

TRADE UNION INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Commission Launch 3rd Equal Opportunities Action Programme

The promotion of the full participation by women in the European labour market is the fundamental objective of the Third Medium-Term Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men which was published by the European Commission in November. The programme covers the period 1991-1995 and intends to build on the solid achievements of the first two Action Programmes and the growing body of Community Directives relating to equal opportunities.

Whilst significant progress has been made since the Community first indicated its intention of encouraging equal opportunities in the 1974 Social Action Programme, many problems and obstacles to the full and equal participation of women still remain and potential barriers are constantly developing. Accordingly, the European Commission has attempted to formulate its Third Action Programme to take account of the new socio-economic context which exists in the first half of the final decade of the twentieth century.

The period covered by the new Action Programme will see the completion of the internal market and the wide-ranging economic and social changes which will accompany it. The danger of disadvantaged groups being adversely affected by the industrial restructuring which is taking place as part of the single market process has always been recognised and therefore it is important to ensure that women are equipped to fully benefit from the substantial opportunities provided by European economic integration. Europe is also

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ACTION PROGRAMME

being faced with critical demographic changes which will mean that there is a need for more qualified workers, and women's participation in employment could be decisive. In most Member States, women still constitute a reserve of labour which is under-utilised - women still occupy a large proportion of low-qualified and insecure jobs.

These changes in the socio-economic context make it clear that equal opportunities policy can no longer be regarded solely as a specific and limited policy. It must form an integral part of the Community's economic, social and structural policies. Additionally, effective equal opportunities policy cannot be confined to Community actions alone: wider co-operation between - what the Commission term - the "equality partners" is necessary. The "equality partners" include not only the Community institutions and the governments of the Member States, but also appropriate organisations at local and regional level and the social partners. Thus the Action Programme defines the responsibilities of each group within the context of initiatives planned for the period 1991-1995.

Thus the aims of the new Action Programme are:-

- to consolidate Community achievements, maximise and capitalise on the experience achieved to date.

- to develop new initiatives directed at women in the field of vocational training and employment, integrated into the framework of Community policies and programmes.

- to reinforce partnership and complementarity between the measures carried out by the various partners concerned (Commission, Member States and the Social Partners).

The Programme establishes three major objectives relating to developing the legal framework, integrating women into the labour market and improving the status of women in society.

The Implementation and the Development of the Law.

The cornerstone of European Community law on sexual equality is provided by Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome. In addition, over the years, a number of Directives have been adopted and currently form the

main body of Community law. These include the 1975 Directive on Equal Pay, the 1976 Directive on Access to Employment, Training and Promotion and the 1986 Directive on Social Security.

A further three proposed Directives are still within the Community decision-making system. Two of these - on parental and family leave and the burden of proof in equal opportunities law - have been held up for a number of years and their future progress is suspect. The third - the new proposed Directive on the protection at work of pregnant women - is currently being discussed as part of the Social Charter Action Programme.

As well as the above Directives, a developing backcloth of case-law is emerging from the European Court of Justice which is helping to clarify the scope of Article 119. Of particular importance was the Barber/Guardian Royal Exchange Group case (case 262/88 - 17 May 1990) in which the Court ruled that occupational pensions form an integral part of employees' remuneration and therefore fall within the scope of the equal pay provisions of Article 119.

The new Action Programme indicates that the Commission will concentrate on three areas of activity during the period 1991-1995.

(1) The Implementation and Development of Existing Legal Procedures.

(2) Develop Initiatives in the Field of:-

(i) Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value:

(ii) Indirect Discrimination: The Commission hope to build on the interpretations of the European Court of Justice and thereby clarify the scope of indirect discrimination.

(iii) Social Protection and Social Security:

The Commission intend to present a Communication on occupational benefit schemes which will take into account the judgement of the European Court in the Barber/Guardian Royal Exchange case.

(iv) Self-Employed Women:

(3) The Commission will attempt to raise the awareness of current legal provisions by supporting the provision of information and training and monitoring legal developments in Member States. A system for disseminating information on case law and legal

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standards is to be introduced.

The Integration of Women into the Labour Market

The Second Action Programme on Equal Opportunities brought about the establishment of a number of programmes and networks designed to promote the integration of women into the labour market. Nevertheless barriers still remain and the new Programme identifies two in particular - in the fields of education and vocational training. Other important barriers relate to the problem of reconciling work and family commitments. The new Programme establishes three priority objectives:-

- bringing women into the labour market, especially by making their integration easier;

- upgrading women's work by improving the quality of their jobs, particularly through the improvement of their education and training, the development of positive action programmes in enterprises and by protecting the dignity of women and men at work;

- reducing barriers to the integration of women in the labour market, with special reference to the reconciliation of working and family life.

