proper protection for the family.

In the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, as in Germany, legislation covers the question of failure to pay maintenance. In 1964, French Parliament adopted a basic law entrusting to the bodies disbursing family allowances the recovery of unpaid maintenance. In future, the orphan's allowance, now renamed the family support allowance, will be granted as an advance on the maintenance that will be recovered by the family allowances fund. In the Federal Republic of Germany, where maintenance is not paid by the father, the State may take his place temporarily and pay a pension (currently DM 228).

In France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, a whole set of provisions are aimed at putting parents who remain at home on a proper footing in terms of old age, sickness and maternity cover. In France, one example of this is the 10% increase in the pension for any person who has had at least three children. In Luxembourg the period spent bringing up a child may be regarded as the equivalent of twelve months' actual insurance cover. A period of six years for one child, eight years for two children and ten years for three children may be taken into account for the purpose of completing the qualifying period for pension insurance.

## 2. SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

The social services responsible for protecting children and young people are many and various in the Member States. Listing them would be a time-consuming process. It is better simply to bear in mind that the aims of these services can be briefly summed up as follows: to provide care and temporary assistance for young children; to provide advice and assistance for young people, couples and families; and lastly to assist families in which some of the members are in difficulty (disabled, elderly, drug addicts, etc.) to alleviate their burdens.

To meet the first objective, day nurseries, nursery schools and primary schools are adequate.

Children may also receive medical aid through day nurseries and educational establishments (Portugal, Italy, Luxembourg, Denmark, France).

Portugal goes still further, taking an interest in the nutrition of young people. Free milk is distributed in primary schools, and canteens have been set up in some schools to ensure that all children are adequately fed. In Ireland, meals subsidized at a rate of 80% by the various local authorities are provided in schools.

The second objective is primarily achieved through family counsellors. In France, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark and Luxembourg, a number of centres provide psychological guidance for pupils in post-primary education, particularly to prevent children from falling behind. Other centres provide couples with psychological and social assistance to help them fulfil their parental role responsibly or to see them through periods of crisis (France, Italy, Belgium).

Finally, it is usually the local authorities which keep a check on children's living conditions (abuse, family conflicts and so on), and which try to prevent delinquency (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands).

Home helps are generally provided for the elderly and for families of the disabled. When a mother cannot cope with family and household tasks herself, she may also be given a home help temporarily (France, United Kingdom, Italy, Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg).

### 3. TAXATION

In all Community countries, families can obtain tax reductions depending on their size and income. These exemptions are generally higher where there is a third child, where the family includes a disabled or elderly person. They also apply in the case of the purchase of a dwelling (Spain, France, Luxembourg).

Just as in the area of social assistance, there are many tax measures affecting the family directly or indirectly. The comparative Table 8 and graphs 2, 3 and 4 (see Annex) show the impact of the various methods of taxation, and in particular the undesirable effects that they can cause.

## II. FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

Several countries (France, Greece, Portugal, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Federal Republic of Germany) are concerned about the environment in which families live and the need to improve council housing or community amenities (green areas and playgrounds). Cooperation between national and local authorities is absolutely essential for this. One example, in France, is "family contracts", which take into account the wishes of families when changes are made to their local environment, for instance when activity or community centres are set up.

### 1. HOUSING AID

There are several types of housing aid specifically aimed at large or low-income families.

First, there are allowances enabling families in difficulty to pay their rent (Greece, Portugal, Netherlands, France and Italy). In Luxembourg, certain communes take rent into account in assessing the amount of financial assistance families should receive.

Many countries pursue a low-cost housing construction policy (Greece, Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Luxembourg and Ireland). The criteria for access to such housing relate mainly to the composition of the household and its income.

Some countries grant loans or low interest rates to various categories of people seeking to acquire or renovate a dwelling (Greece, Portugal, France, Italy and Luxembourg). In the United Kingdom and in Ireland, local authorities are required to provide accommodation for the homeless.

### 2. TRANSPORT

A reduction ranging from 20% to 50% is applicable on railway networks, urban transport and sometimes airlines (Spain) depending on the number of children and income of the family (Spain, Netherlands, France, Italy and Luxembourg, Belgium) and on the basis of age (Portugal). In France and Greece family tourism is assisted. In Ireland school transport is free.

