

Commission of the European Communities DG V
Working document on employment policies

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On the basis of an agreement of the directors general for employment, the Commission of the European Communities has created a Mutual Information System on Employment Policies (MISEP).

inforMISEP is the quarterly outcome of this system. It presents the changing policies and actions, particularly those sponsored by national ministries and agencies, aimed at promoting and improving employment within the European Community. It is compiled on the basis of information provided by national correspondents (listed on the back page). No statistical information is provided, readers being referred to the various Eurostat publications. The present issue covers the following areas:

Overall development

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Aid to the unemployed

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Training

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Belgium: | SME advisers |
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Special categories of workers

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Belgium: | Hansenne experiments |
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Miscellaneous

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Greece: | European Social Charter |
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Developments at a glance

- Belgium** The government has drawn on nine years of experience of fostering traineeships for young people within public and private organisations to reform the system (p. 9). To increase assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises the state can contribute to the salaries of unemployed persons employed to this end by non profit bodies with an appropriate track record (p. 14). First results are presented of the experimental approaches of Minister Hansenne to enable working time to be organised differently to make better use of equipment (p. 19).
- Denmark** The number of unemployed persons grew somewhat in 1983, but then stabilised, a trend which should continue throughout 1984 (p. 3). Concern has been expressed on securing jobs for conscripts at the end of their military service, a tripartite report on which has gone to the government (p. 5). Changes have been made in the system of financing vocational training with the creation of a fund (p. 11). Training places have been given great importance in the government's youth package (p. 17). On the basis of a report on working time policy by the government to parliament, a resolution has been adopted to establish a tripartite committee to examine this aspect notably as a background to 1985 collective bargaining (p. 19).
- France** The agreement of January 1984 between the social partners on the unemployment insurance system, outlined in inforMISEP no. 5, has been completed by a signed statement which organises the new system of national solidarity, this constituting the second plank of the new arrangements for providing unemployment benefits (p. 7). The Cabinet brought in new economic, social and industrial measures at the end of March aimed at smoothing structural adjustments in industries most severely affected by the crisis, at the same time defining 14 (geographical) "conversion poles" (p. 5). The first results of the broad action programme for the long-term unemployed indicate that it is on course (p. 17).
- Germany** The Government has brought in an employment promotion bill which seeks to make labour and social legislation more flexible (p. 3). The special measures of June 1982 to combat youth unemployment have been strengthened and a further DM 205m made available for actions (p. 18). The early retirement law came into force from May 1, 1984 for people reaching 58 years of age - and not 59 as previously indicated (p. 20).
- Greece** The June 1982 law on job creation has been revised with one programme for creating 5,000 subsidised jobs in enterprises for 18-25 year olds and the second for 4,000 jobs for over 25s (p. 14). Among other matters, parliament has voted the European Social Charter, a law on equality of treatment and is examining a bill on the social protection of Greeks abroad (p. 21).
- Ireland** The training authority has published a discussion document on the future of management education (p. 11). The country's first information technology centre will be opened later this year (p. 12). A pilot job sharing scheme (two persons into one job) is being introduced in the civil service (p. 15). The Employment Incentive Scheme is being modified in favour of smaller firms (p. 15). Among the recent activities of the Youth Employment Agency is an audio-visual aid on careers (p. 18).
- Italy** A draft agreement was reached between the three social partners in February dealing with restraining inflation and employment measures in the deep South, the public sector and unemployed youths (p. 4). Indexation of government rates and prices and containing labour costs together with new scales of allowances was the subject of one April decree (p. 4), whereas another on maintaining and increasing employment covered solidarity contracts, training and employment contracts, part-time contracts and nominative hiring (p. 6).
- Luxembourg** The regulation governing the scheme to establish socio-economically useful jobs has now been published (p. 15).
- The Netherlands** In a year long experimental programme now starting, jobseekers in three areas can register at post offices (p. 7). Various changes in claims for unemployment benefits are being brought in relating to part-time employment allowances for education, unpaid work and role patterns (p. 8). Philips have started privately a youth plan which should provide jobs for 700 young people (p. 19). Five regions of high unemployment levels will be receiving grants each intended especially for jobs for the long-term unemployed (p. 16), whereas HFL 800m is earmarked for some 7,000 building and construction jobs in 1984/5 (p. 16).
- United Kingdom** In its policy guidelines ("Training for Jobs") the government has stated its intention of making training and vocational education more relevant to employment by increasing the influence of the Manpower Services Commission and reforming adult training (p. 12). The Ministry of Defence has launched a new broad skill scheme for 2,000 civilian training places (p. 13). The Local Enterprise Programme was launched in Northern Ireland in November 1983 to support local initiatives for job creation (p. 16). Following pilot schemes in nine locations all Jobcentres will improve their services to jobseekers by March 1985 (p. 8).

Overall developments

DENMARK: The development on the labour market in 1983 and the outlook for 1984

In 1983 there was an increase in unemployment of about 8% in Denmark compared with the year before to reach a total number of about 285,000 unemployed persons, corresponding to 10.4% of the labour force. However, unemployment figures stabilised in the course of the year. Seasonally adjusted unemployment was thus about 3,000 lower in February 1984 compared with the month of April 1983.

Employment in 1983 compared with 1982 was largely unchanged. Thus the increase in unemployment in 1982 corresponds largely to the entry into the labour force of some 25,000 persons.

