

*European*

# TRADE UNION

## *Information Bulletin*

ISSUE 4 of 1993

SOCIAL DIALOGUE SUMMIT, SEPTEMBER 1993

### Social Partners Reaffirm Commitment To European Integration And Economic And Social Cohesion

The high-level meeting of the Social Dialogue held in Brussels on the 28th September provided an opportunity for the social partners (UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC) to strenuously reaffirm their commitment to continued European integration and their conviction that only more extensive economic and social cohesion can provide the foundations and resources for a recovery which was vital to Europe.

The meeting, which brought together Council President Jean-Luc Dehaene, Commission President Jacques Delors, and the leaders of the three social partner organisations was held as part of the preparation process for the forthcoming European Commission White Paper on "Growth, Competitiveness and Employment". The social dialogue leaders invited the Social Dialogue Committee to try and develop common inputs for the White paper with the assistance of the appropriate working group. They also called on the Commission to initiate studies, in co-operation with UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC, on topics related to growth, competitiveness and employment.

The June European Council meeting, held in Copenhagen, decided to implement a strategy to re-establish sustainable growth, improve the competitiveness of European industry and reduce unemployment. It called on the European Commission to present a White paper on these three issues which will be discussed at the Brussels European Council meeting in December. It also asked the European Commission to consult the social partners during the preparation of its White Paper.

On the following pages summaries are provided of two recent reports which will also provide an essential background to the new White Paper : the Commission Communication entitled "A Community-Wide Framework For Employment" and the 1993 Annual Employment in Europe Report. The next edition of the Bulletin will carry an extended report on the new White Paper.

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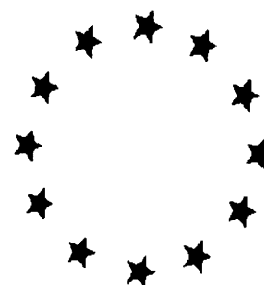
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# A Community-Wide Framework For Employment

The European Commission have presented a Communication which sets out proposals for a framework within which a process of analysis and exchange of information can be pursued in a structured and co-operative manner with a view to co-ordinated action to increase employment opportunities. The Communication has been issued at a time when growing concern with the lack of growth in employment is evident within the Community and its institutions. At the informal Social affairs Council on the 3rd and 4th of May 1993, the Danish presidency expressed the need to strengthen the Community approach to combating unemployment. The Ministers underlined the need for supplementary coordination and action at Community level in order to address the common problems of employment and unemployment. The Council supported a presentation by the Commission of a proposal which would provide a framework for actions at all levels within the Community - and this proposal is detailed in the new Communication.

It is based on four key observations:-

- The current high level of unemployment is unacceptable. It is damaging both to the Community's competitiveness, and to economic and social cohesion.
- Stronger economic growth is required, but the employment problems cannot be resolved by economic growth alone. A more employment-intensive pattern of growth is needed if employment needs are to be met.
- An integrated policy response is needed, mobilising all actors involved in employment matters.
- Primary responsibility for action lies with, and within, the Member states, but closer co-operation at the level of the Community is necessary - economically and politically - in order to ensure the maximum impact of national actions.

The Communication records the scale and nature of the employment problem within the Community. Over 17 million people in the EC are now out of work. Almost half of these have been out of work for more than a year. On current forecasts unemployment will continue to increase during the rest of 1993 and throughout 1994. If current trends persist, the rate of Community unemployment will have reached the all-time record level of 10.8% by the end of 1994.

Unemployment statistics alone do not provide a full representation of the scale of the problem facing the Community. The EC has a low rate of employment compared with other industrialised areas of the world. Less than 60% of the working age population of the Community are currently in work, compared with over 70% in the USA, Japan and the EFTA states. The counterpart of such a low rate of

employment is not only high unemployment but also a hidden labour supply. This is partly shown by the fact that in the late 1980s, the creation of over 9 million new jobs only reduced unemployment by some 3 million. Consequently, economic growth alone is unlikely to lead to a sufficient scale of job creation to reduce unemployment in the Community to a more acceptable level of 5%.

The Communication points out that levels of employment depend, not only on the rate of economic growth, but on the employment intensity of that growth. Employment intensity depends not only on the relative levels of capital and labour (the labour intensity of growth), but also on the way a given volume of employment is divided up between numbers of jobs and numbers of hours. Comparisons with other countries tend to suggest that economic growth in the Community tends to lead to higher income growth per worker rather than higher employment growth. Over the past decade, the United States has sustained similar rates of growth in GDP to the Community. During this period, however, the rate of income growth per worker has been lower in the USA than in the Community (1% as opposed to 2%). But employment levels in the USA are some 10% greater than in the EC Member States.

The Communication draws three main conclusions from the analysis of the current employment problem.

- 1) The scale and nature of Europe's employment problems are cause for major concern. Action is needed to prevent serious impairment to the Community's economic competitiveness in the next century and damage to the fabric of our society.
- 2) There is sufficient evidence and experience to suggest that ways of, at least, improving the situation can be found - over and above those which can result from higher levels of economic growth - by Governments adopting policy mixes which favour a more employment-intensive pattern of growth.
- 3) Although the main instruments lie with, and within, the Member States, the Community has an important role to play as a catalyst, as a forum for co-ordination, and as a support through the use of Community policies. Action at Community level is also necessary for reasons which are both economic (because of the growing inter-dependence of the economies of Member States) and political.

Consequently the Commission are proposing that Community institutions and Member States commit themselves to a structured, co-operative and systematic process of analysis and policy reflection on possible solutions to the employment problem with a view to concerted policy

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action, centred principally around the need to create a more employment-intensive pattern of growth in Europe. The Commission is suggesting a timetable and agenda for this process which would lead to some operational conclusions by the end of 1994. The Commission undertakes to underpin this process by promoting the transformation of successful Community pilot experiences into mainstream policies. The Commission also intends to present analysis and suggestions for co-ordinated action in a number of areas, in particular the following:-

- adaptability at the workplace, and the potential for developing new forms of employment based on new forms of work organisation.
- the development of new working time structures able to expand employment opportunities.
- the development of training systems and qualifications able to improve integration into the labour market, and anticipate structural change.

- investigating the scope for reducing labour costs and increasing employment-intensity, notably by modifying the incidence of taxation systems.
- the exploitation of the employment growth potential of new areas of work - the environmental industries, the arts, household services etc.
- the creation of employment through small businesses and self-employment.
- the role of local initiatives and local economic and employment development in strengthening the capacity of areas to create employment.
- the role of different partners and agencies in developing efficient external labour markets.