### 3. STUDY GRANTS

In Portugal, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, United Kingdom and France, secondary school pupils and university students may receive study grants. Their award depends on school results and the family income level.

### 4. THE MEDIA

France and Luxembourg are concerned about the way in which families are portrayed by the media. In France, since 1981, the public authorities and family associations have examined the issue of the family image in the media. They deplore the fact that television's image of the family is unrealistically narrow. Family and consumer associations in Luxembourg, nevertheless, use the media to put across their information.

### 5. ACCIDENTS IN THE HOME

Portugal, France and Luxembourg point to the number of accidents that occur in the home and their potential seriousness and give advice on preventing such accidents.

## III. MEASURES TAKEN BY THE MEMBER STATES IN RELATION TO COMMON THEMES

### 1. BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY LIFE. SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY

The Member States are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of women in the workforce and the ensuing conflicts between family and working life. Most women would like to see the organization of working time improved, particularly so that pregnancy and maternity no longer become an

occasion for their marginalization and de-skilling. This objective could be attained by:

- improved maternity and childcare measures, including in particular special authorization for absence from work and leave for parents with young children;
- facilities for pre-school and school-age children;
- a fairer division of family responsibilities;
- measures concerning working hours (reduction, flexitime, part-time work).

#### A. Maternity and childcare measures

##### (a) Measures directly related to the health of mother and child.

In the majority of Community countries, antenatal care consists of medical consultations and home visits. The latter often continue for several months after the baby is born. Later on it is the school and the school doctor or the social services (Denmark, Luxembourg and Ireland) which take over and provide medical check-ups for all children.

Special recommendations on breastfeeding have been drawn up. As a result, breastfeeding mothers in Greece, Luxembourg, Belgium, Portugal and Germany can take one or two hours off each day with no change in their monthly wage. In addition, they are not allowed to do any dangerous work. In Denmark, some groups have been given the right to 10 to 15 days' special leave per year when a child is ill.

##### (b) Social support measures with regard to maternity.

The main social measure with regard to maternity is maternity leave, which is generally accompanied by cash benefits (see Annex II, Table 12).

Maternity leave is given throughout the Community, at least to public sector staff.

Parental leave, which exists in several Member States, is also an important factor in balancing work and family life (see Annex II, Table 12). It is given indiscriminately to either parent and lasts anything from three months to three years. Parental leave is paid only in France, Italy, Germany and Denmark. In the United Kingdom leave is granted in certain sectors, depending chiefly on agreements between employers and employees.

### C. Facilities for pre-school and school-age children

As regards childcare facilities, a variety of systems exists in all the Member States. However, whether they take the form of creches run on a collective, family or parental basis, nursery schools or child-minders, there are not enough places to meet the growing demand.<sup>1</sup>

Some countries, like France, Italy and Denmark, stress the increasing role that the local authorities will have to play in providing day-care centres for children aged up to 6. An example of this is the "childhood contract" proposed to the French municipal authorities whereby the financial support given to the commune is increased provided the commune increases childcare facilities, however innovative they may be.

In Ireland, creches and nursery schools are privately financed institutions, not in receipt of public funding.

Italy is concerned with family involvement in the management of schools. It wishes to facilitate the integration of disabled children in ordinary schools to promote their learning and social skills. It intends to extend the statutory period of schooling with a view to improving the level of pupils' education, but also to resolve the problem of child-minding when parents work.

<sup>1</sup> Moss, P., Phillips, A., Who cares for Europe's children? EEC, V/1219/1/88, June 1988.

C. A fairer division of family responsibilities

Since the 1970s, in most European countries, the notion of the father as head of the family, along with his wife and children as complementary members of the family unit, has given way to the idea of joint parental authority or responsibility. All too often, however, fathers have disengaged themselves from the family, not only in terms of financial responsibilities but in other areas too.

D. Measures concerning working hours

The Federal Republic of Germany emphasizes the fact that women must have access to more skilled part-time work and that a break in working life must be possible with the assurance of a return to work subsequently and including the possibility of promotion after such a break. The need to promote continuing training for women is likewise stressed. It is emphasized that employers could play a positive role with respect to these goals.