There are no signs which indicate that the development in the labour force in 1983 has been very different from the preceding years. The reason for the more favourable development in unemployment during the last six months of 1983 compared with the preceding years must therefore be the development in employment. A comparatively strong increase in private consumption, a continued growth in industrial exports, an increase in business investments and strong growth in residential construction meant that employment increased in the private sector in the course of the year: about 15,000 higher at the end of 1983 than at the end of 1982. On the other hand employment in the public sector has only risen by 5,000 persons during the same period.

This is a turn-about compared with developments in the preceding years where more or less unchanged or slightly increasing employment has masked a strong increase in public sector employment and a corresponding decline in private sector employment.

The expected development in 1984

From 1983 to 1984 the labour force is expected to grow by about 20,000 persons corresponding to a 0.7% increase.

With the financial policy to be pursued in 1984, employment in the public sector is not expected to increase. The development in private sector employment in 1984 will, in addition to growth abroad, also depend on interest rate levels. Throughout 1983 there was a very marked fall in the interest rate for bonds from about 20% at the beginning of 1983 to about 13% by the end of the year. During the first months of this year the bond interest rate has again shown an upward trend.

For continued growth in residential construction and business investments in 1984 it is imperative that the rate of interest does not increase again. If this is possible and if the expected increase in exports does take place, it is estimated that private sector employment will increase by about 25,000 persons corresponding to just over 2% from 1983 to 1984.

Such a development means that unemployment will be more or less unchanged from 1983 to 1984. If this holds good it will be the first time since 1979 that no marked increase in unemployment compared with the preceding year has been experienced.

GERMANY: Bill to promote employment

With the aim of opening up additional employment opportunities for the unemployed, the federal government has drafted a bill aimed at relaxing numerous labour laws and regulations. To this end, the Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs has submitted a "bill for promoting employment".

The bill foresees various modifications to existing labour and social legislation as well as partly providing for some new legal regulations. All the proposals are based on the idea of improving, directly or indirectly, the employment situation which for some time has been difficult.

The introduction to the bill states that "in times of full employment labour and social legislation can be primarily focused on the interests of wage and salary earners, i.e. persons who have a job. However, currently the interests of those who are looking for a job must also be taken into consideration. It is above all these jobless who are the target group of this bill which at the same time ensures that adjustments or restrictions of labour and social legislation are shaped so that they do not harm those workers/employees who in fact have a job. In line with this thinking, the intention is to introduce part of the regulations, i.e. limited length contracts of employment, prolonged duration for temporary work and the compensation of overtime through time off, only for a transitional period up to December 31, 1988. Data currently available indicates that the labour market situation should ease after that date.

The bill is part of an overall political strategy to improve the employment situation. This strategy includes in the first place measures aimed at improving the overall economic setting and at reinforcing industrial investment and innovation as well as the bill on early retirement."

The bill covers proposals dealing with the **following areas:**

1. Law on the limited length contract of employment.
2. Prolonged duration for temporary work.
3. Law on compensating overtime through time off.
4. Law on part-time work.
5. Regulation on partial capacity/incapacity to work.
6. Health cures - "taking the waters" - taken into account towards holidays; prolongation of minimum holiday entitlement.
7. Extension of the compensation procedure for continued payment of wages.
8. Modification of the company pension scheme.
9. Promotion of measures for creating employment.
10. Law on identity cards for workers in the building industry.
11. More severe punishment of illegal employment.
12. Doing away with the special provision regarding low wage/salary earners' contribution to health, pension and unemployment insurance.
13. Standardising the ceiling of earnings for persons drawing an early retirement pension.
14. Extending the special conditions granted to single craftsmen for their pension insurance contribution when training apprentices.

15. Clarification in the Protection Against Dismissal Act.
16. Relaxing the three year period for cures under the health insurance scheme.

ITALY: Draft agreement signed on 14.02.1984 between the Government and the social partners

The social partners and the government have reconfirmed their draft agreement of January 1983 (see inforMISEP no. 1) to respect the expected rate of inflation (10% for 1984, 7% for 1985 and 5% for 1986) as a basis for their decisions and behaviour so as to boost the economy and employment. At the same time they have committed themselves to intervene in numerous areas: reform of the labour market, employment maintenance, industrial and service sector policy, Mezzogiorno (South of Italy), special measures for some sectors (mines, metallurgy, telecommunications, textiles, etc.) and in specific fields such as taxation, prices and rates, solidarity funds, reorganising social institutions and public employment.

As regards **employment**, the following **measures** in particular are foreseen:

- A special scheme for creating viable new employment opportunities in the **Mezzogiorno**, above all for developing the entrepreneurial skills of the young. Young people of between 18 and 29 years of age must constitute at least 80% of the hirings in individual initiatives, such as those of co-operatives.
- Employment maintenance, where, in the **public sector**, the government intends:
 - to establish in those areas of the Mezzogiorno where they do not already exist, public administration service centres. Located in the areas of highest structural unemployment, each centre has a potential for absorbing between 500 and 1,000 persons;
 - to find a further 10,000 to 12,000 skilled jobs in sectors having high social priority, such as soil conservation, the enhancement of cultural and environmental assets, combatting tax evasion, customs and public order;
 - to find approximately 5,000 jobs for semi-skilled people in public administrations and public utilities; a part of these jobs should be utilised for providing public services in the industrial triangle (Genoa - Milan - Turin) so as to absorb industrial redundancies.

The implementation of these measures is the subject of an agreement between the Civil Service Minister and the labour unions.

