

European

TRADE UNION

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European Growth Initiative

Co-ordinated Action Will Lead To 450,000 New Jobs

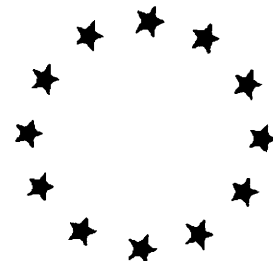
The European Commission, in a report submitted to the April meeting of the Economic and Finance Council, has predicted that the macro-economic effects of policies already adopted which form part of the European Growth Initiative will be an additional 0.6% economic growth in 1994 leading to the creation of an additional 450,000 jobs. The effect of the policies - in particular the creation of a European Investment Fund and the establishment of a temporary Cohesion Instrument - will also mean an increase in fixed investment of 3% in 1994.

The need for a concerted and co-ordinated attack on unemployment in the Community has been emphasised by the continued increase in unemployment. The Community average increased from 10% to 10.1% in February. At the ETUC Day of Action for a Social Europe on the 2nd April, the President of the Party of European Socialists, Willy Claes MEP, called for a rapid implementation of the measures adopted by the Edinburgh European Council meeting at both European, national and regional levels. He called for the forthcoming Copenhagen European Council to concentrate on social and employment issues, a call which has since been taken up by the European Trade Union Confederation.

The ETUC has also called for two new "convergence criteria" to be adopted to achieve the declared aim of a constant decline in the rate of unemployment. They would like economic growth and regional cohesion to become part of the economic criteria which will guide the Community towards economic and monetary union under the terms set out in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. The European Commission, in their report to the Economic and Finance Council, stressed the importance of a co-ordinated strategy which links measures taken at Community level with measures taken within individual Member States. The Commission predicts that the effects of economic regeneration measures taken by Member States can be effectively doubled if they are accompanied by similar measures in the other Member States.

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The European Growth Initiative

The key components of the European Growth Initiative, adopted by the Edinburgh European Council meeting in December 1992 can be summarised as follows:-

1. The achievement of solutions to several current problems facing the Community will have a positive effect on strengthening economic confidence and thereby economic performance. These include:
 - the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union.
 - agreement on the future financing of the Community (Note: this was achieved at Edinburgh when the amended Delors II plan was adopted).
 - a successful, early conclusion to the GATT Uruguay round negotiations.
2. The objectives of economic policy as listed within the Maastricht Treaty are reiterated.
 - an open market economy with free competition;
 - sustainable growth which respects environmental considerations;
 - stable price levels;
 - sound public finances and monetary conditions;
 - a sustainable balance of payments.A determination to fulfil the convergence criteria for economic and monetary union, established in the Maastricht Treaty, is also reiterated.
3. Member States are invited to implement economic measures to boost confidence and promote economic recovery. Implementation should be in a concerted way, but at the same time should be tailored to national requirements. Such measures should be targeted towards:
 - improving the prospects for growth;
 - creating lasting jobs;
 - consistency with the principles of convergence established in the Maastricht Treaty.
4. The declaration calls on Member States to:
 - wherever possible switch public expenditure priorities towards infrastructure and other capital investment and growth-supporting expenditure;
 - implement measures to encourage expansion within the private sector, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises;
 - take actions to improve the efficiency and competitiveness of their own economies;

- make efforts to achieve restraint in wage settlements within the public sector.
5. The European Council agrees that a further review of the economic situation will be required at its next meeting (scheduled for Copenhagen in June). It calls upon the Economic and Finance Council to:
 - review the actions and initiatives of Member States in response to this growth initiative;
 - continue to monitor the performance of national economies;
 - identify measures to improve the functioning of the labour market.
 6. The declaration calls for a number of initiatives at Community level to strengthen and complement the actions and initiatives of Member States.

(a) EIB Lending Facility:

The European Investment Bank is called upon to establish a new, temporary lending facility of 5 billion ECU in order to accelerate the financing of capital infrastructure projects, in particular those connected with the establishment of trans-European networks. The degree of Community funding for such projects - which can include projects involving Central and Eastern European countries - should be increased from the normal 50% to 75%, and the ceiling for combined loans and grants should be increased from 70% to 90%.

(b) European Investment Fund:

The declaration includes a call for the establishment of a European Investment Fund (EIF) with a capital of 2 billion ECU. Such a fund could extend guarantees of 5-10 billion ECU and thereby support up to 20 billion ECU of projects.

(c) Existing Community Funds:

The European Commission, along with the Member States, is invited to establish programmes to utilise the existing structural funds and the new Cohesion fund in the interests of generating economic growth.

(d) Community Support for Research:

The Commission is requested to bring forward proposals aimed at improving the management of research funded by the Community.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

7. The declaration:

- reaffirms the commitment of the European Council to an early, comprehensive and balanced GATT agreement;
- welcomes the successful completion of the Single Market;
- recognises the importance of increasing the understanding of Community rules within the business community;
- welcomes the Commission's intention to achieve enhanced consultation with industry and clearer and simpler legislation.

8. The declaration calls upon the Council and the Commission to ensure that the burdens of Community legislation on small and medium sized enterprises are reduced and to ensure that full information about Community support is provided to such organisations.

9. The declaration reiterates the commitment of the European Council to the European Monetary System as a key factor of economic stability and prosperity.

Implementing the Growth Initiative

Significant progress has already been made with the implementation of the growth initiative at Community level. In mid-February, the Commission published a Communication (COM(93) 54 final of the 10th February 1993) which reviews the progress achieved within the various elements which constitute the Community level contribution to the overall growth initiative.