The Commission intends to continue the various initiatives introduced under previous Programmes and integrate these with the major new initiative on the promotion of opportunities for women in the field of employment and vocational training (the NOW Programme)

The NOW Programme is a Community initiative within the context of the Structural Funds. The draft proposal has been submitted to the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee for their opinions. Under the Programme the Community will co-finance, along with Member States, a variety of measures including the creation of small business and co-operatives by women, measures concerning guidance, advice, pretraining and training and the development of childcare facilities.

Other measures, in addition to those covered by the NOW Programme, envisaged by the Commission include further research on the situation of women in the labour market, exchanges of information and experience on measures to improve the integration of

women in the labour market, and other measures to aid the creation of businesses by women and to promote women's entrepreneurship. The Commission is also to draw up - following the appropriate consultation - a code of good conduct on the protection of the dignity of women and men at work. In addition, the Commission will adopt a Recommendation on Child-care Services and produce a Guide to Good Practice to supplement the Recommendation. The Commission will also produce a Code of Good Conduct on the protection of pregnancy and maternity.

Improving the Status of Women in Society

In order to improve the status of women in society, three key areas have been selected for Community action during the course of the new Programme.

(1) Awareness Raising and the Increased Provision of Information and Improved Communication:

The Commission intends to continue to improve the amount and quality of information available on all the issues dealt with by the Programme. The Commission will also publish and disseminate studies, research and evaluation reports within the framework of the new Programme and Member States will be encouraged to undertake similar initiatives.

(2) The Image of Women in the Media:

The Commission intends to continue to promote change in the representation of women in the media, as well as in the institutional and professional environment of media organisations. Innovative programmes and materials which challenge traditional images, and promote positive images, of men and women will be developed.

(3) Women in the Decision-Making Process:

The Commission intends to liaise with the European Parliament and the political parties in the Member States with a view to raising awareness of the fundamental importance of having more women in the decision-making process.

A budget of ECU 5 million is being proposed for the first year of the programme (1991) and ECU 5.3 million for the second year (1992) The budget for subsequent years will be decided on a year-to-year basis taking into account the progress made and the results which have been obtained.

NEWSBRIEF

Eurobarometer

The latest Eurobarometer Survey was conducted within Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The survey reveals a high level of support for the association treaties between these states and the European Community (78%). Indeed a majority of the citizens of Poland and Hungary (55% and 51%) are in favour of their countries' immediate membership of the Community. The survey also shows that a very high level of support also exists for greater European unification extending to the creation of a United States of Europe of which their own country would be a member. 81% of Hungarians, 79% of Czechoslovakians and 68% of Poles were in favour of such a development.

Inflation in Member States

Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Community, has released figures on the level of consumer price inflation in Member States for the first nine months of 1990. The figures are as follows (equivalent 1989 figures in parenthesis)

Denmark	2.0%	(3.7%)
Ireland	2.1%	(3.9%)
FR Germany	2.2%	(2.2%)
Netherlands	2.5%	(1.2%)
Luxembourg	2.8%	(3.1%)
France	3.0%	(2.8%)
Belgium	3.3%	(3.2%)
Italy	5.0%	(4.4%)
Spain	5.4%	(5.8%)
UK	8.8%	(5.7%)
Portugal	10.8%	(8.7%)
Greece	16.2%	(9.5%)

Integration of European Labour Markets

A two-day international conference on the impact of the European single market on employment and labour markets in the European Community is to be held in Birmingham, UK, on 11th-12th April 1991. The conference is being sponsored by SYSDM (the European System of Documentation on Employ-

ment) which is an initiative of the European Commission Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, and ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd. The four main sessions of the conference will cover:-

- The background to the Europeanisation of the labour market
- The main aspects of the European labour market
- How is industry responding to the opportunities created by economic integration?
- Implications for sectors

Further details of the conference can be obtained from Caroline Lambert, ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd, Priestley House, 28-34 Albert Street, Birmingham B4 7UD, UK. Tel: (44) 21 616 1010 Fax: (44) 21 616 1099.

Shipbuilding Industry

The negotiation of an international agreement within the framework of the OECD aimed at achieving normal and fair competitive conditions in the shipbuilding industry is called for in a position paper issued by the European Metalworkers' Federation. The paper maintains that until such an agreement is concluded, the survival of the European shipbuilding industry is dependent on maintaining a certain degree of state aid. Such aid must, however, be limited and more transparent. It must also be reorientated with a view to improving the efficiency of shipyards and converting warship production to civil production according to the EMF.