Furthermore, to encourage the integration of **unemployed youths** into the labour market, the government is proposing to parliament suitable bills and will adopt measures including:

- a special scheme of national interest for hiring in 1984 and 1985 at least 30,000 young people of between 18 and 25 years of age. Training and employment contracts of a duration of not less than six and not more than 24 months, according to the type of vocational skill to be acquired, will be reached with companies or their associations. Such contracts can be converted into regular

employment contracts, even before their expiry;

- adequate refinancing of the revolving fund, set up by law no. 845 (Industrial Training Act), for partial coverage of the relevant charges, whether they are for reductions in social charges or for vocational training;
- temporary training and employment contracts must constitute part of specific projects of enterprises or employer associations which are submitted to the Ministry of Labour for approval. Advice will be provided by an appraisal unit within ISFOL (the National Vocational Training Institute), a tripartite body including regional representatives.

ITALY: Containing labour costs
- D.L. no. 70 of 14.04.1984

This decree, which has the force of law, sets out urgent measures regarding government controlled rates and prices and inflation compensation. It specifies:

- that for 1984 the weighted average of increases in government controlled prices and rates cannot exceed the maximum rate of inflation in the government's forecast and programme for the year (i.e. 10%);
- that a new scale has been adopted for calculating the supplementary allowance ("assegno integrativo") to be paid in addition to the family allowances and family allowance supplements for dependent children under 18 years of age, scaled according to the annual family income liable to IRPEF tax (see table);

Annual family income liable to IRPEF tax	1 child	2 children	3 children	4 children or more
	amount per month	amount per month	amount per month	amount per month
Up to 9,000,000	45,000	90,000	135,000	180,000
From 9,000,001 to 10,100,000	39,000	82,000	127,000	171,000
From 10,100,001 to 11,500,000	33,000	74,000	119,000	162,000
From 11,500,001 to 12,700,000	27,000	66,000	111,000	153,000
From 12,700,001 to 13,800,000	21,000	58,000	103,000	144,000
From 13,800,001 to 14,900,000	15,000	50,000	95,000	135,000
From 14,900,001 to 16,100,000	-	42,000	87,000	126,000
From 16,100,001 to 17,300,000	-	34,000	79,000	117,000
From 17,300,001 to 18,400,000	-	26,000	71,000	108,000
From 18,400,001 to 19,500,000	-	20,000	55,000	99,000
From 19,500,001 to 20,700,000	-	15,000	39,000	90,000
From 20,700,001 to 21,800,000	-	-	23,000	81,000
From 21,800,001 to 23,000,000	-	-	15,000	72,000
From 23,000,001 to 24,000,000	-	-	-	54,000

- for the six months from February to July 1984 the index points of variation of the compensation for inflation and of similar allowances for private workers and of the special supplementary benefit for workers in the public services was set to increase by two points from February 1, 1984 and by not more than two points from May 1, 1984.

The measure should be ratified by the Chambers before 16.06.1984.

Employment Maintenance

DENMARK: Securing jobs for conscripts

A committee set up under the competence of the Ministry of Labour and with participation of the social partners and the authorities and organisations concerned reported in March 1984 on how to improve the employment opportunities for conscripts on termination of their military service.

In Denmark about 15,000 young men are drafted each year to perform military service. Of the half who are in employment on being drafted, about 1/3 are without a job on termination of their service. Many young men thus lose their jobs each year because they must perform military service. The setting up of the committee should be seen as an expression of a wish to try to do something to minimize this unfortunate consequence of military service.

The committee considered two possibilities in particular. Either a reinstatement arrangement (formulated as a right to return to one's former job on completing military service) or a broader scheme comprising preferential treatment in connection with job offers, training, guidance, etc. The first possibility, the **reinstatement arrangement**, is undoubtedly the most interesting because of the fundamental principle it would involve.

The committee has considered the advantages and disadvantages connected with such a reinstatement arrangement. Members of the committee agree, first, that the arguments in favour of this arrangement are the wish to reduce the imbalance in the employment situation of those who are called up to perform military service and those who are not; secondly, the fact that performance of military service makes job-search difficult, both for geographical reasons and lack of time; and thirdly, that conscripts in other countries - and a few groups of conscripts in Denmark - are already guaranteed this right to be reinstated in their former jobs.

Furthermore, it has also been agreed that the most important argument **against** a reinstatement arrangement is that it will only ensure that young men who were in employment when they were called up for military service cannot be dismissed because they are performing or have performed military service; but it gives no real security for employment on completion of military service as there will be no restrictions in the general rights of the employer to dismiss and recruit staff. Secondly, a reinstatement arrangement will generally make the employment situation more difficult for young men who have not yet performed their military service. Thirdly, such an arrangement would involve a number of problems for the employer and for persons recruited as replacements.

The members of the committee are not agreed on how to weigh up these advantages and disadvantages. A majority of the committee recommends a reinstatement arrangement, while a minority - including the representatives of the Ministry of Labour who have stressed the "empty" character of the arrangement - is sceptical.

There has as yet been no political follow-up to the report.

FRANCE: Industrial restructuring

The Cabinet announced on March 29, 1984 a set of measures aimed at smoothing industrial change in those industries which are most severely hit by the crisis and at encouraging the creation and development of enterprises. These measures revolve around three focuses: industrial, economic and social. In addition, special attention will be paid towards 14 "conversion poles", those areas most hit by industrial structural change.