*The full text of the Communication can be found in COM(93) 238 final - 26th May 1993*

## 1993 Employment In Europe Report

The 1993 Employment in Europe Report prepared by the European Commission presents perhaps the bleakest picture since such reports were first introduced in 1989. Just a few of the headlines will serve to set the scene:

- The Community labour market has now gone into "sharp recession".
- By the end of 1993 it is estimated that all the employment gains of the 1980s will have been lost and unemployment will be back to its 1985 levels.
- Unemployment will remain the major economic problem facing the Community throughout the 1990s and perhaps beyond.
- Jobs lost are predominantly full-time jobs, whilst jobs created are mostly part-time.

In the context of such a depressing survey, the 1993 Employment in Europe Report attempts to contribute to the process of reviewing, reassessing and reformulating policy at European level - a process within which the forthcoming White paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment will play a key part. The Report does not seek to make new policies - this is the role of the White paper and the Community institutions - rather its purpose is to explore different aspects and dimensions of the employment problem and thereby bring a greater understanding to our analysis of employment and unemployment.

The Report is in three parts. The first part provides an overview of employment prospects by examining current trends and the short term economic and employment outlook. The second part examined four specific aspects of

the European labour market: recent developments in Central and Eastern Europe, the development of an integrated European labour market, labour market developments in assisted regions, and women in employment. The third part focuses on employment policies, looking at both employment protection and labour force adjustment in the Member States and the Community employment framework.

As with the previous editions, the Employment Report provides a mass of information and analysis on both Community trends and the situation in individual Member States. European trade unionists will find it invaluable for the background it gives to the current employment crisis and the evidence it provides in order to counteract some of the so-called solutions which are being suggested by some Member State governments. There follows just a few extracts and highlights taken from some 200 pages of detailed analysis.

### TRENDS IN EMPLOYMENT

The European Community has for many years been less successful than other developed parts of the world in creating jobs. Whilst the proportion of the working age

#### % of People of Working Age In Employment 1992

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY	60%
EFTA MEMBER STATES	70%
UNITED STATES	70%
JAPAN	75%

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population in employment has increased in other countries over the past 20 years, in the European Community it has dropped.

### ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT

For the European Community, as for other countries, a close relationship is evident between economic growth and job creation. The job losses suffered in 1992 were a clear consequence of the spread of recession to virtually all Member States. From the experience gained since the nineteen fifties, output growth of around 2% a year might be enough in the future to prevent employment levels from falling still further. Higher rates of growth may give rise to an increase in the numbers in work.

### TRENDS IN WORKING TIME

During the 1980s, average hours worked by those in employment in industry and services declined in all Member States other than in the United Kingdom.

#### Average Hours Worked in Industry and Services

	1983	1991
NETHERLANDS	37.0	32.5
DENMARK	36.5	34.5
GERMANY	39.5	37.5
BELGIUM	39.5	38.0
UNITED KINGDOM	38.0	38.5
FRANCE	39.0	38.5
LUXEMBOURG	40.0	39.5
ITALY	40.0	39.5
IRELAND	40.0	39.5
SPAIN (1987/1991)	41.0	40.5
PORTUGAL (1986/1991)	42.5	42.0
GREECE	43.0	42.5

### TRENDS IN SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Proportionately more people are self-employed in the Community than in other developed countries. Although part of this difference is due to the relative importance of agriculture in the EC, there is also a higher proportion of self-employed in industry and services. Equally the number of self-employed in the Community is increasing, whilst it is static in the USA and falling in Japan.

### SECTORAL TRENDS

Although the proportion of workers employed in the service sector increased substantially between 1980 and 1991, services remain considerably less important in the EC than they do in countries like the USA. The increase in employment in the service sector slowed appreciably during 1991, and two Member States - Denmark and the United Kingdom - experienced a reduction in service employment.

## WAGES AND LABOUR COSTS

There continues to be a large variation in wages and labour costs across the Community, and also a difference in non-wage costs as a proportion of total labour costs.

#### Average Hourly Labour Costs In Manufacturing In The EC Member States, 1990 ECU per worker (1990 values)

	Wage Costs	Total Costs
PORTUGAL	2.5	3.5
GREECE	4.2	5.2
IRELAND	9.4	11.2
SPAIN	8.6	11.2
UNITED KINGDOM	10.5	12.0
ITALY	11.0	15.4
LUXEMBOURG	13.8	16.3
DENMARK	16.5	17.0
FRANCE	11.8	17.1
NETHERLANDS	13.2	17.7
BELGIUM	12.8	17.8
GERMANY	15.6	20.2

The differences in labour costs largely reflect equally large differences in labour productivity. In a number of Member States there are also large regional variations in labour costs. An analysis of regional labour costs and regional unemployment indicates that, in principle, the regions with the highest labour cost in any Member State can be expected to be the regions with the lowest level of unemployment. This relationship is not true in all cases, however: in Germany wages tend to be higher in the north - where unemployment is also high - than in the south.

### WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

One of the most striking trends in the EC labour market over the last thirty years has been the growth in importance of women within the labour force. Between 1965 and 1991, while the number of women in employment in the Community increased by over 13 million, the number of men fell by 1 million. Whilst the employment of men increased in the eighties, the growth of female employment was some seven times greater. In no other developed part of the world was such a pattern evident. Many of the women who joined the labour force in the 1980s took up part-time jobs. In 1991 over 28% of women worked part-time as compared with only 4% of men. Largely as a result of this, whereas women accounted for 40% of the numbers in employment in the Community in 1991, they accounted for under 35% of the total number of hours worked.

*The full Report "Employment in Europe 1993" is available from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities and the various national agencies. The catalogue number is CB-CO-93-447 and it costs 12 ECU.*

# Common Position On Working Time Directive Adopted

After almost three years discussion and debate within the various European Community institutions, the Social Affairs Council, meeting in Luxembourg on the 1st of June, finally adopted a "common position" on the draft directive on working time. The adoption of the Common Position by a qualified majority vote represents the most significant progress to date in the campaign to establish common minimum standards on working time throughout the European Community. Pdraig Flynn, the Commissioner responsible for social policy, speaking after the Social Affairs Council meeting, said "this is an important step in the creation of a European Social Policy and, when implemented, the Directive will ensure that all workers in Europe can no longer be required to work excessively long hours".