The Communication identifies these elements as:-

- The European Investment Fund
- Trans-European Networks
- Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
- Research and Development
- EIB Loan Facility
- Cohesion Fund and Structural Funds
- Training
- The Single Market.

The following is a summary of the main points contained in the Communication.

Objectives	Actions
THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT FUND	
To contribute towards the accelerated completion of large infrastructure projects and facilitate investment by SMEs.	The Commission published proposals for the establishment of a European Investment Fund in January 1993. Work is currently being undertaken on drafting an EIF statute. The EIF is expected to have a capital of 2 billion ECU - 40% from the European Investment Bank, 30% from existing EC budget, 30% from public and private financial institutions. Initially it is likely that EIF activities will be limited to financial guarantees, although in the future it is likely to provide capital and reserves.
EIB - LOAN FACILITY	
To accelerate the financing of capital infrastructure projects, in particular those associated with trans-European networks.	The European Investment Bank presented the necessary proposals to increase lending ceilings on the 26th January 1993. The proposals will allow for a new, temporary lending facility of 5 billion ECU.

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

Objectives	Actions
TRANS-EUROPEAN NETWORKS	
To accelerate work on trans-European projects to promote economic growth and improve economic and social cohesion.	Projects eligible under the EIB loan facility will need to be consistent with guidelines for trans-European networks. Guidelines have already been established in a number of areas (roads, high speed trains, combined transport etc.) and other guidelines are in the process of being adopted. Potentially eligible projects of almost 75 billion ECU have already been identified.
COHESION FUND AND STRUCTURAL FUNDS	
The promotion of economic and social cohesion, economic growth, and industrial restructuring in order to reduce the disparities between the various regions of the Community.	<p>COHESION FUND: Proposals for a Cohesion Fund instrument were published in February. Discussions are already taking place between the Commission and the Member States concerned to enable contracts to be established during the first half of 1993.</p> <p>STRUCTURAL FUNDS: The Commission is in the process of presenting proposals for the amendment of the structural funds to cover the period until 1999. The Commission will ensure continued concentration of structural fund assistance to increase its economic effect.</p>
SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES	
To ensure that the burdens of Community legislation on SMEs are reduced and that full information about Community support is provided to such enterprises.	During January 1993, the Commission published a Communication - "The Enterprise Dimension Essential to Community Growth" - which examines the necessary priority areas for intensifying enterprise policy during the coming years.
TRAINING	
To provide Community support for training and retraining programmes which contribute to the necessary restructuring of economic activities.	The Commission's proposed amendments to the existing structural funds will include the establishment of a new Objective 4 which is designed to facilitate the adaptation of workers to industrial change. In addition, the Commission will promote actions in the field of training and human resources on the basis of funding programmes such as COMETT, FORCE and ERASMUS.
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	
To improve the management and efficiency of existing research programmes so as to optimise their contribution to stimulating growth.	The Commission will take immediate steps to encourage national organisations to take initiatives in proposing consortia to undertake research projects and publish new proposals for the pre-competitive element of the Eureka programme.
THE SINGLE MARKET	
To ensure the effective operation of the Single Market and to maximise its contribution to economic growth and employment creation.	The Commission will enhance consultation with industry and introduce clearer and simpler rules to maximise transparency. The Commission will also be making proposals to improve the business environment for firms carrying out cross-border activities and proposals to increase the thresholds below which simplified accountancy practices apply.

Health and Safety and Means of Transport

Commission Issues Proposed Directive

The European Commission has submitted proposals for a new Directive in the field of health and safety at work. Once adopted, the proposals will become an individual directive under the 1989 Health and Safety Framework Directive.

The new proposals cover the field of transport and relate to minimum safety and health requirements for transport activities and workplaces on means of transport. Such activities were specifically excluded from the previous individual directive on workplace health and safety, and the latest proposals seek to extend minimum health and safety requirements to the transport sector. As with all individual health and safety Directives, the general provisions set out in the 1989 Framework Directive would apply to the areas covered by the current proposals. The main areas covered by the draft Directive are as follows:-

(i) Coverage:

The proposed Directive would apply to all activities on board means of transport. Means of transport are defined as work equipment intended for all types of transport in the air, on roads, on railways or on water.

(ii) Modification of Workplaces:

After the 31.12.94, new workplaces on board means of transport must comply with the minimum requirements set out in Annex II(A) to the draft Directive. Workplaces on board means of transport already in service on that date must, within three years, comply with the same minimum requirements.

(iii) Sanitary Facilities:

The draft Directive requires the provision of sanitary facilities, rest rooms and living areas on board means of transport in circumstances where workers are obliged to remain on board the means of transport for continuous periods. The minimum requirements for such facilities are set out in Annex II(B) to the Directive.

(iv) General Requirements:

The draft Directive establishes the general responsibilities of the employer with regards to such things as technical maintenance, cleanliness and hygiene and the provision of safety equipment. Equally, the employer is required to take suitable organisational measures to ensure the health and safety of workers.

(v) Medical Surveillance:

Medical surveillance of workers involved in transport activities involving hazards likely to jeopardise directly their own safety and that of other workers on board means of transport must take place before the worker takes up duty, and at regular intervals thereafter, and whenever called for by circumstances or requested by the workers themselves.

(vi) First Aid etc:

In implementing the requirements of the Framework Directive in relation to first aid, fire-fighting, and the evacuation of workers, the employer must take into account the type and size of the means of transport and the characteristics of its load and of the route.

(vii) Other Provisions:

The draft Directive also contains provisions (in line with the other individual directives) relating to the provision of information to workers, the training of workers, and the consultation of workers and worker participation.