The EMF states that one of the most urgent problems is that of re-industrialisation of the regions affected by the crisis in the shipbuilding and ship-repairing industries. It calls for the establishment of tripartite bodies in such areas to assess the possibilities for re-industrialisation and re-employment. The paper also calls for support for efforts to diversify production and to adopt job-creation programmes in the fields of environmental protection, energy supply, transport infrastructure etc.

NEWSBRIEF

European Social Fund

The European Commission has approved financing for training and job creation programmes in Spain, Greece and Italy from the European Social Fund. Brief details of the new funding initiatives are as follows:-

SPAIN:

2.4 million ECU in support of a vocational and language training

programme to facilitate the integration of immigrants
3.6 million ECU in support of a programme to facilitate the professional integration of women, the long-term unemployed and young people in the agricultural sector

154.9 million ECU to develop human resources in various regions

2 million ECU in support of schemes to fight long-term unemployment in various regions

0.4 million ECU in support of a programme in the region of Rioja to increase the level of workers' qualifications.

GREECE:

6.0 million ECU in support of transnational training programmes

6.5 million ECU in support of a programme of innovative actions in favour of the long-term unemployed and young unemployed workers.

ITALY:

91.6 million ECU to provide training in Basilicata and Sardinia in support of regional and rural development

85 million ECU for a programme in Campania to fight long-term unemployment and unemployment amongst young people.

The Sectoral Impact of the Single Market

The impact of the European single market on industrial sectors is considered in a major study recently published by the European Commission. The study, which forms a part of the on-going series of reports on the "cost on non-Europe" attempts to measure the structural consequences of the completion of the single market on each of the Member State's manu-

facturing industries. The joint objectives of the study are to provide an evaluation of structural adjustments within all the industrial sectors affected by 1992 for all the Member States, and to discuss the impact of certain Community policies on the structural adjustment process in Member States. The study is published jointly by the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs and the Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs as a special issue of European Economy and Social Europe.

Luxembourg Presidency and Social Policy

The Minister of Labour Affairs of Luxembourg, Jean-Claude Juncker, told the Social Affairs Committee of the European Parliament that he hoped to make progress on a variety of social policy issues during his term as President of the Social Affairs Council. He indicated that he was considering separating the three directives on atypical work in the hope that the proposed directive on health and safety and temporary workers could be quickly approved.

The Ageing of Europe

By the year 2015, one quarter of the population of the European Community will be over 50 years of age compared with just under one fifth in 1990. The "ageing of Europe" is clearly shown by figures published in a Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament entitled "Europe 2000: Outlook for the Development of the Community's Territory" (COM (90) 544 - 16 November 1990). Population maps contained within the Communication indicate that there is a considerable diversity between regions in the proportion of citizens aged 65 and over. The relative decline in young workers and the associated ageing of the workforce are presented as evidence of the need for continuous education during adult life as well as more targeted opportunities for re-training. The Communication looks at many other trends besides demographic ones and presents a broad picture of the major problems likely to be facing the Community by the end of the decade.



NEWS FROM THE ETUC

European Trade Union Confederation

European Committees of Workers' Representatives

The ETUC Executive Committee recently proposed the establishment of a binding Community Regulation to facilitate cross-border exchange of information and other forms of consultation between companies in different Member States and the creation of a "European Committees of Workers' Representatives". The ETUC is in favour of a binding legal instrument containing general rules which would leave management and unions scope to adapt the rules, by mutual agreement, to the particular requirements of individual firms or branches of industry. European Committees of Workers' Representatives must be able to exert a genuine influence on decisions taken by the enterprise and the ETUC see a reliable procedure for information disclosure as central to this task.

The European Committees of Workers' Representatives should meet at least twice per year with the provision for extraordinary meetings at critical times. The ETUC proposes that the company concerned should bear the cost of these meetings and all expenses incurred in the effective functioning of the Committees.

Trade Unions and Regional Policy

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) organised a conference in October on the participation of trade unions in European Community Regional Policy. The conference split into two groups; one of which examined the role of trade unions within the regional policy of Objective 1 regions (structurally underdeveloped regions) whilst the other looked at the at the policy of reindustrialisation necessary in Objective 2 regions (regions in industrial decline). Much of the debate at the conference was centred around two papers prepared by the ETUC on the following subjects:-

1. Which Regional Policy and What Kind of Trade Union Participation is Required to Ensure Social and Economic Cohesion in the Context of Objective No.1 Regions?