The Commission published its initial proposals for a directive on the organisation of working time in September 1990 and they formed part of the Social Charter Action Programme. The main aims of the proposal were to ensure that workers have minimum daily, weekly and annual rest periods and that they do not work excessively long hours at night. The directive is based on Article 118A of the Treaty which stipulates that "Member States shall pay particular attention to encouraging improvements, especially in the working environment, as regards the safety and health of workers, and shall set as their objective the harmonisation of conditions in this area". Directives adopted by virtue of Article 118A can be approved using the Co-operation Procedure which involves the adoption of a common position by a qualified majority vote and a 2nd reading in the European Parliament.

## Provisions Contained Within The Common Position

The Common Position approved by the Social Affairs Council on the 1st June established the following basic principles:-

- (a) A minimum rest period of 11 consecutive hours a day.
- (b) A right to a rest break where the working day is longer than 6 hours.
- (c) A minimum rest period of 1 day a week.
- (d) A maximum working week of 48 hours on average, including overtime.
- (e) A right to 4 weeks' annual paid holiday.
- (f) Night work must not exceed an average of 8 hours a night for normal occupations.
- (g) Night work involving particular risks or leading to major physical or mental tension must not exceed a maximum of 8 hours per night.

## Derogations

Flexibility in the operation of the directive will be allowed by means of derogations. The principle types of derogation contained in the Common Position are:-

- (a) The stipulations on daily and weekly rest periods, breaks, maximum weekly working hours, and the duration of night work will not apply to senior executives and other people with autonomous decision-making power, family labour, or the clergy and workers in religious communities.
- (b) The stipulations on daily and weekly rest periods, breaks and the duration of night work may be replaced, either by legislative measures or collective agreements concluded by the social partners, by other solutions offering equivalent compensatory rest periods or, where this is impossible for objective reasons, by "appropriate protection" in cases of a number of listed occupational groups.
- (c) With respect to maximum weekly working time, employer can ask a worker who has agreed to work more than 48 hours to do so, but no worker can suffer prejudice due to the fact that he is not willing to accept such extended hours. This provision will be reviewed within 10 years of the adoption of the Directive.
- (d) With regards to annual leave, Member States are entitled to make use of a maximum three-year transitional period (on top of the three year implementation period) on condition that, during this period, all workers enjoy annual paid leave of at least three weeks.

The directive will apply to all sectors of public and private activity with the exception of the transport sector (air, rail, road, maritime and inland waterway transport) and maritime fishing.

## Reference Periods

In order to calculate weekly rest periods and maximum weekly working hours, reference periods will be made use of. Such reference periods will be used in calculation averages. The reference period for applying the principle of the 11 hour daily rest period and the 24 hour weekly rest period will be 14 days. The reference period for calculating the maximum working week of 48 hours will normally be 4 months. Through legislation and the agreement of the social partners this can be extended to 6 months, or if the social partners agree, 12 months.

## Implementation

The Common Position provides for implementation of the provisions of the Directive by Member States within three years of its final adoption by the Council. The provision of a right to a fourth week of annual paid leave will be subject to a further three year transitional period. The Common Position will now return to the European parliament for a 2nd Reading.

# Draft Directive on Protection Against Chemical Agents In The Workplace

The European Commission has presented a proposal for a new Council Directive on the protection of workplace health and safety with respect to chemical agents. The proposal is for an individual directive within the context of the 1989 Health and Safety Framework Directive, and thus it will be covered by the general provision set out in the Framework Directive. The publication of the proposal follows closely on from the proposals relating to physical agents in the workplace which is currently being considered by the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

The Commission proposals for chemical agents follows the general pattern established in earlier individual directives. Consequently it stresses the general obligations of the various parties and emphasises the need for assessment, prevention, protection, training and the provision of information.

## Coverage

The Directive establishes minimum requirements for the protection of workers against risks to their health and safety arising, or likely to arise, from the effects of chemical agents that are present in the workplace or as a result of any work activity involving chemical agents. The provisions apply to all chemical agents at work. Chemical agents are defined in the following way: "a "chemical agent" means any chemical element or compound, on its own or admixed as it occurs in the natural state or as produced by any work activity, whether or not produced intentionally and whether or not placed on the market".

## Obligations

The Directive places an obligation on employers to take the necessary measures, including the assignation of specific duties to a competent person, to ensure that for activities involving chemical agents:-

- (a) workers can perform their duties without endangering their safety or health;
- (b) operations take place under the responsibility of the designated person in charge;
- (c) work involving special risk is entrusted only to competent staff and carried out in accordance with given instructions;
- (d) effective arrangements are made to deal with accidents and emergencies;
- (e) all safety and health instructions are comprehensible to all workers concerned;
- (f) appropriate first aid facilities are provided.

The employer is required to undertake an assessment of risks in relation to chemical agents which must also list the necessary precautionary measures to protect the health and safety of workers. The employer must also ensure that the design, use and maintenance of the workplace and of equipment involving chemical agents is safe. A list of all chemicals used, or intended to be used, at the workplace must be kept.

The employer must ensure that risks arising from the use of chemical agents are either eliminated at source, or the maximum degree of reduction of risk is achieved by collective protection measures, in particular cleaner technologies, in preference to individual protection measures.

## Other Provisions

Employers must provide the warning and other communications systems required to signal increased risk to health and safety and keep workers fully informed of the chemical agents used in the workplace.

The Directive prohibits the use of certain chemical agents above a certain maximum concentration and sets occupational exposure levels for other agents - in particular lead.

Member States are required to establish arrangements to ensure that workers receive health surveillance appropriate to the safety and health risks they incur at work.

## Implementation

The current proposed final date for implementation of the Directive by Member States is the 30th June 1996. Member States will be required to report to the Commission every five years on the practical implementation of the Directive, indicating the views of employers and workers.

### EC Health And Safety Legislation

#### The Framework Directive and Individual Directives

The majority of European legislation on health and safety at work has been introduced in the form of individual directives under the 1989 Health and Safety Framework Directive. So far, some 12 individual directives have been adopted and a further four (including the draft directive on chemical agents) are under discussion within the Community institutions. Directives on biological agents and carcinogenic agents have already been adopted and a proposal for a directive on physical agents is currently before Parliament.

## ERGO II

# People taking Action Against Long Term Unemployment

About half of the 17 million unemployed workers in the European Community have been out of work for more than a year. Long-term unemployment was the slowest to respond to the period of growth in the late eighties, and the fast to respond to the recession of the early nineties. Thus, the European Community is facing a remorseless trend in the number of people who are losing contact with the labour market - and witnessing the economic, social and political effects of such a trend.