1. The **industrial measures** cover three industries: coal mines, shipyards and steel. They are intended to enable these industries to adapt to the new technologies and to the development of the world market.
2. The **economic measures** consist of:
 - general measures, particularly fiscal, which are aimed at encouraging corporate creation and development;
 - measures exclusively for the 14 "conversion poles".
3. The **social measures** aim at enabling a true and rapid regrading of those whose jobs have disappeared. They are an indispensable element to the measures for industrial restructuring.

Two categories of measures can be distinguished:

- **adapting existing measures:**
 - **measures dealing with retirements:** the National Employment Fund (FNE) system of early retirements will be modified, State support being subordinated to corporate attempts to maintain and promote employment (training actions, reduction in the length of working time, etc);

In the conversion poles, these measures will be available to enterprises which, although not experiencing economic problems (a condition normally required), can, by arranging departures for early retirements, open up jobs which can be filled by the unemployed;

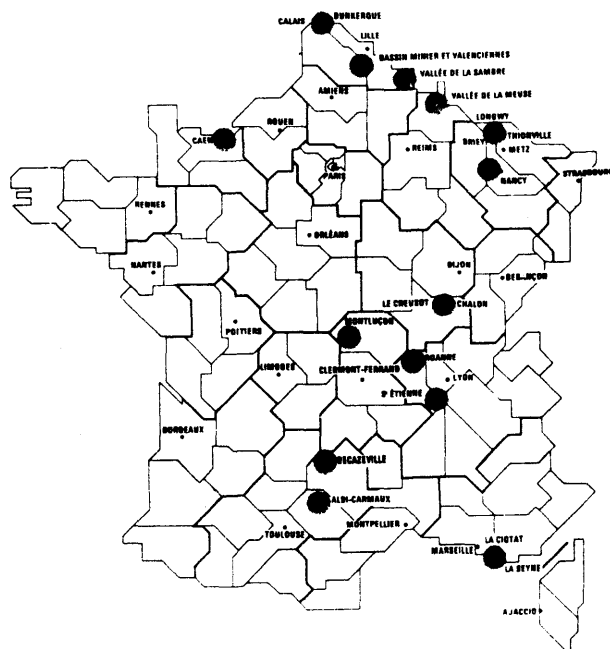
- **reduction of the length of working time:** the mechanism for solidarity contracts (see France: Basic Information Report) will be modified with the employment commitment demanded of the enterprise being made more flexible: aid will be available for enterprises in which reducing working time can avoid redundancies, without there being any requirement for maintaining numbers for a three year period. Aid from the State has also been redefined and increased;
- **degressive temporary allowance:** this allowance is geared to wage-earners who accept downgraded jobs which entail income lower than their previous wage. It can be drawn on in conversion poles and for those segments of the workforce who are experiencing difficulties. Finance is split between the enterprise concerned and the State.
- **Conversion leave:** a new measure. This measure is intended for the steel industry, large shipyards and the coal mines. It is designed

to enable wage-earners in these industries who are affected by redundancies to obtain, over a two year period, training enabling them to adapt to a new job and thereby ensure really effective redeployment. During the conversion leave, the legal link with the employer remains, but the work contract is substantially altered. During this period, the wage-earner will receive income comparable with that of jobseekers who are undergoing training (80% of the previous net income). Training leave can be the subject of an agreement between the State and the enterprise, with the State taking on a part of the costs of training (up to 50%) and of the income (up to 30%).

Redeveloping conversion poles

The government considers that the very heavy geographical concentration of the problems experienced justifies the most affected zones being given special treatment: the 14 conversion poles (see map).

MAP OF POLES



The conversion poles are being given priority as regards earmarking public money aimed at supporting industry, building and public works. A special allocation of FF_r 3 billion has been put aside for financing new industrial projects, and FF_r 1.3 billion for implementing major works aimed at improving the corporate environment.

They are furthermore benefiting from a significant movement towards decentralising, flexibilising and accelerating the procedures for public aid.

Finally, all the actors involved at the local level will be systematically mobilised. The Commissioners of the Republic (previously the Prefects) who have had their resources increased to this end, are being given a key role in stimulating and co-ordinating the initiatives.

ITALY: Decree for maintaining and increasing employment (D.L. no. 94 Official Gazette of 30.04.1984)

This decree having the force of law covers urgent measures to maintain and increase the level of employment. It should be converted into law by parliament within 60 days of April 30, 1984. However, its elements enter immediately into effect.

1. **Solidarity contracts** enable a taxable wage compensation allowance to be made to workers who have signed an agreement with their industrial company to reduce working time to avoid redundancies. This allowance amounts to 50% of the wages forfeited through this reduction; it can be paid for a maximum of two years.

The period of receiving the allowance is considered as fully contributing to pension rights' qualifications, the contributions in question being paid by the Wage Compensation Fund.

2. Under **solidarity contracts** with simultaneous **hiring of young people**, workers agree to a permanent reduction in working time and a commensurate reduction in wages with a planned hiring of young workers (15 to 29 years of age and, in agreed cases, workers older than 29 years). For each such additional hiring the government provides aid representing 15% of the appropriate monthly pay scale for the new employee for the first 12 months, 10% for the second 12 months and 5% for the third. This measure, which is estimated to cost some Lit 20 billion in 1984, does not apply to companies which have reduced their workforce over the previous six months.