2. Crisis in the Sectors and a Policy for Reindustrialisation.

Intergovernmental Conferences

The ETUC Executive Committee, meeting in October, established three objectives for the December Intergovernmental Conferences regarding the reform of the Community treaties:-

1. To reset the balance of the European integration process through strengthening social and economic policy objectives - and not simply monetary ones. The principle objectives of economic and monetary union should be full employment, economic development, price stability and social and economic cohesion.
2. To reinforce the effectiveness of Council decisions by extending qualified majority voting procedures to include the areas of social, economic and environmental policy.
3. To give a constituent mandate to the European Parliament and to democratise European integration by making the European Parliament a genuine parallel legislative body, and strengthening the status of the Economic and Social Committee in its dealings with both the Council and the Parliament.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

The New Draft Directive on the Protection of Pregnant Women at Work

1. Background

The Single European Act introduced a number of new provision into the Treaty of Rome, including Article 118A which has become the basis of most of the new proposals for harmonisation in the field of health and safety at work. Article 118A allows the Council, acting by a qualified majority, to adopt directives establishing minimum requirements relating to health and safety. Indeed, over the last two years, a major programme of European legislation has been under way with the adoption of the Framework Directive on health and safety in 1989 and subsequently a number of individual directives on a variety of specific subjects.

The Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights, adopted by eleven of the Member States at the Strasbourg summit last December, again stressed the importance of continuing improvements in the health and safety field. Article 19 of the Charter declares that "Every worker must enjoy satisfactory health and safety conditions in his working environment".

In November 1989 the Commission issued a Communication concerning its proposed Action Programme relating to the implementation of the Charter. Section 8 of the Programme deals with equal treatment for men and women. It notes that in the past the Commission has been concerned with the health and safety of women in the workplace within the general context of worker protection. It concludes, however, that the various general measures have not taken sufficient account of the specific problems of pregnant women and therefore a specific directive in this subject is required. Work on the proposed directive was given a high priority within the Commission's 1990 Work Programme and the draft was published in October. (Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the protection at work of pregnant women or women who have recently given birth - COM(90) 406 final - SYN 303, Official Journal C281, 9 November 1990)

2. The Scope of the Proposed Directive

The proposed directive covers a number of aspects relating to the employment of pregnant women and women who have recently given birth. In particular it deals with:-

- (1) The conditions relating to the entitlement to maternity leave and the arrangements for payments during this period.
- (2) The situation with regards to night work and pregnant women.
- (3) The potential exposure of pregnant women and nursing mothers to potentially dangerous agents in the course of their work.

The proposed directive will constitute an individual Directive within the meaning of the 1989 Health and Safety Framework Directive and therefore the arrangements relating to such things as worker information, consultation and training contained within the Framework Directive will apply.

3. The Current Situation in Member States

The Explanatory Memorandum - published as part of COM(90) 406 - contains information on the present conditions existing within Member States in relation to maternity leave, night work and exposure to harmful

BACKGROUND BRIEFING - The Protection of Pregnant Women

agents. Whilst the situation with regard to maternity leave and pay is somewhat complex, with a wide range of special entitlements and conditions, the situation can be briefly summarised as follows:-

	<u>Maternity Leave</u>	<u>Pay</u>
B	14 weeks	100% for weeks 1-4, thereafter 80%
DK	28 weeks	90% of salary
D	14 weeks	100% of salary or fixed sum
Gr	15 weeks	100% of salary
Esp	16 weeks	75% of salary
F	16 weeks	84% of salary
Ire	14 weeks	70% of salary
I	20 weeks	80% of salary
Lux	16 weeks	100% of salary
ND	12 weeks	100% of salary
P	90 days	100% of salary
UK	40 weeks	6 weeks at 90%, 12 weeks at fixed reduced sum, the rest unpaid.

The Community average is 15 weeks paid leave, six of which are taken before the birth. Practices differ as to the financing of the maternity pay, in some cases it is financed by the employer, in other by the state, and in others by a combination of the two. With regards to night shift working the situation is again somewhat complex. Whilst night working by women is often prohibited there exists a wide number of exemptions and derogations. In the case of pregnant women special conditions apply in the Netherlands (special authorisation required) and Ireland (women can choose to be transferred to a day shift on medical advice).