A series of annexes to the draft directive provides a detailed list of minimum safety and health requirements for workplaces aboard means of transport. Annex 1 provides a list of activities to be used in determining the scope of the proposed Directive. Annex 2 provides a comprehensive list of minimum safety and health requirements and sanitary facilities referred to in Articles 3 and 4. Annex 3 provides a list of minimum safety and health requirements in terms of organisational measures which are referred to in Article 6 of the proposed Directive.

The draft Directive proposes that Member States should be required to bring into force the necessary laws, regulations and administrative provisions to comply with the Directive by the 31st December 1994. Member States are also required to communicate to the Commission the texts of the national laws introduced to comply with the Directive and to report every five years on the practical implementation of the proposals.

Proposal for a Council Directive concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for transport activities and workplaces on means of transport. Official Journal of the European Communities C 25 - January 1993.

Continuing Education and Training

The importance of continuing vocational training, as distinct from initial vocational training, as a factor in improving the competitiveness, productivity and product quality of firms has been increasingly recognised over recent years. Within the context of rapidly changing technology and production techniques, it has become increasingly impossible to concentrate effective vocational training into the initial few years at the start of employment. Therefore the importance of effective provision for continuing vocational training has been accepted by employers, workers and governments alike.

The concept of continuing vocational training as a fundamental social right was reflected by Article 15 of the Community Social Charter, which stated: "Every worker must be able to have access to vocational training and to benefit therefrom throughout his working life". Despite broad agreement on the importance of continuing vocational training, there are still a number of major obstacles to access to such training. Too few firms have training plans geared to developing their human resources. Many small and medium sized enterprises face specific difficulties in setting up appropriate training policies.

As far as individual workers are concerned, many - particularly older workers - have gaps in their basic training and often have inadequate basic education. There are substantial differences between male and female participation rates in continuing training. For a variety of reasons, workers are often insufficiently motivated to undergo training. The European Commission, in its 1989 Social Charter Action Programme, promised to submit an instrument to the Council on access to continuing vocational training. This has now been done in the form of a proposed Council Recommendation.

The draft Recommendation calls on Member States to introduce and strengthen different measures focusing on a number of key areas:-

- (i) Encouraging undertakings to introduce and implement training plans and programmes;
- (ii) Providing methods and mechanisms for assistance to SMEs (including links between large and small companies) to help them overcome problems associated with their size;
- (iii) Promoting new forms of work organisation and inter-company links in order to help undertakings

- (iv) faced with industrial change and transformation; Enabling continuing vocational training to play a part in regional development;
- (v) Ensuring that workers are informed about the conditions of access to continuing training in the undertaking or in partnership with public authorities;
- (vi) Encouraging the adoption of individual assessment of skills and training requirements whilst guaranteeing the confidentiality of information concerning the individual;
- (vii) Encouraging the consultation with workers' representatives over continuing training issues;
- (viii) Ensuring that the content and design of continuing training activities contributes to their overall effectiveness within undertakings;
- (ix) Encouraging the dissemination of new techniques of processing and transferring information so as to facilitate access to continuing training for workers who cannot use traditional methods such as workers in rural areas, employees of SMEs, and itinerant workers;
- (x) Enabling all workers to reach a basic level of skill and to achieve a basic mastery of the new technologies so as to protect those groups in society most vulnerable to unemployment;
- (xi) Encouraging measures to reduce the inequalities in access to continuing training between women and men;
- (xii) Increasing the effectiveness of training for those seeking work.
- (xiii) Identifying ways of avoiding discrimination in access to continuing training based on the personal characteristics of workers, particularly their nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion or opinions.

The draft Recommendation invites the Commission to reinforce co-operation with Member States and the social partners in order to support the implementation of the measures listed above. The Commission undertakes to disseminate and add to the body of comparative information on continuing vocational training, reinforce exchanges of experience and methods of good practice, and support transfers of know-how between Member States by means of transnational partnerships and networks, especially for the benefit of regions, sectors and groups of workers where access to continuing training is less developed.

The Trade Union Movement in the Netherlands

A number of years ago, the European Trade Union Institute - the research and documentation arm of the European Trade Union Confederation - commenced publication of a series of guides to national trade union movements. The latest in this series, which deals with the trade union movement in the Netherlands, has just been published.

In the latest year for which total figures were available - 1989 - there were some 1,600,000 trade union members in the Netherlands, representing about a quarter of the total workforce. The majority of Dutch trade unions are affiliated to one of three confederations:-

The FNV:

(De Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging - Dutch Trade Union Confederation). Established in 1981, the FNV brought together the trade unions who had previously been affiliated to the Catholic Trade Union Confederation (NKV) and the socialist trade union confederation - the NVV. Total affiliated membership of the FNV in 1991 was 1,059,339.

The CNV:

(Het Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond - Christian Trade Union Confederation). Established in 1909, the CNV based its philosophy on Christian principles and a rejection of class warfare. After an early attempt to be an interdenominational Christian confederation, it eventually became a de facto Protestant trade union confederation. Total affiliated membership of the CNV in 1991 was 316,814.

The MHP:

(De vakcentrale voor Middelbaar en Hoger Personeel - Confederation of Senior and Higher Managerial Employees' Unions). Established in 1974, the MHP brought together three trade unions active in representing management, executive and professional staff in both the public and private sectors. Total affiliated membership of the MHP in 1991 was 133,167.

In 1990 a fourth confederation, the General Trade Union Confederation (AVC) was established but as yet it has not been officially recognised. It has an affiliated membership of over 100,000.