3. **Training and employment contracts** for persons aged from 15 to 29 years can be concluded by public and private enterprises (or their representative bodies) for non-renewable periods not exceeding 24 months. Contracts specify the time and nature of the work and training, in accordance with existing practice defined notably in collective agreements. They are vetted, where necessary, by the Regional Employment Commission before being approved by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. At the end of the contract, the employer attests to the trainee's activities on his/her employment card. The contract can also be converted into an unlimited length work contract provided this complies with the level of training received. Such trainees are not part of the head-count for determining the limits for numerical placements. In the 12 months following conclusion of the contract, workers can be taken on for an appropriate job by the same or another employer under an indefinite work contract through "nominative request".

Training and work contracts directly linked to scientific and technological research - administered by the Research Ministry - can exceed 24 months.

4. **Part-time contracts** can be drawn up for working fewer hours than is generally foreseen in a collective agreement. Workers with such contracts can remain or become registered as full-time jobseekers. With the consent of both parties, a full-time contract can be transformed into a part-time contract and vice versa.

Contracts must be drawn up in writing, describing the job and the spread of daily, weekly, monthly or yearly work. Failure to send a copy of the contract to the appropriate provincial labour inspectorate within 30 days results in a fine of Lit 300,000. Fines must also be paid for other infringements: part-time workers cannot work overtime and for non respect of collective or company agreements specifying the comparative percentages of full and part-time workers. Employers caught illegally hiring part-time workers are fined Lit 40,000 per worker day.

Contracts also specify how to compute social charges, family allowances (full allowances are payable for a working week of not less than 24 hours), payment for incapacity to work of not less than 20% and pension contributions.

None of the above regulations apply to workers in agriculture.

5. **Nominative hiring:** employers intending to hire workers for an indefinite period for whom "numerical request" is obligatory, can henceforth make a "nominative request" for 50% of these workers. The nominative request must be submitted at the same time as the numerical. In exceptional single cases such as terminating a contract during the probationary period, such compensation takes place at the time of the next request. All other regulations pertaining to hiring by nominative request remain unchanged.

Aid to the unemployed

FRANCE: New unemployment benefit system

Negotiations on reforming the unemployment benefit system led to the signing, on January 11, 1984, of an agreement between the social partners on the unemployment insurance system (inforMISEP no. 5). This agreement was completed with a "statement of the conclusions" signed on February 9, 1984, by the State and the social partners. This statement organises the national solidarity system, which constitutes the second plank of the new arrangement for providing unemployment allowances.

The new arrangement can be summarised as follows:

1. The unemployment insurance system

Financed by contributions from enterprises (unchanged: 4.08% within the limits of 4 times the social security ceiling) and wage-earners (raised from 1.72% to 1.92% plus a supplementary contribution of roughly 0.53% on the amount of the wage between the ceiling and 4 times this ceiling), this system will cover, provided they have contributed for a minimum period, wage-earners who have been dismissed or completed a limited length contract and those who have given up their work for a reason recognised to be legitimate.

The **main characteristics** of this system are as follows:

- there are now only two types of allowances: the basic allowance (42% of the wage + FF_r 40 per day) and the end-of-rights allowance (FF_r 40 per day, which is doubled after 55 years of age under certain conditions). This means that the previous "special allowance" for being made redundant ("economic dismissals") disappears. The "lump sum allowances" (young people looking for their first job, single women,...) have been transferred to the new solidarity system, as has the "aid for exceptional help".
- The length of time for which benefits will be paid is variable according to the length of enrolment and the age of the unemployed person (under 50 years, from 50 to 55 years of age and more than 55 years of age).
- In case of prolongation, the amount of the allowances is depressive.

2. The solidarity system

Financed by the State, it takes on those persons who

have exhausted their rights to allowances under the insurance system or who are excluded from it because of their lack of working references (previously "flat rate/lump sum allowances").

This system also takes over:

- expenditure dealing with early retirees (early retirement solidarity contracts, National Employment Fund agreements, steel industry agreement on social protection);
- aid to unemployed persons who are setting up their own enterprise.

The current "lump sum allowances" and "aids for exceptional help" will be replaced by **two new allowances:**

- a "transition-to-working-life allowance" ("allocation d'insertion") for young people aged 16 to 25 years who are looking for work for the first time, female one-parent family heads, etc., paid for a year at the most. Amount: FF_r 40 (FF_r 80 for women on their own);
- a "solidarity allowance" for the long-term unemployed leaving the unemployment insurance who can show 5 years of wage-earning activity and are in want: paid by renewable 6 month periods; amounts: FF_r 40 per day in general, FF_r 60 per day from 50 years of age with 10 years of wage-earning activity and FF_r 80 per day after 55 years of age and 20 years of wage-earning activity.

An agreement will be drawn up between the State and UNEDIC (the National Union for Employment in Industry and Commerce which manages the unemployment insurance system) providing that the whole of the unemployment allowance system be managed by UNEDIC (insurance and solidarity). The system of the "single counter" for all unemployed persons is thus maintained. It will continue to be manned by the ASSEDICs (the Associations for Employment in Industry and Commerce).

NETHERLANDS: Experimental registration at the post office

Since December 1, 1983 jobseekers can sign on at post offices by way of so-called "pre-registration". This experiment is being carried out in the areas of the employment offices of Amersfoort, Veenendaal and

Doetinchem. The intention is to simplify and speed up registration. This new approach results from co-operation between the employment offices and the PTT (Post Office). Agreement has also been reached with the agencies paying out the unemployment benefits (trade associations and social services) on the procedure.