Attempts are being made in Italy to reduce working time, and the working day is becoming more flexible. Some collective agreements and public sector staff regulations provide for special leave and leave of absence of varying length for family reasons.

In Luxembourg, a draft law has been put forward on increased protection for workers, particularly for temporary staff and employees on fixed-term contracts.

Workers in Portugal with children under the age of 12 are entitled to work part-time.

2. SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

Two types of family have been the focus of special attention by the public authorities: single-parent families and families with a handicapped child.

In Italy, the United Kingdom, Greece, Denmark, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, various measures have been adopted to assist single-parent families. Generally, such families receive additional allowances. In the Federal Republic of Germany, allowances are generally more substantial for low-income families, such allowances and parental leave being particularly generous for single parents.



In addition, these families can obtain tax relief of up to DM 480 per child. Germany emphasizes the importance of child-minding facilities for the children of single-parent families, but regrets that they are not sufficiently widespread and in many cases do not take sufficient account of the parents' working hours. In cases where the father fails to pay maintenance, the State can act as a temporary substitute ... (DM 228 at present).

In Portugal, few measures to assist single-parent families have been taken. Some private or religious institutions, however, financed inter alia by the Government, may for a limited period assist unmarried mothers in difficulties.

In Ireland, single parent families are recognised through assistance for unmarried mothers based on a means-test. In October 1989 a special allowance is to be brought in for deserted husbands with dependent children based on the same assistance paid to widows and deserted wives with dependent children.

Help for families with a handicapped child is one of the priorities in Belgium. Stress is placed on prevention, care of the child in the home, and independent living mainly through services providing early assistance and family help, day-care centres and support services.

In Italy, the United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, help for families of disabled people mainly takes the form of additional allowances. In Denmark the need for more aid for young disabled people is emphasized. In Luxembourg, the Government declaration does not specifically refer to the category of single-parent families. However, single parents may benefit from a guaranteed minimum income, with no exclusion on grounds of age. Hence, a large number of GMI recipients fall within this category. Families which include a disabled or sick person may obtain a tax reduction in respect of exceptional expenditure. They are also entitled to certain housing grants where special alterations have to be made. In Ireland, support for families including disabled persons is generally provided by non-governmental organizations which, for the most part, receive funds from the Department of Health.

In Belgium, Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, the need for action on behalf of families supporting elderly people is stressed. Belgium seeks to encourage keeping them at home. In Italy, the measures mainly concern social security.

This is no longer restricted to wage-earners, but has been extended to the category of self-employed workers. A welfare pension for persons aged over 65 without an income has been introduced. In the Netherlands, efforts are made to promote the independence, emancipation and equality of elderly people in society.

In Belgium and Greece, interest is being shown in the migrant and prison population. In the former, projects for social integration and reintegration of these two categories are being supported. In the case of the immigrant population, various approaches have been adopted with particular emphasis on reception services, supervised homework facilities, workshops and courses in the mother tongue. In Greece, family allowances are being paid to returning migrants. With regard to the immigration problem, Luxembourg is seeking to implement a determined integration policy, while respecting cultural identities.

In Belgium, social aid is provided for persons in prison, which is continued when they are released. In Greece, a family allowance is paid to mothers whose spouses are in prison.

### 3. SUPPORT FOR THE MOST DEPRIVED FAMILIES

While, overall, all political measures taken by governments attempt to assist the most deprived families, some Member States have given a more specific character to their endeavours on behalf of this category. In Portugal, such action is generally in the hands of regional centres or non-governmental institutions which are subsidized by the State. They facilitate the setting-up of social facilities, provide grants in cash or in kind depending on needs, and provide some help. However, it is felt that the aid provided is far from satisfactory.

The concerns of Belgium and France are somewhat similar to those of Portugal. The former is concentrating in particular on the occupational and social integration or reintegration of the most deprived groups. Here, too, operations are in the hands of both the private and public sector and aim at going beyond the traditional framework of assistance. For some years the main target groups have been elderly persons of 65 and over and the unemployed. Belgium is likewise stressing access to subsidized housing for persons in difficulties. France, on 15 December 1986, introduced a measure relating to social/occupational integration minimum income. A minimum income has existed in the Netherlands since 1965 and, in Belgium, the "minimex" was introduced in 1974.