A variety of restrictions exist in Member States relating to the exposure of pregnant women or nursing mothers to potentially harmful agents. These vary from the relatively wide restrictions ("dangerous, tiring or stressful jobs considered injurious to health during pregnancy or seven months after giving birth" - Italy) to the more specific (pregnant women coming into contact with lead). No bans on work by pregnant women currently exist in the Netherlands. The task of the Commission in drafting the new directive - as with all the individual directives on health and safety - has been to arrange for the introduction of harmonised minimum standards of protection whilst ensuring that Member States are not prevented from maintaining or introducing more stringent measures.

4. The Content of the Proposed Directive

Articles 1 & 2 These deal with the scope of the directive and the definitions of pregnant women and women who have recently given birth.

Article 3 A general requirement is placed on Member States to "take all necessary steps to ensure that pregnant workers are protected against the risks arising particularly at work" Relevant health and safety authorities are required to evaluate the impact of pregnancy on work activities including exposure to chemical, physical and biological agents and with respect to posture, movements and mental and physical fatigue. In situations where the normal work activity may endanger the health of pregnant women or breastfeeding women, Member States are required to ensure that working conditions/working hours are adapted, or, if necessary, alternative duties are provided with the maintenance of pay and employment rights.

Article 3 also requires Member States to ensure that an alternative to night work is available to women workers before and after childbirth for a period of 16 weeks, at least 8 of which should be before the date of birth. Where a medical certificate is produced stating that it is necessary for the health of the woman or child, this period can be extended to the full pregnancy and during a specified period after the birth. Alternatives can include a transfer to day work, the provision of social security benefits or an extension of maternity leave and

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employment rights are to be maintained.

Article 4 Member States are required to take the necessary measures to ensure that pregnant women are not engaged in activities during which they are actually or potentially exposed to a number of agents and processes which are listed in an Annex to the Directive. The Annex covers a variety of biological agents (for example, toxoplasma, rubella virus, listeria), chemical agents such as carcinogens, thiophosphoric esters, mercury, derivatives of benzene hydrocarbons and asbestos, and physical agents such as work at high pressures or work liable to cause movements harmful to the embryo or foetus.

Article 4 also imposes a requirement for Member States to ensure that breastfeeding mothers are not engaged in a variety of specified activities. These include work in a hyperbaric atmosphere or underground work, work with the biological agents myxovirus, paramyxovirus and enterovirus, and work with a variety of chemical agents including lead, mercury, carbon disulphide and solvents containing chloride. A full list of all the agents covered within the meaning of Article 4 is provided in Annex 1 and Annex 2 of the Directive.

If there is a danger that a pregnant woman or nursing mother would be exposed to the agents listed in the appropriate Annex, the woman concerned should be transferred to another activity. Where this is not technically or objectively possible, the worker concerned should be granted paid leave from work for a period judged necessary for the protection of their health and employment rights should be maintained during this period.

Article 5 An uninterrupted period of at least 14 weeks leave from work on full pay and/or a corresponding allowance, commencing before and ending after delivery, should be granted to pregnant women, Member States have the facility to grant a period of leave longer than 14 weeks, not on full pay, as long as an equivalent standard of protection is assured. In this case, the pay and/or corresponding allowance for the entire period of leave shall not be less than 80% of the salary of the beneficiaries, and if need be, within a ceiling defined by national regulation.

In addition Article 5 requires Member States to take measures to ensure that pregnant women shall be granted an obligatory period of paid leave covering a period of not less than two weeks before the expected date of delivery. This two week period of paid leave would exist irrespective of length of service. Member States, however, have the right to subject the more general right to maternity pay to the condition that the benefiting workers have worked or are registered as unemployed since at least the beginning of the pregnancy. In cases where medical examinations before birth can take place only during work hours, pregnant workers should have the benefit of leave without loss of pay to attend.

Article 6 For the period of maternity leave referred to in Article 5, there should be no diminution of employment rights. Member States are also required to take the necessary measures to prohibit the dismissal of pregnant women for reasons connected with their pregnancy for a period starting with the beginning of their pregnancy and ending with the conclusion of maternity leave.

Articles 7,8 and 9 These deal with the implementation of the Directive by the Member States. The proposed deadline for compliance is 31 December 1992.

Obviously, at the moment, this is still a proposed directive and is still subject to revision or amendment. It is proposed that it should be dealt with under the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament and therefore be subject to qualified majority voting at the Council of Ministers. It is also subject to consultation with the Economic and Social Committee.

Industry Policy in the European Community

New Commission Communication to the Council and the European Parliament

On the 26 November the Industry Council approved the Commission Communication on the future development of Community industrial Policy ("Industrial Policy in an Open and Competitive Environment" COM(90) 556 - 16 November 1990). In approving the Commission approach to industry policy and calling for further studies, the Council has effectively re-launched Community action in this field.