Registration, which can currently only take place at the employment office, is necessary among other things for applying for unemployment benefit. In the experimental areas the jobseekers can fill in the pre-registration form at the post office. The PTT is then entrusted with forwarding the first part of the form to the employment office. The applicant sends the second part to the social service office or the trade association and keeps the third part. Within a fortnight the newly registered person will be invited for an interview.

The experiment will last a year. Experience acquired will be used to decide on the possible extension of the approach.

NETHERLANDS: Changes in the State Group Regulation for Unemployed Workers (RWW)

The Secretary of State for Social Affairs and Employment, Mr de Graaf, has announced his intention in the official gazette of changing the RWW. The purpose is to clarify the rights and duties of the unemployed who are receiving the assistance. Possibilities for taking up education or doing unpaid work while retaining benefits are also indicated. Further modifications concern changes in the distribution of roles between men and women as well as part-time work.

The unemployed who cannot, or no longer, claim the WW benefit (benefit under the Unemployment Insurance Act) depend on the State Group Regulation for Unemployed workers (RWW), a regulation which implements the General Assistance Act ("Algemene Bijstandswet"). They receive a benefit on a social minimum level. When granting the assistance, the personal means (income and property) of the applicant and his/her partner are taken into consideration.

Part-time work

Until now the RWW only applied to people looking for full-time jobs. People who are looking for part-time jobs for medical or social reasons, now receive assistance mostly directly on the basis of the General Assistance Act. In the future the RWW will also apply to them if they are available for work for at least half the working week.

Beneficiaries of assistance who are able to accept a full-time job but who prefer a part-time one will receive only a partial benefit. If within a reasonable period (maximum one year) no part-time job has been found, a suitable full-time job will have to be looked for and accepted. People who are unable to take up a full-time job (because of having to look after young children for instance) will, of course, receive a full benefit.

Education

Unemployed persons aged 21 years or more can take up daytime education which is not strictly necessary for their being integrated into the labour market and still retain their benefit, if they cannot claim a government grant for this kind of education. However,

they must actively continue to look for employment and accept suitable work should it be offered. Unemployed young people (up to 21 years of age) and school-leavers of 21 years or older cannot take up daytime education while retaining benefits. From the moment they enroll in daytime (full or part-time) education they are considered as students.

Working while retaining unemployment benefit

What unpaid work can be done while retaining an unemployment benefit is laid down in the revised version of the RWW.

Municipal bodies have to give their agreement for participating in activities. These cannot be professional or industrial in character nor lead to unfair competition or subsidisation. During unpaid work the individual must remain active in his/her quest for integration into the labour market such as by making applications and by accepting any suitable work which might be offered.

Role patterns

Because of changing views on the role of men and women in society it is now much less evident that only one of the partners earns the whole (family) income. These changes have been taken into consideration in the revised RWW. If, in the course of a year, one partner receiving unemployment benefit does not earn enough to keep both of them, the obligation to look for paid work can be imposed on the other. This change primarily affects younger people without children.

The revision of the RWW will be submitted to the "Raad van State" (governmental advisory council) for advice two months after its publication in the "Staatscourant" (official gazette). Following this advice, the regulation as modified will come into effect as soon as possible.

UNITED KINGDOM: Developments in MSC Jobcentre services

A major study has recently been completed into the services provided by Jobcentres and the ways in which these services are presented to the public. The project was designed to establish best practices in Jobcentres' approaches to the change to voluntary use of its services and set out a number of ways in which Jobcentres could most effectively provide a wide range of services to their jobseekers within existing staffing and financial resources. Between March and September 1983, MSC's Employment Division used nine Jobcentres to develop and improve services to jobseekers. A report on the project was produced in November 1983, and the recommendations arising from the project are due to be implemented in all Jobcentres in the country (just over 1,000) by March 1985.

The **objectives** of the project were:

- (a) to make Jobcentres as welcoming and as easy to use as possible;
- (b) to improve the presentation of facilities to help the public find the service or information they need quickly and informally;
- (c) to apply the best customer handling practices in personal contacts between staff and public;
- (d) to minimise queues and reduce waiting time.

Organisational changes contemplated as a result of the project include attempting to deal with the majority

of jobseekers' enquiries at their first point of contact with the office, as well as providing jobseekers with a range of self-help information on how best to look for a job and MSC and other Government schemes and courses. This emphasis on front-line and self-help service does not mean that those jobseekers (such as the disabled and the long-term unemployed) who require more detailed information and advice will not continue to be able to request an interview with staff if they so wish.

Significant improvements have also been suggested to the ways in which Jobcentres present their services to the public. The layout of front-line desks and job display boards has been altered to give Jobcentres a more informal, attractive and less bureaucratic appearance to the public. It is planned to make extensive use of explanatory signs and notices to augment the self-help materials provided for jobseekers. These in-

clude leaflets on jobhunting, coping with redundancy, self employment and MSC schemes and courses together with specially designed basic reference and information material on a wide range of jobs and careers. These materials were developed by MSC's Careers and Occupational Information Centre.

Surveys carried out in the nine Jobcentres involved in the project showed 93% of people questioned found the offices easy to use and 87% judged the offices to be good or very good. This success comes against a background of high unemployment, when jobseekers are experiencing considerable stress and difficulty in their jobsearch. Staffing resources in the Jobcentre network have been considerably reduced over the last few years, and the success of this Development Office experiment makes a valuable contribution to the range of ways of meeting the needs of the unemployed in a time of static or diminishing resources.