In 1988, the United Kingdom altered the structure of social assistance in order to increase amounts payable to families with children. At the same time a new allowance (family credit) was introduced in favour of low income workers with dependent children.

Greece has adopted a housing policy which aims mainly to meet the needs of families faced with serious social and economic problems.

Luxembourg has set itself the task of combating poverty. To this end, it introduced in 1986 a guaranteed monthly wage, together with certain supporting welfare measures concerning, for example, retraining, community work schemes, occupational integration, etc. The aim of all these measures is to obviate handicaps which produce insecure social situations.

## ANNEXE IV

### THE SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE MEMBER STATES

#### BELGIUM

The Communities' responsibilities are defined by the Constitution and the special laws of 8 August 1980; they include "family policy, namely all forms of aid and assistance to families and children". The State remains responsible for taxation and social security.

Within the Communities the Minister with responsibility for Social Affairs administers family questions.

The Minister for Social Affairs and Health bears administrative responsibility for assistance to the individual citizen, family policy, social policy, policy in respect of disabled and elderly people, health policy, health care policy and health education.

The Administration de l'Aide à la Famille (family aid administration) is administratively responsible for services in support of families and elderly people, aid centres, etc.

The Conseil Supérieur de la Famille (Higher Family Council) is responsible for delivering an opinion on all legislation concerning the family, on its own initiative or at the Minister's request.

#### DENMARK

Family welfare does not fall within the sphere of responsibility of any individual Ministry.

The law on assistance contains provisions relevant both to the individual citizen and to the family. Family-related legislation does, however, fall within the competence of a number of Ministries.

Interministerial cooperation (Ministry for Social Affairs, Labour, Education, Culture, etc.) has been set in train in order to better serve family interests.

## FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Family policy is a central element of federal government policy. The Federal Chancellor stressed its key importance once again in his government statement on 18 March 1987. Family policy measures taken by the Federal Government are reflected in national legislation and in that of the Länder, and in government statements made by the Federal Chancellor and the prime ministers of the Länder.

Family policy, measures and programmes can be implemented by the German federal authorities only where the competent national or Land governments take the relevant decisions and the competent federal or Land parliaments make the necessary funds available.

## SPAIN

The administrative body concerned with family affairs is the CEFAC (Government Centre for Family Affairs and Cohabitation). Administratively, this centre is answerable to the directorate-general for social action of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Its task is to provide assistance for the autonomous communities and non-governmental organizations concerned with guidance and family benefits.

The CEFAC provides technical and financial support for projects, studies, etc., in particular on the situation of single-parent families and sexual information.

The CEFAC organizes training courses for officials of the non-governmental organizations and supports the groups of social workers concerned with family affairs.

The CEFAC is backing a plan aimed at homogenizing family benefits, home help and access to housing.

## FRANCE

By a decree of 28 June 1988, Mrs Hélène Dorlhac was appointed State Secretary in the Ministry of Solidarity, Health and Social Protection, with family affairs as her special responsibility.

The following departments of this ministry have been placed at her disposal:

- the directorate for social security;
- the directorate for social action;
- the directorate for the population and migrations;
- the directorate-general for health;

At the same time, several public establishments are active in this field:

- Caisse Nationale d'Allocations familiales (CNAF) (National Family Benefits Fund);
- Institut d'Etudes démographiques (INED) (Institute for Population Study);
- Institute de l'enfance et de la Famille (Institute for Childhood and the Family).

The advisory bodies:

- the Haut Conseil de la Population et de la Famille (High Council for Population and the Family), an advisory body chaired by the President of the Republic, is responsible for providing the President and the Government with information on population problems and their medium and long-term consequences and on all matters concerning the family. It prepares opinions and looks into all economic, social and cultural issues likely to have a demographic impact, particularly in the areas of the birthrate, ageing, population and migration;
- the Conseil économique et social (Economic and Social Committee) delivers opinions, inter alia, on draft laws. Its opinion was requested on implementation of a comprehensive family policy.