The European Community, with its responsibility for co-ordinating the economic policies of Member States in the run-up to economic and monetary union, and with its clear objective of encouraging economic and social cohesion, has an important role to play in the fight against long-term unemployment. Whilst the main campaign must be centred on economic policies at the level of the Community and individual Member States, there remains an important role for local groups, projects and programmes in encouraging labour market reintegration through the provision of advice, training, temporary work and wage subsidies.

In 1989, the European Commission launched the first phase of a programme for action, research and communication on long-term unemployment - the Ergo programme - which covered the years 1989 to 1992. The second phase - Ergo 2 - covering the period 1993 to 1996, has now been launched. The objectives of Ergo 2 are the reinforcement of awareness of the problems encountered by the long-term unemployed and those who are excluded from the labour market, and research on actions undertaken in this area by Member states and other organisations throughout the Community. In line with these general objectives, Ergo 2 has been given three complementary tasks:-

- Evaluation of projects and research on measures taken against long-term unemployment in order to understand how and in what conditions positive practices are being developed in the Community.
- Initiating and sustaining dialogue between the various actors combating long-term unemployment in order to encourage the exchange of information and know-how and with the aim of facilitating partnerships.
- Financing development activities. An annual budget of one million ECU has been allocated to fund transfers of methods used, with the aim of developing know-how on labour market reintegration at local level.

Experience gained in the first phase of the Ergo programme indicated that the effectiveness of local actions can be

### Long-Term Unemployment In The European Community

Share of long-term unemployment in the total figures for unemployment in the EC Member States  
1991

ITALY	66%	NETHERLANDS	41%
BELGIUM	61%	PORTUGAL	40%
IRELAND	60%	FRANCE	40%
SPAIN	50%	DENMARK	35%
GREECE	49%	LUXEMBOURG	32%
GERMANY	45%	UK	32%

improved, at least in part, by developing networks in local areas, co-ordinating the activities of local bodies and representatives and promoting partnerships. The Commission have therefore decided that development funding under Ergo 2 should be concerned with building and developing these characteristics of local structures. Funding is intended to support development work which leads to know-how materials which can be used in other regions of the Community to develop actions combating long-term unemployment and labour market exclusion which involves transfer of experience.

The Commission will provide up to 70% of funding required for chosen projects (up to a maximum level of Commission funding of 50,000 ECU. Proposed projects will need to demonstrate either direct transnational transfer of experience or the development of materials, and their effective packaging, which can bring lessons to the attention of a Community wide audience, including policymakers and practitioners. Proposals should also clearly show how their activities will enhance the labour market prospects of the long-term unemployed and those otherwise excluded from the labour market.

There are no formal application forms for development activity funding. Interested organisations are invited to present proposals which address the various objectives and tasks of Ergo 2 and include a breakdown of the full cost of the activity and the degree of support required from the Ergo programme. Further information on the programme can be obtained from:-

#### Ergo 2

Marie-Christine Ashby / Nick Mansley

37, rue Van Campenhout, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium.

Tel: 010 322 736 7922 Fax: 010 322 736 1147

# European Commission Opinion On An Equitable Wage

The European Commission has adopted its Opinion on an equitable wage. The final text of the Opinion takes into account the views of the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament, both of whom examined the draft Opinion which was submitted by the Commission. The Opinion stresses that the pursuit of equitable wages must be seen as a part of the general drive to achieve higher productivity, employment levels and good industrial relations. Member States are encouraged to give substance to their commitment given in the Social Charter to assure the right

of all workers to an equitable wage by following actions to improve labour market transparency with regards to wages, to ensure that the right to an equitable wage is respected, and in favour of human resource development. The social partners are also encouraged to contribute towards this end. For its part, the Commission will undertake a new, revised Survey of the Structure of Earnings and encourage the development of exchanges across the Community on practices within firms with regard to remuneration.

## Main Text of the European Commission Opinion on an Equitable Wage.

THE COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, .....  
HEREBY DELIVERS THE FOLLOWING OPINION:

1. *The right, referred to in the Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers, of all workers to be assured of an equitable wage should be reaffirmed, with particular attention being paid to the more vulnerable members of the labour force; the concept of an "equitable wage" means that all workers should receive a reward for work done which in the context of the society in which they live and work is fair and sufficient to enable them to have a decent standard of living.*
2. *While operational definitions can best be established at national, regional or sectoral levels, the right can best be assured as far as the Community level is concerned by complying with the following principles:*
  - *the Community's future in the world economy lies in achieving high productivity and high quality employment. This objective should be pursued throughout the Community not only by increasing the rate of investment in capital equipment, but also by increasing investment in education and training, particularly in order to meet the developing needs for qualifications on the part of companies and workers and by the promotion of good industrial relations;*
  - *the pursuit of equitable wages is to be seen as part of the process of achieving the Community's basic objectives of greater economic and social cohesion and a more harmonious development within the framework of an increasingly integrated European economy;*
  - *wages are determined as much by social as by economic factors. While adjustments in wages may reflect structural changes of demand and supply in industries, regions and skills, the increasingly integrated Community labour market may well affect the social preferences which influence national wage hierarchies. The Community should therefore seek ways of eliminating discriminatory wage practices, as part of its wider social and economic objectives;*
  - *attitudes to traditionally low-paid groups should be reassessed. Discrimination should be combated and equal opportunities promoted in a variety of ways, including legislation, taxation and administrative arrangements or consensus or collective bargaining.*
3. *To this end Member States should:*
  - *give substance to their commitment given in the Social Charter to assure the right of all workers to an adequate wage, irrespective of gender, disability, race, religion, ethnic origin or nationality;*
  - *take account of the principles outlined in point 2 in the development of their economic and social policies;*
  - *take the following action to implement these principles:*

### **Access to improve labour market transparency with regard to wages**

#### **Action is needed at all levels to improve the labour market, in particular:**

- *by improving transparency of the labour market by a better collection and dissemination of comparable statistical information about wage structures at Community, national and local levels to enable more effective policies to be developed and thus remove some of the causes of unfairness; employment services have an important role in this respect;*



**..... European Commission Opinion On An Equitable Wage (continued).**

- by disseminating widely existing information about equitable reference wages.