Training

BELGIUM: Traineeships (A.R. no. 230 of 21.12.1983)

The background

Already in 1975 a royal decree of April 13 foresaw the employment office - ONEm - contributing financially to employers taking on young graduates for a traineeship ("stage"). Such traineeships were to enable them to adapt to work within the enterprise related to their studies. Many young people were having trouble finding jobs because their theoretical training inadequately prepared them for the demands of employment.

The law of March 30, 1976 concerning traineeships for young people was the first to compel employers with more than 100 workers to take on a certain number of trainees (1% of the total labour force). Their employment was temporary and their pay could be slightly less than that of workers doing the same job in an enterprise or public administration. The aim was to mop up youth unemployment by enabling them to acquire, on completion of their studies, practical training within a real work situation, thereby facilitating their entry to working life.

Since the 1976 law worked out satisfactorily, similar arrangements were taken up in the 1977-78 budget law of December 22, 1977. This made the traineeship into a legal requirement: private enterprises and public administrations employing more than 50 persons had to recruit at most 2% of young people under 30 years of age for a once renewable period of six months. A BFf 30,000 premium was granted to employers for each trainee they took on above 1%. A similar premium was given to private employers of less than 50 persons who voluntarily recruited 1 or 2 trainees.

Finally, royal decree no. 26 of March 24, 1982 raised the number of trainees required to be taken on to 3%, opened up the possibility of part-time trainees (1%) and scrapped the premium system.

However, the 1977-78 budget law as it had thus far been modified had brought out a number of **problems**:

- as the compulsory percentage of trainees to be recruited was raised from 2% to 3%, fewer trainees were taken on by their enterprises on completion of their traineeship;
- the 3% requirement was made up of 2% full-time and 1% compulsorily half-time. This half-time recruitment raised problems both of work organisation in enterprises and of the lack of volunteers in public administration;
- the same system was introduced for the private and public sectors despite differences between and even within them. This made some arrangements difficult to apply;
- doing away with grants to enterprises taking on trainees had caused a significant drop in numbers hired afterwards.

New arrangements

Taking account of the economic situation and the continuing growth of youth unemployment, matters had to be revised to overcome the difficulties experienced and the same time boost youth training and integration into working life.

Such was the purpose of **royal decree no. 230 of December 21, 1983**. This draws on actual experience with provisions of the law of December 22, 1977 as well as on legal provisions brought in since then such as the law on industrial apprenticeship and that concerning raising the school-leaving age.

The target group of persons eligible for traineeships are young people under 30 years of age who have as yet no experience of working life. They have to apply at their local ONEm placement office.

Every enterprise with at least 50 workers has to take on trainees. The total number of trainees must correspond to 3% (full-time) of the personnel of the enterprise. The number of trainees can be in excess of this amount without, however, being more than 4% of the total personnel.

To meet its trainee requirement, the enterprise can also take on industrial apprentices. Furthermore, young people retained by the enterprise after a traineeship contract are taken into account when fixing the percentage to be reached, but only during their first year of employment. Assimilating industrial apprentices to trainees is intended to provide an incentive to enterprises to take on young people who, within the framework of lengthening compulsory schooling, choose part-time training at school and in the factory.

The minimum number of trainees required is calculated by taking account of all workers in the enterprise including part-timers, but not trainees. If different operating units make up a single legal entity, it is the total number of personnel employed which counts.

The requirement to take on trainees can be extended to enterprises employing less than 50 workers if they are highly capital intensive. For other enterprises with less than 50 workers, recruitment is voluntary, with a maximum of three full or half-time trainees.

Enterprises which are in trouble can be dispensed for a specific time, in whole or in part, from taking on trainees, on the advice of the sub-regional employment committee. Another **exemption** is foreseen linked to the commitment to create further unlimited full-time jobs for people less than 30 years of age who are either receiving a full unemployment benefit or are trainees. The Ministry of Employment and Labour can sign contracts covering hirings of this sort with enterprises which:

- have not reduced their employment volume from June 30 of the year preceding that of signing the document;
- have, during the same period, met all their legal requirements as regards youth traineeships and early retirements;
- have met all their requirements as regards social legislation, working regulations and conditions of pay.

It can reach similar contracts with enterprises meeting the two last mentioned conditions and which either

- without having maintained their employment volume during the period in question have, during this time, reduced short-time working;
or,
- during the same period and without any collective dismissals, have taken over an enterprise which is bankrupt, in liquidation or in trouble or have merged with such an enterprise.

Aim and conditions

The traineeship seeks to provide practical training aimed at bridging school and working life. It should thus be carried out under conditions fitting the trainee's studies, qualifications and skills.

The King can authorise a traineeship abroad.

The enterprise has to ensure that activities performed during traineeships conform with their purpose. A programme has to be individually worked out for each trainee at the conclusion of the contract and conceivably completed in case the traineeship is prolonged.

The enterprise has to take account of the preferences which the person concerned can justify and organise

the traineeship in such a way that the person in question gets as much out of it as possible. To this end, and whether or not there might be a traineeship supervisor, each trainee is guided by a member of the personnel designated because of his/her experience and proven capacity in training young people.

Full or half-time employment

Recruited trainees must always be additional to the existing workforce, thus not compensating for dismissals. Those concerned can be taken on full or part-time on the understanding that:

- part-time traineeships are taken into account proportionally to full-time;
- taking on an apprentice is equivalent to taking on a trainee half-time;
- taking on a worker by an enterprise with whom at the end of the traineeship an unlimited term work contract is signed, is equivalent for the first year of employment to taking on a half-time trainee.