**GREECE**

In view of the large number of organizations involved, coordination is in the hands of a committee set up under the auspices of the Ministry for Economic Affairs and by a Committee of Experts under the Ministry of Labour.

**IRELAND**

The Department for Social Affairs is responsible for social security, including family allowances.

Maternity matters and worker protection are within the competence of the Minister of Labour. The Health Minister is responsible for the handicapped and the Environment Minister coordinates national and local activities relating to housing and town planning.

Since 1982 a Minister has been responsible for women's affairs.

## ITALY

There are no ministers for the family or social affairs.

The Minister for Labour and Social Security is responsible for family matters.

The Minister for Labour is responsible for family allowances and pensions, while the Minister for Health deals with social services, and the regions with assistance for young people and the elderly. Housing falls to the Minister for Public Works, and family law to the Minister for Justice.

## LUXEMBOURG

The Minister for the Family, Subsidized Housing and Social Solidarity is responsible for family policy, but not exclusively responsible since by definition family policy affects all social sectors. Measures are coordinated, however, by the Council of Ministers and the Minister for the Family may intervene even where his department is not directly responsible for the proposed measures. There are also many advisory bodies in which representatives from the Ministry for the Family participate when draft measures are being prepared.

Since 1984 his main tasks have been as follows:

- the family, Conseil supérieur de la famille (Higher Council for the Family), Caisse d'allocation familiales (Family Benefits Fund), Fonds des allocations de naissance (Birth Grants Fund);
- Service d'Intégration Sociale de l'enfance (Service for the Social Integration of the child);
- services for the elderly;
- social measures for migrant workers;
- subsidized housing;
- social solidarity;
- service de la promotion familiale (Service for promotion of the family).

Responsibility for tax reductions falls to the Minister for Finance. Finally, local authorities take action in the area of social assistance for the disadvantaged and also in respect of housing, the elderly, young people and children, etc.

## NETHERLANDS

There has been no government statement or policy programme on family policy. However, certain principles have been adopted in relation to certain categories (young people, the elderly) and are embodied in multiannual programmes or in draft laws.

The following bodies operate in the field of family policy:

- the Dutch Families Council (Nederlandse Gezinsraad);
- the Platform of Organizations for Single Persons (Platform van Organisaties voor Alleenstaanden).

These organizations are concerned with information and documentation, defending the interests of and carrying out research for conventional families and other types of common living. They are subsidized by the Ministry for Welfare, Health and Culture. Within the Ministry, various directorates and divisions deal with the preparation of policies and their implementation in a number of subsectors: Directorate for Policy on the Elderly, Directorate for Policy on Young People, and Task Force on Policy on Emancipation and the Family within the Directorate for Social Development. This task force is working on a memorandum on family policy in close cooperation with the Dutch Families Council. The document should be ready by the end of the year.

Several advisory committees also operate in the Netherlands:

- Council on Policy concerning the Elderly;
- Council for Policy on Young People.

They deliver their opinions to the government on request or on their own initiative.

## PORTUGAL

The Member of the Cabinet responsible for family affairs is the Minister for Employment and Social Security who has entrusted this function to the State Secretary for Employment and Social Security.

The administrative unit which drafts and implements government policy measures is the Directorate-General for Family Affairs.



The interministerial family committee, which includes representatives of numerous sectors (emigration, employment, vocational training, etc.) coordinates everything to do with family affairs. This committee was not in operation last year. It has been reorganized, task forces having been set up to deal with specific fields.

In future, the Family Affairs Council will act as a link between the family associations and the administration.

#### **UNITED KINGDOM**

No ministry is formally responsible for family policy at national level.

The Secretary of State for Social Services is responsible for family allowances and social services, while housing falls to the Secretary of State for the Environment. The Secretary of State for Employment is responsible for maternity and parental leave. Consumer affairs come under the Secretary of State responsible for employment and industry.

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the relevant Secretary of State deals with certain questions which affect the family.

An interministerial group has been set up to look at women's issues generally - and thus to a large extent family interest.

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