**Action designed to ensure that the right to an equitable wage is respected**

Member States should take appropriate measures to ensure that the right to an equitable wage is protected, in particular by a reassessment of the adequacy of existing arrangements to protect the right to an equitable wage, including consideration of the following:

- further legislation including legislation on discrimination, in particular on grounds of gender, race, ethnic origin or religion;
- means of ensuring fair treatment for workers in all age groups and for homeworkers;
- mechanisms for the establishment of negotiated minima and the strengthening of collective bargaining arrangements.

These arrangements could be supplemented by:

- development of codes of good practice with regards to the treatment of weaker groups of workers on the labour market who are susceptible to low wages;
- improved arrangements for providing information about the labour market, particularly with regards to rates of pay, while avoiding imposing undue burdens on small and medium-sized undertakings;
- provision of information about discriminatory practices.

The Member States should ensure that the measures taken do not force low-paid workers into the informal economy and do not encourage recourse to unlawful employment practices.

The Member States should also ensure that the measures do not have a negative impact on job creation.

They should take the necessary measures to ensure that the wages agreed in contractual labour relationships are effectively and fully paid and that employees are correctly paid in respect of periods of leave or sickness.

**Action in favour of human resource development**

Member States should take the necessary measures to improve the long-term productivity and earnings potential of the workforce. These measures should include a major effort to increase investment in human resources at all levels and at all stages of development, including secondary and tertiary education, initial training, retraining, continuous training and individual development.

4. The social partners are invited to:

- address all the issues raised by this Opinion at Community, national, regional and local level, in particular to examine what contribution they can make to ensuring the right of every worker to an equitable wage.

5. For its part the Commission considers that it is pertinent:

- to take appropriate measures to improve the quality of information available at Community level, in particular with regard to wage structures. To this end the Commission propose to undertake a new, revised Survey on the Structure of Earnings in order to provide more rapid information and to adapt existing statistical tools. The information so collected will be widely disseminated and can provide a basis for discussion at national and Community levels;
- to contribute towards a better matching of vocational training arrangements to the developing needs for qualifications and retraining of both workers and businesses, by ensuring the collection and dissemination of experiences in this area and encouraging co-operation between those concerned;
- to encourage the development of exchanges across the Community on the practices within firms with regard to remuneration;
- to undertake further studies, in collaboration with the Member States and the social partners, to seek to promote a convergence of equitable wage policies within the Member States.

6. The Commission will submit a report to the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament, after consultation with the social partners, within three years after the adoption of this Opinion on the basis of information which will be requested from the Member States on the progress made and the obstacles encountered. Thereafter, progress will be monitored every two years.



**Parliament Adopts resolution On The Social Protocol of the Maastricht Treaty**

The May Plenary Session of the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Social Policy Protocol of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union (134 in favour, 89 against, 3 abstentions). The resolution calls for the adoption of minimum social policy measures which cover all twelve Member States of the European Community. Consequently it calls on the British parliament to accept the Social Policy Protocol Agreement. According to the resolution, the basis of EC social policy should be opposition to social dumping, respect for accepted social benefits to be guaranteed by the prevention of "levelling-down", and the promotion of social rights throughout the Community.

**Text of the Resolution adopted by the May Plenary Session of the European Parliament:-**

*The European Parliament,*

- A. *having regard to the fact that the United Kingdom did not sign the Social Charter in 1989 and that no decisions have yet been taken on many of the proposals of the Social Action Programme tabled by the Commission as an instrument for social cohesion for the internal market because of the United Kingdom Government's refusal to sign,*
- B. *having regard to its resolution of 7 April 1992 on the results of the Intergovernmental Conferences,*
- C. *whereas one Member State has chosen not to be part of the Agreement on Social Policy concluded between the other Member States,*
- D. *having regard to the process of ratification of the Maastricht Treaty in the Member States,*
- E. *believing that the Agreement on Social Policy should be an integral part of the development of a people's Europe that is relevant to its citizens' daily experience,*
- F. *believing that the Agreement on Social Policy is only the beginning of a social dimension of the Community, because important points such as minimum social security rules and works councils still have to be decided unanimously in the Council, even after the Maastricht Treaty is ratified,*

- 1. *Reaffirms its view that the Agreement on Social Policy should be applicable to all 12 Member States;*
- 2. *Asks the Commission and the Member States at the next Intergovernmental Conference to adopt, in co-operation with the European Parliament, qualified majority voting procedures for all minimum social legislation;*
- 3. *Instructs its Legal Service to formulate appropriate advice for the Parliament to ensure that the benefits of the Agreement on Social Policy apply to all citizens of the Community;*
- 4. *Calls on the Community authorities and the Member States to implement social policies which permit social dumping to be opposed, respect for accepted social benefits to be guaranteed by preventing any levelling down, and the promotion of social rights to be ensured in all Member States;*
- 5. *Considers that there is a need for Parliament to promote the social dialogue by keeping in touch with the social partners;*
- 6. *Calls upon the British House of Commons to support the accession of the United Kingdom to the Agreement on Social Policy when voting on this issue after Royal Assent for the Maastricht Treaty in the United Kingdom;*
- 7. *Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the social partners and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.*

**Parliament Adopts Reports On Women's Rights**

The June Plenary Session of the European Parliament adopted three Reports which relate to women and women's rights.

**DRURY REPORT:**

Parliament adopted the Report on the IRIS network and vocational training for women. IRIS is a European network of training schemes for women. It is an initiative of the European Commission and co-ordinated by the Centre For Research On European Women, Brussels. By adopting the Dury Report, Parliament have called on the IRIS network to be involved in Commission policies for vocational training for women and the dissemination of information on good practices. The Dury Report also called for the question of equality to be fully taken into account in the structural funds and calls for all programmes to take account of the problems of women immigrants.

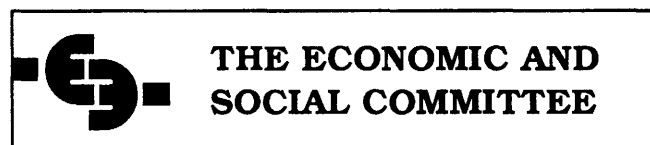
**KEPPELHOFF-WIECHERT REPORT:**

The Report asks the European Commission to carry out an appraisal of the economic and social usefulness of housework and its contribution to the Community GNP. The

Report also calls on the Commission to present a Recommendation on measures to reconcile work and family responsibilities. Member States are called on to recognise unpaid work performed in the family by means of a proportional rise in pension benefits.

### LENZ REPORT:

Parliament adopted the Lenz Report on the situation of women in Central and Eastern Europe. The Report calls on the governments of Central and Eastern Europe to take all possible measures to ensure the full participation of women in political and social life.