Within its Communication, the European Commission set out the three elements to a Community approach to industrial policy -

- **Ensuring the necessary prerequisites for adjustment**
- **Providing catalysts for adjustment**
- **Accelerating adjustment**

The Commission feel that the necessary prerequisites for adjustment include securing a competitive environment and maintaining a stable economic environment. In addition the Commission list a further three prerequisites which will be of considerable interest to trade unionists.

1. Ensuring a High Level of Educational Attainment:

The Commission believe that a high level of educational attainment represents the foundation for the necessary level of human capital which advanced economies require. Lifelong learning should therefore become an attitude and a practice to continually upgrade skills.

2. Promoting Economic and Social Cohesion:

The Commission believe that the effectiveness of the single market can be enhanced by greater levels of economic cohesion among its regions. Also the Commission point out that employee information, consultation and participation in decision making facilitates structural adjustment by securing confidence in business decisions and assisting the rapid introduction of new working methods and the rede-

ployment of human resources within the enterprise. Adjustments can also be carried out easier in those circumstances where an adequate level of social protection provides a safety net which diminishes the risks of change and so promotes mobility.

3. Achieving a High Level of Environmental Protection

The Commission stress that continued economic growth can only be sustained by a high level of protection for the environment. Since it is now certain that the necessity to pay due regard to the environment is imperative throughout the world for all segments of business, a leading position occupied by Community firms in the field of environmental protection can represent a major competitive advantage.

In its conclusions, the Commission Communication calls on the Community to pursue those positive adjustment policies aimed at building a favourable economic environment for private initiative and investment in the Community. In particular this should be done by:-

- maintaining a macro-economic framework directed towards stability and the facilitation of medium and long-term funding for industrial enterprises;
- insuring that the efforts of firms, the Community and Member States for technological research and development are strengthened, through greater co-operation between the parties concerned and in particular between producers and users of new technologies, and through exploiting the industrial potential of innovation and technological research and development policies at national and Community level;
- strengthening policies which take into account the special requirements of small and medium sized enterprises and the promotion of new business formation;
- directing national and Community structural instruments more towards backing structural

adjustment and strengthening the competitiveness of firms in less developed regions

- recognising that a high level of environmental protection offers both challenges and opportunities for industry, and that competitiveness and protection of the environment are not in opposition to one another;
- implementing effective policies to develop human resources, in particular through a life-long approach

- to the acquisition of skills based on a detailed knowledge of industry's requirements;
- supporting the implementation of trans-European networks required for the proper functioning of the Community and wider European markets;
- ensuring that a sufficiently attentive examination of industrial development is made in order to ensure that the necessary requirements for adjustment are met.

Occupational Health, Safety and the Environment in Central and Eastern Europe

In Copsa Mica, Central Romania, there are two major factories. One is a non-ferrous metals factory producing zinc, lead, copper and cadmium, the other is a factory producing a black powder used in the manufacture of rubber. The by-products of these two factories are 30,000 tons of soot per year and the effects of this are that everything within a 20 km radius of the factories is quite literally black. The blackness of what has been described as one of the most polluted places in Europe is just part of the story. The number of local inhabitants who have been diagnosed as having excessive or dangerous levels of lead in their bodies has risen from 70 in 1977 to over 400 in 1990.

This is just one example taken from a new International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) pamphlet of the enormous problems facing the newly democratised states of Central and Eastern Europe. In many cases industry has been allowed to develop over the years with scant regard for either the safety of the workers and the local population or the wider effects on the environment. Only now, when openness and free trade union pressures are beginning to develop, is the scale of the problem becoming apparent.

Over recent months and years attention has obviously been focussed on the wider political developments within Central and Eastern European states. Free, democratic elections do not automatically solve all problems although the development of free independent trade unions provides workers with the opportunity to challenge and change the dreadful working conditions which exist throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

The ICFTU pamphlet, "Occupational Health, Safety and the Environment in Central and Eastern Europe", sets out to do two things. It clearly and concisely illustrates the type of problem facing Central and Eastern European states, indeed as pollution is no respecter of national boundaries, the problems are not entirely theirs as Chernobyl so graphically illustrated. Secondly it provides trade unionists from Central and Eastern European states with a useful guide to the trade union structures and policies for dealing with health and safety and environmental problems which have been developed elsewhere. These are presented in the hope that they might be useful to the trade union committees of Central and Eastern Europe.