The three main confederations (FNV, CNV and MHP) are affiliated to the European Trade Union Confederation and relations between the confederations have improved in recent years. Regular consultation between the confederations on policy matters takes place and in 1991 - for the first time ever - joint action was organised in protest against government policy on the Health Insurance Act and the Industrial Disablement Act.

Trade union density in the Netherlands declined during the 1980s (from 32% in 1983 to 24% in 1989). There are still considerable differences between density in different sectors as the following table indicates.

Sector	Trade Union Density % 1989
Agriculture	24
Manufacturing	25
Public Utilities	45
Construction	45
Commerce, Hotel & Catering	8
Transport & Communications	33
Banking & Insurance	9
Other Services	30
Education	38

Industrial relations in The Netherlands can be classed as a consultation model, and thus the social partners have an influential position in social and economic life. There is a strong trade union organisation at central level but its representation is weaker at local level.

The ETUI guide (published as No. 35 in the Info series) provides a detailed overview of both the organisation and policies of the various trade union confederations. Its structure is similar to that of the other reviews of national trade union movements published in this series and this provides the basis of a useful comparative approach. It is published in English, French, German, Dutch and Norwegian, and Italian and Spanish versions will be available in the near future. It is priced at BF 300, although a reduced price of BF 100 is available to trade union organisations, trade union members and students.

The European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations

The European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations was officially launched by European Commission President, Jacques Delors, on the 21st January. The main aim of the Year is to make the public more aware of the changes taking place within society which result from the population getting older. Specific objectives include:

- to heighten society's awareness of the situation of older people, the challenges resulting from present and future demographic developments and the consequences of an ageing population for all Community policies.
- to increase the ability of older people to lead independent lives.
- to deal more effectively with the health problems of older people.
- to promote and enhance the positive contribution of older people within society.
- to promote solidarity between generations.

The European Year will bring together a number of measures designed to achieve these objectives, many of which will be either financed or co-financed by the European Community. Total European funding of ECU 6.9 million (£5,500,000) has been allocated for the support of measures during the campaign. At European level a major research study is being undertaken into attitudes towards older people and the European Commission is preparing a report on the social integration of older people. During the Year, exhibitions, festivals and events of all kind will reflect the themes which form the campaign.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, European Commissioner for Social Affairs, Pádraig Flynn, emphasised that it would not just be a year of studies but also a year of festivals and celebrations. "We should celebrate the fact that, in this day and age, we live better and for longer" he said. The opening ceremony reflected the importance of the concept of solidarity between generations by bringing together over 6,000 people of all ages.

The latest Eurobarometer survey (conducted amongst a sample of 5,000 people from all EC Member States) concentrates on the question of older people and solidarity between generations. The publication of the

survey results was timed to coincide with the start of the European year of older people and solidarity between generations. Amongst the main findings of the survey are:-

- (i) the existence of a powerful intergenerational solidarity between young and old, workers and pensioners;
- (ii) a widespread awareness of age discrimination and a belief that something should be done to counter this injustice;
- (iii) a strong belief that older people should do more to stand up for their own rights;
- (iv) a resentment amongst older people at the low levels of their pensions;
- (v) a general dissatisfaction amongst older people with the life they lead (less than 25% of older people questioned said that they were satisfied with the life they lead). The rate of satisfaction varies considerably between Member States - whilst 68% of Danish and 43% of Dutch pensioners are satisfied with the lives they lead, only 6% of Greek and 3% of Portuguese pensioners are satisfied.

The 5 themes covered by the survey were:-

- (i) Older European Citizens: questions examined attitudes towards respect for the elderly, contact between older people and their families, and an examination of how older people spend their time.
- (ii) Inter-generational relations: questions examined the level of contact between different generations and whether younger people have a responsibility for ensuring that older people have a decent standard of living.
- (iii) Pensions and financial security: questions examined the attitude towards public pensions schemes, methods of financing pensions and attitudes towards reduced prices for older people.
- (iv) Older Workers: questions related to whether older workers should be encouraged to take early retirement in favour of younger, unemployed workers and to the question of age discrimination.
- (v) Politics and Policy: questions related to knowledge of, and support for, the European Year of older people, and whether more should be done at European level in favour of older people.

Commission Propose Directive on Noise and Vibration Levels at Work

Millions of workers in the European Community are subjected to excessive exposure to physical agents, such as noise and mechanical vibration, which can have harmful effects on their health. These result in accidents or illness in addition to the pernicious effect on the victims' quality of life. There are gaps and disparities between national regulations which result in inequality in both the protection afforded to workers and the burdens borne by undertakings in respect of measures taken to control the risks.

The European Commission has therefore submitted a proposal for a Council Directive which seeks to establish a common approach within the European Community to the establishment of minimum standards in relation to workers exposed to noise, vibration and other physical agents. The proposal is in the form of an individual directive under the 1989 Framework Directive on health and safety at work. Whilst existing European legislation exists in the field of noise hazards at work (Directive 86/188/EEC), there is a significant degree of unevenness between Member States in relation to other hazards resulting from physical agents such as vibration, optical radiation and electrical and magnetic fields and waves.

The European Commission pointed out the need for a comprehensive approach to physical agents in the workplace in their Social Charter Action Programme. Equally, the European Parliament, in a resolution adopted in 1990, called upon the Commission to propose a directive covering risks from noise, vibration and other physical agents.