### ESC Call For Integrated Approach To Safety Training

The June Plenary Session of the Economic and Social Committee unanimously adopted an Opinion on health and safety at work and training. The Opinion, adopted at the initiative of the Committee rather than in response to a Commission proposal, calls for an integrated approach to health and safety training which would include a number of elements.

- The general education of children at school in risk prevention;
- Vocational Training;
- Risk related safety and health training at work;
- Training of workers' representatives with responsibilities for safety and health.

The Committee believes that such an integrated approach is currently not adequately provided for in existing legislation - the health and safety framework and individual directives. Consequently, the Opinion favours a series of Commission Recommendations and a number of amendments to existing legislation.

1. A Recommendation on education and health and safety is suggested in which the Commission could lay down guidelines covering the following areas:-
  - the introduction of safety and health protection in the school curricula throughout the EC.
  - adequate preparation of teachers who would implement such a programme.
  - the promotion of pedagogical research and the development of new teaching aids.
  - preventive safety and health provisions and awareness in schools.
  - the linking of these general education programmes with work experience programmes.

2. The Opinion also suggests a Recommendation for training and prevention of occupational risks which would include guidelines for:-

- promoting workers' representatives interest and involvement in problems and activities of occupational safety and health.
- training for categories not clearly covered by the existing Framework and individual directives.
- the drawing up of training criteria, minimum standards for induction training for all new starters, and model training programmes.
- promotion of study of, and research into, occupational safety and health, ensuring that the results are integrated in the context of training course programmes.
- evaluation of safety skills acquired through training.
- the training of trainers, especially in high-risk sectors.
- closer co-operation between public authorities, workers, employers and training establishments.

3. The Opinion also suggests a number of amendments to the existing health and safety legislation in relation to the training of workers in health and safety issues:-

- the Framework Directive should make it clear that an adequate infrastructure of training/education institutions should exist in all Member States.
- safety and health representatives' training should be supported by public funds.
- the fields to be covered by training courses should be outlined more precisely.
- employers should be required to identify training provisions and standards for all grades of employees.
- a standard procedure for the drawing up of an health and safety training plan should be established. This procedure should involve the co-operation of management, workers and their representatives and be assessed for adequacy by the appropriate inspectorate.

### ESC Calls For Action Against Unemployment

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted an Own-Initiative Opinion which calls for united and determined action to fight unemployment in the European Community. The Opinion, which was unanimously adopted by the May session of the Economic and Social Committee, stresses the gravity and complexity of the unemployment problem in Europe. It calls for the adoption of a series of measures including measures to improve vocational training and technological adaptation and measures to improve flexibility in the labour market.

The Opinion also calls for the drawing up of participatory measures aimed at guaranteeing a real strategy of co-operation for growth and employment, and increased worker consultation and participation at company level.

## COMPARISONS OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

In July 1985 the Council of Ministers adopted a Decision which introduced a long-term programme of research into the comparability of vocational training qualifications between Member States. Individual research was conducted on a sector-by-sector basis and over the last four years comparability tables have been published for a number of industrial and commercial sectors. The work, which was co-ordinated by the Community Centre For Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) is now reaching its conclusion and only a few sectors remain to be covered.

The latest work - which relates to the iron and steel sectors and the leather industry - was published in a Commission Communication in July and August. As with all the previous reports, the Communication provides a description of the mutually agreed practical vocational requirements and the various national vocational qualifications to meet these requirements in each of the twelve Member States.

The specific occupational groups to be covered by the latest Communication are as follows:

### IRON AND STEEL SECTORS

- Skilled iron and steel process technology worker;
- Skilled steel worker in process technology - forming;
- Skilled foundry technology worker - hand mould casting;
- Skilled steel worker in foundry technology - machine mould casting;
- Materials test operator.

### LEATHER INDUSTRY

- Shoe repairer;
- Bespoke shoemaker;
- Orthopaedic shoemaker;
- Footwear maker and finisher;
- Hide and leather cutter;
- Hide and leather sewer/stitcher;
- Leather goods maker;
- Heavy leather goods maker;
- Saddle maker;
- Upholsterer;
- Leather production operative;
- Fur finisher.

For each occupational group the comparative tables provides the following information:

- EC and national codes and classifications for the occupation;
- The title of the certificate, diploma or other vocational qualification applicable in each Member State;
- The type of educational institution providing vocational training;
- The organisation which awards the qualification.

## EC STANDING COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT

The EC Standing Committee on Employment met on Wednesday 22 September in Brussels. The Committee brings together representatives of the Council, the Commission and the social partners (ETUC, UNICE, CEEP). The meeting was chaired by the Belgian Minister of Labour, Mrs Miet Smet. According to the conclusions of the Presidency, the main themes discussed by the committee were as follows:-

### 1. GCE White Paper

Support was expressed for the medium-term strategy for growth, competitiveness and employment adopted by the Copenhagen summit and for the preparatory work being undertaken for the forthcoming Commission White Paper. It was agreed that the current employment crisis presents structural as well as cyclical features and that one of the key elements for improving employment is better increased growth and competitiveness. The importance of the social partners being associated with the search for solutions was also agreed.

### 2. Job Creation

Differing views were expressed by the ETUC and UNICE with regards to the role of public and private sectors in terms of job creation. The ETUC stressed the responsibilities of public authorities in terms of job creation, whilst UNICE argued that additional jobs would only be created by market forces.

### 3. Part-Time Work

A divergence of views again emerged in relation to the development of part-time working. UNICE and several governments believed that maximum flexibility, and the absence of rigid controls, should be allowed for the development of part-time work. The ETUC and the remaining governments believed that part-time work should be developed on a mainly voluntary basis which also ensures that such workers retain their rights and proportional salaries. The ETUC called for the draft directive on atypical contracts to be adopted as a matter of priority.

### 4. Labour Market Flexibility

A number of suggestions designed to increase labour market flexibility were raised and discussed. These included:

- the use of part-time work, with partial exemption from social contributions, to facilitate young peoples entry into the labour market.
- more flexible working hours and opening hours.
- the increased use of sabbatical leave to allow career breaks and the filling of posts during the course of such leave by unemployed workers.
- establishment of the right to parental leave.
- the development of fixed-term contracts and temporary work.

- a more flexible early retirement system.
- the redistribution of work in restructuring companies.
- the reduction / adjustment of working hours in the context of a better use of the means of production.
- more flexible conditions for recruitment and dismissal.
- the reinforcement and modernisation of employment agencies.
- the use of leave for training.