A final chapter of the pamphlet describes the "Five Great Myths" and the appropriate trade union arguments. The myths are illustrative of the arguments often used by both managements and governments when dealing with health and safety issues. The myths are:-

1. The "Lack of Resources" Myth
2. The Myth of the "Careless Worker"
3. The "Specialists Know Best" Myth
4. The "Somebody Else's Problem" Myth
5. The "Low Priority" Myth

Their listing in the pamphlet, along with detailed trade union arguments to counter each myth, will be of interest to not only trade unionists from these newly emerging Central and Eastern European states, but to trade unionists fighting to improve health and safety measures everywhere.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

A TRADE UNION GUIDE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

This new guide has been designed and written specifically with trade unionists in mind. It provides a general introduction to the Community, its institutions and its decision-making structures. In particular it highlights the systems and the structures where trade union representation is actively involved and it places the key policy developments of interest to European trade unionists - and in particular the policies associated with the social dimension to the internal market - within a wider historical and institutional framework.

The guide can either be used by itself or as an accompaniment to a presentation on the European Community. It comes in the form of a series of four-page, loose-leaf sections, each of which deals with a specific topic. The full list of topics covered by the guide is as follows:-

1. The Development of the European Communities
2. The European Commission
3. The Council of Ministers
4. The European Parliament
5. The Economic and Social Committee
6. The European Court of Justice
7. The European Trade Union Confederation
8. The Role of Trade Unions in the European Community
9. The Development of the Social Dimension to the Internal Market
10. The Social Dimension and the Social Dialogue
11. The Social Charter
12. The Social Charter Action Programme
13. The Single Market Programme
14. The Structural Funds of the European Community
15. CEDEFOP and Vocational Training and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
16. Sources of Further Information, Contacts and Addresses.

By providing a broad description of the Community from a trade union point of view, the guide is likely to be of particular interest to individual trade union

members and trade union organisations. A special edition of the guide is available - including Overhead Transparency Slides and Student worksheets - for use with trade union education groups.

Increasingly, trade unions throughout the Community are recognising the importance of the European dimension, and the guide therefore provides an ideal introduction to those wanting to discover more about the Community and its workings.

"A Trade Union Guide to the European Community" by Alan Burnett and Robert Greenway. Published by MBO Education and Training Ltd. The guide is currently available in English only - although other language versions are under consideration - priced ECU 18, from:- MBO Education and Training Ltd, 2, Coldwell Lane, Sandygate, Sheffield S10 5TL, United Kingdom.

ETUI Info 29 THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) has just re-issued its descriptive pamphlet devoted to the history, organisation and policies of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). The ETUI first published a profile of the ETUC in 1985, but the new edition is both updated and expanded and provides a detailed picture of the development of the European Trade Union Confederation, its structure and its main common policies.

The historical development of the ETUC reflects the struggle to build a broad-based and comprehensive trade union organisation which could ensure that trade union interests are adequately reflected on a European level. The ETUC, from its very origins, always had a wider coverage than just the Member States of the European Community. It currently represents trade union confederations from the EC Member States, the EFTA Member States and those of Cyprus, Malta and Turkey. The work of the various key structures of the ETUC are fully described - the

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Congress, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat - along with the important industry committees. A section also examines the work of the ETUI, the research, information, documentation and educational instrument of the European trade union movement.

A number of new ETUC bodies are described: in particular the Association for the European Training of Workers in New Technologies (AFETT), the European Trade Union Technical Bureau for Health and Safety (ETUTB) and the European Trade Union College (ETUCO).

The pamphlet serves as both a useful and concise guide to the European trade union movement and an invaluable source of reference information. A detailed appendix provides contact addresses, telephone numbers and Fax numbers for all ETUC affiliated organisations and bodies.

ETUI Info 29 : The European Trade Union Confederation. Available initially in English, French and German and subsequently in Dutch, Spanish, Norwegian and Italian. It is available, priced BF 300 (BF 100 to trade union members) from the European Trade Union Institute, Boulevard de l'Imperatrice 66, Boite 4, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium.

“A Human Face For Europe” by George de Kerchove d'Exaerde

With attention being focussed, over recent years, on the completion of the internal market, it is easy to get the impression that the European Community is merely concerned with the free movement of goods and services. Where the Community impacts on human beings, there is a danger of seeing such humans as merely units of production and consumption. Important as all this is, it would be a mistake to lose sight of the wider aspirations of European integration, a process which is, and always has been, more con-

cerned with freedom and peace than with economic relationships.