The aim of the new Commission proposal is to bring about a gradual improvement in the level of protection afforded to workers and to achieve a harmonisation of the minimum safety and health requirements. The draft directive seeks to:-

- supplement and consolidate the existing standards in relation to noise levels set out in the 1986 Directive;
- introduce threshold levels, action levels and - in the case of optical radiation and fields and waves - ceiling levels, for each type of physical agent;
- establish systems for the provision of information to workers, the provision of training, and the

consultation and participation of workers in line with the 1989 Health and Safety Framework Directive.

- Provide the basis for a further extension of minimum standards in relation to physical agents in the future.

The concept of ceiling levels, action levels and threshold levels can be best understood in terms of the existence of three hazard areas.

- a BLACK zone where exposure results in hazards which are considered to be excessive and which the draft directive bans;
- a WHITE zone in which the draft directive does not stipulate any specific measures and which are a matter for long-term prevention;
- an intermediate GREY zone where measures must be implemented to control the hazards.

A threshold level constitutes the upper boundary of the white zone. A ceiling level constitutes the lower boundary of the black zone. Action levels relate to the grey intermediate zone.

The various threshold, action and ceiling levels are set out in the annex to the draft directive. In terms of noise exposure, the threshold level is set at 75dB(A). Three action levels are established:-

- 80dB(A) for informing workers likely to be exposed to these levels and supplying personal protective equipment on request;
- 85dB(A) for the introduction of a programme of technical and/or organisational measures aimed at reducing exposure, training in the implementation of protective measures, and the provision of information on the noise produced by work equipment;
- 90dB(A) for the delimiting of areas where workers are likely to be exposed to these levels and for the restriction of access.

Full details of the draft directive and the various annexes can be found in the Official Journal of the European Communities (C 77 of 18th March 1993) and in COM(92) 560 final of the 23rd December 1992.

The Revision of the Community Structural Funds.

The European Commission has announced proposals for the revision of the Community structural funds which will take effect at the beginning of 1994. The proposed revisions will build on the major reform of the structural funds which was undertaken in 1988. The structural funds are the main instruments at the disposal of the European Community in its efforts to achieve economic and social cohesion. Since 1988, the three existing funds - the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the European Agriculture Guarantee and Guidance Fund (Guidance Section) have operated in a co-ordinated manner with a set of common priority objectives. The current proposals for revision are designed to promote the continuity of the four basic principles established by the 1988 reforms - programming, concentration, partnership and additionality - whilst simplifying their application.

The Commission proposals are contained within a series of draft regulations which will amend the existing horizontal and vertical structural fund regulations. The two horizontal regulations are the framework regulation which establishes the objectives of the structural funds and the co-ordination regulation which establishes the inter-relationship between the individual funds. The vertical regulations relate to the individual funds - the ERDF, ESF and the EAGGF. In addition, a new vertical regulation is proposed which will establish a Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG).

The main elements of the proposed revision are as follows:-

Period of Coverage

The financial framework for the development of the structural funds adopted by the Edinburgh European Council meeting last December covers the period 1994-1999. The Commission is proposing that the period of coverage for eligibility, programmes and measures should be the same except in two cases. In the case of Objective 2 measures (regions of industrial decline) the eligibility of regions will be reassessed by the end of 1996, and therefore programmes and measures will initially only cover a three year period. In the case of the new Objective 4 (the adaption of

workers to industrial change), programmes and measures will again be limited to a three year period to allow an initial evaluation of the objective by the end of 1996.

The Priority Objectives

Few changes are proposed to Objectives 1,2 and 5b. The previous Objectives 3 and 4 are combined into a new Objective 3, and a new Objective 4 is added. Objective 5a is expanded to include the adjustment of fisheries structures. Thus the list of priority objectives, and the funding instruments available to each, is as follows:

Objective	Fund Support
1 The promotion, development and structural adjustment of regions lagging behind in development.	ERDF, ESF, EAGGF (Guidance)
2 Converting regions seriously affected by industrial decline.	ERDF, ESF
3 Combating long-term unemployment and facilitating the integration into working life of young people and those socially excluded from the labour market.	ESF
4 Facilitating the adaption of workers to industrial change and changes in production systems.	ESF
5a Promoting rural development by speeding up the adjustment of agricultural structures in the context of the reform of the CAP. Adjustment of fisheries structures in the context of the reform of the CFP.	EAGGF (Guidance), FIFG
5b Promoting rural development by facilitating the structural adjustment of rural areas.	EAGGF (Guidance), ESF, ERDF

Regional Coverage

Whilst, at this stage, no changes are proposed to the list of regions covered by Objective 2, the Commission are proposing some amendments to the list of regions covered by Objective 1. The Commission are proposing to add the regions of the former East Germany, the Belgian region of Hainaut, the Spanish region of Cantabria, and the British regions of Merseyside and the Highlands and Islands to the list of Objective 1 eligible regions. At the same time they are proposing to remove the Italian region of Abruzzi from the list. Consequently the regions covered by Objective 1 would be:

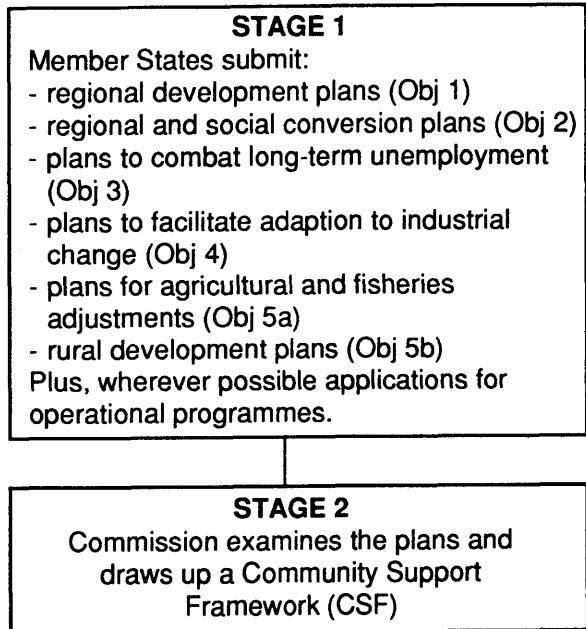
PROPOSED OBJECTIVE 1 REGIONS	
F.R. Germany:	<i>East Berlin, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Saxony, Saxe Anhalt, Thuringen.</i>
Belgium:	<i>Hainaut</i>
Spain:	<i>Andalusia, Asturias, Castilla y León, Cantabria, Castilla-LaMancha, Ceuta-Melilla, Valencia, Extremadura, Galicia, Canary Islands, Murcia.</i>
France:	<i>French Overseas Departments, Corsica.</i>
Ireland:	<i>The entire country.</i>
Greece:	<i>The entire country.</i>
Italy:	<i>Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Molise, Apulia, Sardinia, Sicily.</i>
Portugal:	<i>The entire country.</i>
UK:	<i>Northern Ireland, Highlands and Islands, Merseyside.</i>

Improving Partnership

One of the most important proposed revisions, as far as the European Trade Union movement is concerned, is the proposal to improve partnership by specifically including the participation of the social partners, designated by the Member States, at national, regional, local or other level in the preparation and implementation of operations. Whilst the participation of the social partners has been encouraged in the past, changes to Article 4 of the Framework Regulations now require the social partners to be involved in the partnership responsible for establishing operations. The effect of these proposed changes will be to ensure that trade unions - along with the other social partners - are fully involved in the preparation, monitoring and assessment of operations.

Simplifying Decision-Making

In order to simplify the decision-making process, the Commission is proposing to replace the current three stages, with two. Thus, in the majority of cases, Member States will be required to submit, wherever possible, applications for operational programmes at the same time as they submit their overall plans. The resulting two-stage process will therefore be:-

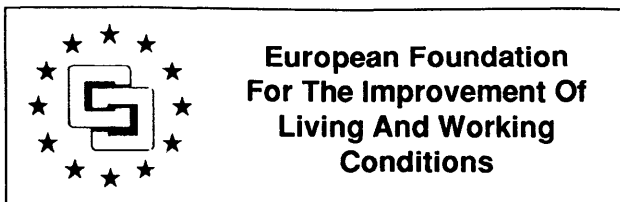


Monitoring, Evaluation and Control

Three changes are proposed in order to improve monitoring, evaluation and control of structural fund activities:

- The regulations will make it explicit that Member States have the prime responsibility for evaluation;
- Plans submitted under the various objectives would have to include an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of previous operations financed by the structural funds;
- The Monitoring Committees will receive increased responsibilities in line with the simplification of the programming process.

Full details of the Commission proposals can be found in the Official Journal of the European Community. The proposed horizontal Regulations are in C118 of the 28th April 1993 and the proposed vertical Regulations are in C121 of the 1st May 1993.



**EUROPEAN FOUNDATION :
1993 - 1996 Rolling Programme**

The Dublin-based European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions was created by the European Community in 1975 to "contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions through action designed to increase and disseminate knowledge likely to assist this development". The work of the Foundation is based upon four year rolling work programmes, the latest of which, covering the years 1993 - 1996, has just been published. This new programme covers an important stage in the development of the Community - coinciding with the start of the unified Single Market and encompassing the likely implementation of the new Maastricht Treaty on European Union. The new programme has been constructed around three main goals, to which the Foundation believes it can make a significant contribution. These are:-

- (i) Improving the health and well-being of European workers and citizens;
- (ii) Increasing economic and social cohesion and fighting against the exclusion of disadvantaged groups;
- (iii) Maintaining the move towards a sustainable and integrated development of social, economic and ecological aspects of living and working conditions.

The Rolling Programme groups proposed activities into six main thematic areas, and for each area consideration is given to the three main aspects of the Foundation's approach - its information and dissemination programme; its programme of debate and discussion; and its research and development programme. The thematic areas are:-

- (i) Social cohesion;
- (ii) Access to employment, innovation and work organisation;
- (iii) Human relations within the company, the social dialogue and industrial relations;
- (iv) Health and safety;
- (v) Socio-economic aspects of the environment;

- (vi) Equal opportunities between women and men.

A number of key principles, which have been developed by the Foundation during its fifteen years of research, will be reflected through all six thematic areas: these include an integrated approach linking working conditions and the environment, giving priority to preventive actions, stressing involvement and participation of those concerned, a concern with economic effectiveness, and giving full consideration to urban and rural regional disparities.

Full details of the various activities planned during the four year period can be found in the programme which is available from the Foundation.



EP Calls For "Reference Fair Wage"

The March Plenary Session of the European Parliament adopted the Wilson Report which approves the European Commission Opinion on an equitable wage. The Commission Opinion believes that the right to an equitable wage - as stipulated in the Community Social Charter - should be reaffirmed by Member States and the social partners. In consequence all workers, including homeworkers, should receive such a wage irrespective of gender, age, disability, race, religion or ethnic origin.

The European Parliament Opinion is in favour of the Commission proposals, however it calls for the adoption of a reference fair wage at national level to serve as a basis for collective bargaining. It recommends that arrangements be established by either law or collective bargaining to establish a minimum wage.