Not all the suggestions received support from the social partner organisations. The ETUC believed that recourse to part-time work, particularly for young people, should be combined with specific training actions.

### 5. Wage Costs

Several governments felt that the development of social security contributions leading to increased wage costs must be contained as they mitigate against employment growth. UNICE believed that it was necessary to reduce total costs for companies whilst the ETUC felt that any reduction in social security charges should not endanger existing social safeguards. A number of governments stressed the importance of moderation in terms of wage increases.

### 6. Training

There was general agreement on the importance of training and the contribution it could make to improving the adjustability of labour and consequently the competitiveness of companies. The trade union representatives felt that training should take account of the needs and requirements of the individual and they stressed the importance of continuing training. The employers underlined the importance of basic education which should contribute to helping workers adapt to companies requirements.

## MAASTRICHT SOCIAL POLICY PROTOCOL

European Commissioner for Social Policy, Pdraig Flynn, has announced that the European Commission will publish a Communication on the social dimension of the Maastricht Treaty as soon as the Treaty is ratified by Germany. The Communication is likely to examine the way in which the social policy protocol will be implemented by the eleven Member States who have adopted it (i.e. all Member States other than the United Kingdom).

Speaking during the debate of the European Parliament and social policy and the Maastricht Treaty, Mr Flynn indicated that the Commission will be seeking to maintain a balanced relationship between the institutions in relation to the implementation of the protocol. He said that the Commission will also respect the principle of subsidiarity and therefore non-interference in the legitimate business of the social partners. However, he felt that the definition of what constituted the base of minimum rules was the joint responsibility of the EC institutions and the governments of the Member States concerned. Commissioner Flynn assured

MEPs that the Commission will act in close co-operation with the Parliament as far as the social dimension of the Maastricht Treaty is concerned. During the debate that followed, a number of MEPs felt that a clearer definition of the role of Parliament in the initiation of social policy under the Maastricht Treaty was required.

## THE FIGHT AGAINST SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The European Commission has adopted a proposal for a new five and a half year action programme to combat social exclusion. The programme, which will have a budget of 121 million ECU for the period July 1994 - December 1999, will support new initiatives intended to help those who are disadvantaged in society and consequently contribute to the fight against economic and social exclusion. The proposed programme follows on from the Commission Communication, adopted in December 1992, entitled "Towards a Europe of Solidarity". The Community will act as a catalyst for national initiatives on specific subjects. European Social Affairs Commissioner, Pdraig Flynn, said that the programme would respect the principle of subsidiarity in that the Community role would mainly be one of support and the stimulation of ideas.

## EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS COURSE

Keele University's distance-learning Postgraduate Diploma and MA in European Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management course is now recruiting for its second year in-take which will start on January 14th 1994. The course is specifically designed for trade union officials and personnel managers from throughout Europe. The first year of the course attracted students from three United Kingdom trade unions and the Norwegian Civil Service Union, NTL. The subjects covered on the course are: the economics of the EC, EC law and social policy, theories of organisational behaviour and industrial relations, European unions, European business, comparative human resource management and comparative industrial relations.

Students who successfully complete the first year are eligible for a Postgraduate Diploma, whilst those who complete both years receive a Masters (MA) degree. Although the course is taught in English, it may be possible for students to submit written work in other European languages. Special discounts are available for non-UK based students and for trade unions. Keele University can be reached in under an hour from Birmingham and Manchester airports and by a two hour train journey from London. For further information phone, write or fax Dr. Steve Jefferys at the Dept. of Human Resource Management, Keele University, Staffordshire, UK ST5 5BG. Tel (+44) 728 717911 / 583254; Fax (+44) 782 715859.

**HEALTH AND  
SAFETY  
AT WORK :  
A  
CHALLENGE  
TO EUROPE**

**The EC Approach  
To Health & Safety  
At Work**

The protection of health and safety at work has a unique place within the social policy initiatives of the European Community for a number of reasons.

- The importance of creating a common set of minimum health and safety protective measures throughout the European Community has long been recognised. Such a body of legislation is essential in order to ensure an adequate level of protection for all European workers and avoid unfair competition based on undercutting accepted social standards.
- There is almost universal support from the citizens of Europe for the introduction of common legislation on health and safety at work. A Eurobarometer survey conducted in 1991 indicated that some 94% of citizens were in favour of such a policy.
- It is the only aspect of social policy which was covered by the co-operation decision-making procedure introduced by the Single European Act which allows qualified majority voting within the Council. As a direct result of this, it has been by far the most successful area of social policy making in terms of legislative achievement.

Since the Health and Safety Framework Directive was introduced in 1989, there has been a large body of legislation adopted in the form of individual directives. 12 individual directives have already been adopted at European level and a further four are currently under discussion. Although a number of publications are available which concentrate on the specific details of these various directives, it is possible to lose sight of the overall objectives of Community health and safety policy and the various provisions which are common to all the individual directives.

This is where a recent publication in the "European File" series will prove particularly important for the trade union reader. Like all pamphlets in the series it is concise and well-written. It provides an essential summary of the general direction of health and safety policy as well as an overview of the achievements to date. The pamphlet was published to coincide with the final stages of the Single Market programme and the European Year of Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, and both these events are covered by the text.

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*"Health and Safety at Work : A Challenge To Europe" European File 5/92. Available, free of charge in all Community languages. Copies can be obtained from the Commission information offices in the Member States (see page 16)*

**TRADE UNIONS  
AND  
INDUSTRIAL  
RELATIONS IN  
THE USA &  
CANADA**

**Trade Unions in  
the USA and  
Canada**

At first sight it might seem odd that an organisation such as the European Trade Union Institute - the research and documentation arm of the European Trade Union Confederation - is publishing a study of the trade union movements and the industrial relations systems in the USA and Canada. But this recent publication should be welcomed for two distinct reasons.

In the first place it provides an invaluable addition to the ETUI series of studies of national trade union structures. Perhaps the greatest strength of this series - which was started over ten years ago - is the contribution it makes to comparative studies. Having been designed with this in mind, the information is provided in a set format. The current publication represents the 17th in the series.

Secondly, the increasingly world-wide interdependence of economies, has prompted a growing interest in Europe in the trade union and industrial relations situation in North America. Recent developments - particularly the establishment of the Mexico / USA / Canada Free Trade Area - have increased the validity of direct comparisons with the situation in the European Community. Within the context of the Free Trade Agreement, questions of fair labour standards and minimum conditions are coming to the fore.