This “human face of Europe” is examined in a new pamphlet in the European Documentation series. The author, George de Kerchove d'Exaerde, traces the development of a United Europe and the parallel development of the rights of man. It is a story of the development of democracy in Western Europe and the way in which the European Communities have attempted to build on existing democratic traditions and ensure that democratic processes are central within the Community itself.

The first chapter traces the development of democratic ideas and the search for peace and the protection of fundamental individual rights. The second chapter examines in detail how human rights are treated in the various treaties and within the current institutions of the Community. The third chapter attempts to chart the achievements to date, whilst the final chapter looks to the future and identifies many of the challenges still facing the people of Europe.

The pamphlet will be of undoubted interest to trade unionists. It deals with issues which trade unionists see as central to the dignity and interests of their members. An examination of these issues is as relevant now as any time in the past, for the shared vision of a Europe of the future which is currently being created must be a vision which is inspired by the rights of man.

“A Human Face For Europe”
European Documentation Series 4/90
Available in all Community languages.
Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
L-2985 Luxembourg.

Attitudes to Part-Time and Fixed-Term Contracts

Preliminary Results of European Foundation Survey

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions is in the process of carrying out a major research survey of new forms of work, in particular "atypical" work forms. An interview-based survey has been conducted in eight Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK) amongst managers and employee representatives in the private sector. In total 5,141 interviews were carried out in 3,520 work establishments.

The main aim of the study is to analyse experiences and future expectations of atypical work forms such as part-time work, limited-term contracts, evening work and Saturday work. With this survey, the Foundation intends to contribute to the on-going discussions at national and Community level regarding such development in the labour market.

Although the substantive analysis of the data is only in its initial phase, some interesting general trends have already emerged. This is particularly true in the field of part-time work, where the results of the survey indicate:-

- Direct cost aspects play only a minor role in decisions to introduce part-time work. Work organisational considerations are much more important.
- Frequently, part-time work is introduced to meet the personal needs and aspirations of employees.
- There are generally good chances of moving internally from full-time working to part-time working, whereas the opposite move is more difficult to obtain.
- Generally speaking, part-time employees enjoy relative equality with full-timers in the same job, except for certain non-material fringe benefits such as access to further training and qualifications.
- Part-timers are concentrated in low qualification jobs with relatively low advancement prospects.
- The stability of employment of part-timers is similar to that of comparable full-timers

There was a high degree of agreement on all these issues between responses from managers and trade union representatives. However there was less agreement between responses from different Member States. This is illustrated by the percentage claiming that cost advantages are a reason for the introduction of part-time work.

- Real cost advantages (e.g. lower social insurance contributions) are reported in Ireland and the UK by managers representing half the work force in the sample.
- Only approximately 15% of managers in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands quote cost advantages as the reason for introducing part-time work.
- The percentage for Spain (25%) is situated between the two groups.

Similar national differences exist in the attitudes of employee representatives to part-time work. Four general attitudes were presented to employee representatives by the survey teams and the average results were as follows:-

"We generally support the introduction of part-time work"	22%
"We support part-time work only if it is explicitly asked for by the employees"	40%
"We are against part-time work but we tolerate it if it is the explicit wish of the employees"	21%
"We are definitely against part-time work under all circumstances"	15%

Whilst this was the average picture for the Community, the situation was markedly different in certain Member States. For example in Spain the definitive opposition to part-time work was the prevailing attitude (58%) whereas in the Netherlands the majority of employee representatives (62%) expressed unqualified support for part-time working.

The reasons put forward by employers for the introduction of fixed-term contracts were as follows:-

"Because some tasks to be carried out only last for a fixed period of time"	50%
"With staff who replace staff who are temporarily absent (e.g. on sick leave or maternity leave)"	54%
"Because we are not sure that the future workload will enable us to keep the newly-hired personnel on a permanent basis"	39%
"Because we want to have a long probationary period before making permanent contracts"	26%
"Because employment law makes it difficult or expensive to lay off redundant staff"	21%
"With employees who only want to stay for a fixed period"	19%
"Other reasons"	11%

When employee representatives were questioned as to why their members accepted fixed-term contracts, 71% said it was "because they could not find permanent employment". In 30% of cases fixed-term contract suited the personal interests of the employee" (e.g. students or employees who want to gain wide job experience). Only 3% claimed that it was "because fixed-term jobs are better paid than permanent jobs". However, 73% of representatives said that their members accepted fixed-term contracts because "they think a fixed-term contract might be the first step towards a permanent job"

The analysis of the data is underway and it is expected that the first comprehensive results will be presented to a symposium of trade unions, employers, government representatives and other experts in March 1991.

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