The Opinion recommends encouraging the development of exchanges of information at European level on wage structures in the public and private sectors, benefits, industrial relations systems and worker participation. It also states that it is willing to support the Commission's voluntary approach to establishing an equitable wage at this stage. However, it calls on the European Commission to propose a binding legal instrument to facilitate the right of all workers to an equitable wage if progress towards equitable wages is inadequate during the coming two years.

**European Parliament Resolution
on Social Dumping**

The February plenary session of the European Parliament adopted a resolution by a large majority (198 in favour, 42 against) calling for the Commission to urgently consider how to implement provisions which would prevent companies from using social competition to boost their profits. The resolution comes in the wake of the Hoover case where production is being transferred from Dijon in France to Scotland and it is believed that the UK's exemption from the Maastricht social chapter may be a factor in the transfer. The resolution calls for efforts to "permit and facilitate dialogue between management and labour in plants belonging to the same company and situated in several Member States" even in advance of the adoption of the draft directive on European Works Councils.

The Commission is also called upon to urgently report on relocation decisions taken by undertakings in recent years so that factors determining relocation can be identified. Parliament also called on the British government to accede to the social chapter of the Maastricht Treaty as soon as possible. During the debate it was pointed out that there have been several recent examples of work being relocated from Scotland to France.



INFLATION :

Annual inflation January 1993.

Annual Inflation in EC Member States :
Year ending January 1993. Year ending December 1992 (* November 1992) in brackets.

Denmark	1.5%	(1.5%)
United Kingdom	1.7%	(2.6%)
France		(2.0%)
Ireland		(2.0%) *
Netherlands	2.6%	(2.9%)
Belgium	2.8%	(2.4%)
Luxembourg	3.5%	(2.9%)
Italy	4.3%	(4.6%)
Germany	4.4%	(3.7%)
Spain		(5.4%)
Portugal	8.5%	(8.4%)
Greece	14.5%	(14.4%)



**European Centre For The
Development Of Vocational
Training**

**Vocational Qualifications In The
Public Works Sector**

In 1985, the European Commission commenced a programme of work designed to provide a practical guide to the comparability of vocational qualifications between Member States within a number of industrial and commercial sectors. The detailed work for each chosen sector, which was organised and co-ordinated by the EC Vocational Training Centre - CEDEFOP, resulted in the publication of a detailed Communication. The central core of each of these Communications is a comparative table of certificates and diplomas for each major occupation within the chosen sector, along with an agreed common description of practical vocational requirements. The tables not only describe the relevant national qualifications, but also the type of educational establishment providing appropriate training.

The latest sector to be covered by such a Communication is the public works sector. Occupations covered by the comparative table include road builder, water worker, well driller, sewer builder, pipelayer, asphelter, pavior, crane operator, scaffolder, construction plant operator and platelayer/tracklayer.

CEDEFOP's 1993-1996 Work Programme

The CEDEFOP Action Guidelines for the years 1993-96, recently adopted by the Centre's Management Board, proposes that activities will focus on two main priority subject areas. One of these subject areas is the analysis of the process and the development of occupational qualifications in the twelve Member States. The other area is an in-depth observation of trends in vocational training systems.

For its 1993 Work Programme, CEDEFOP has highlighted some 15 projects. These include projects aimed at disseminating comparative information on vocational qualifications and the establishment of national databases on vocational training qualifications and certification. CEDEFOP will also be examining the effect of collective agreements on the structure of qualifications and the range of procedures, the relation between vocational training and employment practices in Member States, and mechanisms for the validation of skills acquired through experience.

EUROPEAN TRADE UNION DAY OF ACTION

Thousands of trade unionists gathered in Brussels on Friday April 2nd to take part in the Day of Action in favour of the European social dimension which was organised by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). A demonstration, led by a group of British coal miners protesting about pit closures in the UK, made its way to the European Parliament headquarters in Brussels where it was received by Jean-Pierre Cot, the Chairman of the EP Socialist Group.

To coincide with the demonstration, a meeting was held between ETUC officials and Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission and the Commissioner responsible for social policy, Pdraig Flynn. Jacques Delors outlined a number of priorities in the social field in both the short and the medium term. In the short term he emphasised the importance of implementing the European Growth Initiative and the need to achieve progress on the adoption of the proposals for European Works Councils.

President Delors said that in the medium term the Community should reflect upon unemployment, not just in terms of an economic and social problem but also in terms of a problem of society.

The day of action provided a unique example of European workers combining together in order to press for issues of common interest. By focusing their demands on the need for a real social dimension to the European Community, they maintained pressure on those Member States which are still attempting to block progress on social affairs proposals in the Council of Ministers.

ADVANCED COURSE IN TRADE UNION EUROPEAN STUDIES 1993

Ruskin College, which is based in Oxford in the UK, with the support of the European Commission and the British TUC is organising three two-week courses for trade union full-time officials and senior workplace representatives of trade unions in EC Member States. The courses will be held in June, July or August, and September and they will concentrate exclusively on European issues. Themes covered on the courses will include:-

- the development of closer monetary, economic and political union in the EC following Maastricht:

- the social dimension of the Single Market and progress with the development of the Social Charter;
- the proposed European Works Council Directive and the respective experiences of different machinery and processes for employee representation in different EC Member States.

The cost per course member will not exceed ECU 650, including board and accommodation and tuition at Stoke House Short Course and Conference Centre, Oxford. Additional tuition in English as a foreign language could also be provided if requested. Further details of the courses can be obtained from:-

Roy Moore
Ruskin College,
Ruskin Hall, Dunstan Road, Headington,
Oxford OX3 9BZ, United Kingdom
Fax: +44 865 63090

THE FUTURE OF EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY

The European Commission has issued an announcement calling for interested parties to contribute towards the proposed future development of European social policy.