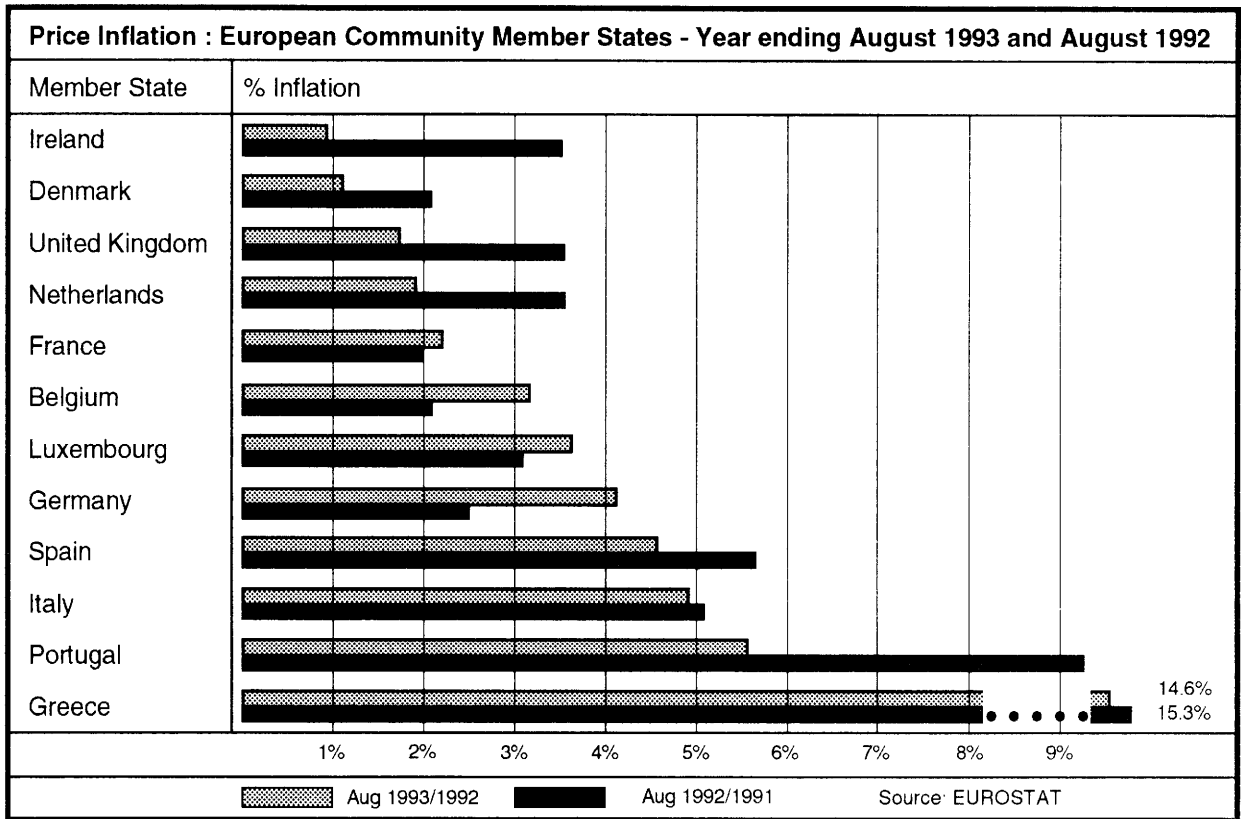
The study looks first at the background to industrial relations and describes the structure and development of the economy. A further chapter describes the trade union movement in both countries and examines recent trends including changes in membership and trade union structures. A concluding chapter considers the recent changes that have been introduced into industrial relations systems and asks whether the resulting arrangements may appropriately be described as a "new system".

One of the great strengths of the ETUI series of national trade union movement reports over the years has been the ability it provides for trade unionists to look beyond their own domestic arrangements and make useful comparisons with the situation in other European countries. In extending this process to North America, the ETUI is adding a further useful dimension to the resources available to European trade unionists.

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*"Trade Unions and Industrial Relations in the USA and Canada : A Comparative Study of the Current Situation" ETUI Info Series No. 36. (September 1993) Available in English, French and German language editions. Price 100 Belgium Francs for trade unionists (300 BF for others) from the ETUI (see page 16 for address).*

# STATISTICS



**BASIC EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS FOR EC MEMBER STATES 1991**

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Total Population	9925	5127	62945	9919	38527	55180	3469	56866	384	14716	10311	56705
Working Age Population	6625	3461	43478	6638	25359	36304	2152	39088	266	10234	6814	37033
Total Employment	3719	2635	29238	3632	12622	22115	1134	21520	162	6420	4839	26207
Employment as a % of Working Age Population	56.1	76.1	67.2	54.7	49.8	60.9	52.7	55.1	61.1	62.7	71.0	70.8
Unemployment Rate	7.0	9.1	4.1	7.7	15.9	9.2	15.8	10.1	1.5	7.3	3.9	8.6
Male Unemployment Rate	4.6	8.3	3.6	4.8	12.0	7.2	15.4	6.8	1.1	5.6	2.6	9.4
Female Unemployment Rate	10.6	10.0	4.8	12.9	23.2	11.7	16.6	15.8	2.0	10.0	5.7	7.4
Youth Unemployment Rate (under 25 years of age)	14.0	11.5	3.7	24.6	30.5	19.8	23.2	28.2	2.6	11.3	8.7	13.9
Share of Employment in Agriculture	2.7	5.7	3.5	22.2	10.9	6.0	14.0	8.5	3.5	4.4	17.4	2.3
Share of Employment in Industry	30.5	27.6	40.1	25.7	33.0	30.0	29.0	32.2	28.9	25.6	34.0	31.2
Share of Employment in Services	66.8	66.7	56.4	52.1	56.1	63.9	57.0	59.3	67.6	70.1	48.6	66.5

Member States: B = Belgium DK = Denmark D = Germany GR = Greece E = Spain F = France  
 IRL = Ireland I = Italy L = Luxembourg NL = The Netherlands P = Portugal  
 UK = United Kingdom.

Source: Employment In Europe 1993. Published by the European Commission

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**EUROPEAN TRADE UNION INFORMATION BULLETIN**

Produced by MBO Education & Training Ltd 2, Coldwell Lane, Sandygate, Sheffield UK.  
with the support of the Commission of the European Communities (DGX)