Having now tabled nearly all the proposals foreseen in the Social Charter Action Programme, the Commission is in the process of planning the next phase of Community social policy. It is intended that this will take into account, as key points of reference, the Social Charter, the progress achieved on the action programme, the new legal and institutional framework foreseen in the Maastricht Treaty as well as the main evolving social and economic trends.

Before presenting specific proposals, the Commission believes that it would be useful to have a wide-ranging discussion on the basis of a general Green Paper. The Commission hope to adopt the Green Paper by the end of September. The Commission wishes to allow all interested parties to contribute to this process and submissions are therefore invited with regard to the key issues that the Green Paper should address.

Submissions are required by the 15th June and should be sent to:-

Mr S Crespo Valera, DGV,
Commission of the European Communities,
RP 11 - 4/59, Rue de la Loi, 200,
B-1049 Brussels.

Regional Unemployment Statistics - April 1992

EUROSTAT, the Community statistical service, has released figures for unemployment in the various regions of the European Community. The figures compare total unemployment rates in April 1992 with the equivalent figure for April 1991. In the following table the figures have been arranged in ascending order of percentage unemployment rates.

Region	Country	04/92	04/91	Region	Country	04/92	04/91
Luxembourg Average	LUX	1.8	1.5	Sachsen-Anhalt	GER	n/a	9.3
Baden-Wuerttemberg	GER	2.9	2.4	EC12 Average	EC12	9.4	8.5
Bayern	GER	3.0	2.6	East Midlands	UK	9.4	7.6
Hessen	GER	3.7	3.4	Centre-Est	FRA	9.5	8.4
Madeira	PORT	3.7	3.1	Brandenburg	GER	n/a	9.6
Rheinland-Pfalz	GER	3.7	3.5	Thueringen	GER	n/a	9.6
Acores	PORT	4.0	3.8	Denmark Average	DMK	9.6	8.7
Lombardia	ITALY	4.2	3.5	France Average	FRA	9.7	9.0
West-Vlaanderen	BELG	4.3	3.8	Ouest	FRA	9.8	9.2
Emilia-Romagna	ITALY	4.5	4.3	South West	UK	9.8	7.4
Germany Average	GER	4.5	4.2	East Berlin	GER	n/a	9.8
Portugal Average	PORT	4.5	3.6	Bassin Parisien	FRA	9.9	9.0
Contiente	PORT	4.5	3.6	Attiki	GRE	n/a	9.9
Nord Est	ITALY	4.6	4.2	Sud-Ouest	FRA	10.0	9.1
Schleswig-Holstein	GER	4.7	4.8	Namur	BELG	10.0	9.3
Nisia Aigaiou Kriti	GRE	n/a	4.8	Bruxelles/Brussel	BELG	10.2	9.0
Oost-Vlaanderen	BELG	5.3	4.8	Lazio	ITALY	10.3	10.3
Hamburg	GER	5.4	6.1	South East	UK	10.3	7.6
Niedersachsen	GER	5.5	5.4	Wales	UK	10.3	9.3
Vlaams Gewest	BELG	5.6	5.1	Italy Average	ITALY	10.5	10.2
Nordrhein-Westfalen	GER	5.7	5.6	UK Average	UK	10.6	8.8
Luxembourg	BELG	5.7	5.4	Yorks & Humberside	UK	10.6	9.4
Voreia Ellada	GRE	n/a	6.3	Liege	BELG	10.8	10.1
West-Nederland	NETH	6.3	6.7	Scotland	UK	10.8	10.1
Zuid-Nederland	NETH	6.3	6.7	Region Wallone	BELG	10.8	10.0
Saarland	GER	6.3	6.1	West Midlands	UK	11.2	9.0
Antwerpen	BELG	6.5	5.9	North West	UK	11.5	10.1
Netherlands Average	NETH	6.6	7.0	North	UK	11.8	11.1
Oost-Nederland	NETH	6.7	7.1	Mecklenburg-Vorp.	GER	n/a	12.1
Brabant	BELG	7.0	6.2	Abruzzi-Molise	ITALY	12.4	10.7
Kentriki Ellada	GRE	n/a	7.2	Madrid	SPA	12.5	11.8
Centro	ITALY	7.5	7.6	Nord-Pas-De-Calais	FRA	12.6	11.6
West Berlin	GER	7.5	6.5	Mediterranee	FRA	12.9	11.9
Est	FRA	7.5	6.9	Hainaut	BELG	13.2	12.3
Belgium Average	BELG	7.6	7.0	Este	SPA	14.9	13.1
Limburg	BELG	7.8	7.2	Noreste	SPA	15.3	14.7
Bremen	GER	7.9	8.1	Sud	ITALY	16.4	17.8
Ile De France	FRA	8.0	7.6	Noroeste	SPA	16.6	13.7
Nord Ovest	ITALY	8.2	6.5	Northern Ireland	UK	16.7	16.3
East Anglia	UK	8.3	6.3	Ireland Average	IRE	17.6	15.8
Noord-Nederland	NETH	8.5	9.0	Spain Average	SPA	17.8	16.1
Sachsen	GER	n/a	8.8	Centro	SPA	18.5	16.3
Greece Average	GRE	9.2	7.7	Sardegna	ITALY	18.7	18.4
				Campania	ITALY	21.3	20.8
				Sicilia	ITALY	21.8	21.9
				Canarias	SPA	24.8	24.6
				Sur	SPA	25.9	23.9

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