The duration of the traineeship remains unchanged: six months or 26 weeks (it being possible to prolong this period once only by a further six months or 26 weeks).

For the duration of the traineeship, the trainee receives an allowance equal to at least 90% either

- of the initial wage paid to a member of the personnel in public administration with the same vocational qualification as is set out on a diploma or certificate;
or,
- of the wage a worker performing the same functions could claim in accordance with the wage scale applied in the enterprise.

The reference wage is reduced proportionally for a monthly wage of a trainee taken on part-time.

Incentives to enterprises hiring trainees at the end of their traineeship

To increase permanent hirings at the end of the traineeships incentives are offered to enterprises:

- during the first year of his/her unlimited term contract the former trainee is paid 90% of the pay a worker performing the same functions earns; this wage is thus equal to his/her traineeship allowance. From the second year of his/her unlimited term contract, his/her wage is raised to 100%;
- the employer's social security contributions are reduced by 10% of the gross pay of the person concerned for a period from the fifth to the eighth quarter which follow that during which the hiring under unlimited term work contract started. However, the hiring of this worker must bring with it a net increase in the personnel and the enterprise must respect its requirement for hiring trainees.

Status

All the regulations pertaining to the worker's or employee's limited term employment contract, with the exception of specified dispensations, apply to the traineeship both in the public and the private sectors. This means that it should contain a probationary clause. The trainee must, like any other member of

the personnel, respect regulations concerning working time and other conditions of employment.

If, once the traineeship is over, the enterprise employs the trainee, his/her traineeship period is taken into consideration for calculating his/her seniority and rights.

If the traineeship contract is to be broken, the trainee has only to give seven days notice, whereas the employer can only break for reasons previously recognised as being sufficient by the monitoring bodies (the works council or, failing that, the trade union delegation; the safety, health and works improvement committee; or the representatives of the workers. In public administration the bodies are the trade union consultative committee, or the competent staff council).

Special provisions for public administration

Traineeships are organised differently in public administration to take into consideration their special characteristics.

Traineeships are compulsorily part-time in services employing at least 50 workers. Thus the length is 12 months (or 52 weeks) without any possible extension.

Part-time can correspond to a half-time job, or a 4/5 time job, the latter having to be carried out in complete days.

Adding up the part-time jobs must correspond to the full-time hiring of 3% of the staff concerned (excluding the trainees already in place).

Services employing less than 50 workers can take on a maximum of three trainees.

Young people wishing to carry out a traineeship in a public service must be of Belgian nationality, without prejudice to article 48 of the Treaty of Rome which guarantees the freedom of movement of workers within the Community.

Recruitment of trainees by the State and public interest bodies must be carried out from among successful candidates of the recruitment examination. Should there be insufficient numbers of candidates, other young unemployed jobseekers can be called upon.

Without prejudice to the provisions for recruiting staff in public services, carrying out a traineeship within a public administration gives no right to nomination.

A special system is foreseen for public enterprises being restructured under a plan approved by the King.

DENMARK: Changes in financing adult vocational training

On December 15, 1983 the Folketing (the Danish Parliament) adopted the Government proposal to set up a vocational training fund.

This fund will cover public expenditure in connection with adult vocational training (training of semi-skilled workers, further and advanced training for skilled workers, etc., retraining and introductory work experience courses for young persons and for the long-term unemployed).

All employees and employers are to contribute to the fund.

In 1984 the contribution in respect of a full-time employed person will be DKr 972, to be financed on a fifty/fifty basis by the employees and the employers.

For the coming years the contribution will be fixed for one financial year at a time so that the total income from the contributions will correspond to public expenditure on adult vocational training.

At the same time the Folketing decided to increase public financing from 85% to 100% of the running expenses in connection with training of semi-skilled workers and further and advanced training of skilled workers. This means that the employers' and employees' organisations and the municipal authorities will no longer have to finance 15% of the expenditure.

IRELAND: Management Training and Development in Ireland - a discussion document

A discussion document on "Management Training and Development in Ireland" was released at the end of February by AnCO - The Industrial Training Authority.

The document sets out the conclusions of an important examination of management training and development in Ireland. It has been produced following consultations with a wide range of interests including employer and employee bodies, state development agencies and all of the major providers of management training programmes. In issuing a discussion document AnCO is inviting all those with an interest in this important topic, particularly the industrial and commercial sectors, to respond constructively to it. On the basis of such responses AnCO will draw up a programme to implement much needed action in this vital area.

The task force who drew up the discussion document discerned some strong common threads among **capabilities** which will be needed by Irish managers in the future. Chief amongst these were:

- strategic corporate planning;
- marketing (in particular, export marketing);
- finance;
- socio-political involvement at local and national levels.

Other capabilities which received frequent mention were:

- managing people/industrial relations;
- computer familiarity;
- creative thinking;
- decision-making;
- business law.

It became very clear to the task force that managers are working in an environment of accelerating change and complexity and that this will demand an increasing capability to manage and cope with change.

The task force also recognised that the degree of priority in certain capabilities will vary not only according to the level of management but also according to the size, type of business, etc. These capabilities are also likely to change over time with changing political, economic, social and technological circumstances. Therefore, it was seen that it is a matter for each organisation to determine its own management capabilities over any particular time span. Nevertheless, the four key capabilities of strategic planning, marketing, finance and socio-political involvement are seen as being essential for all chief executives and

senior managers. Specific capabilities for middle and junior managers were seen as being more likely to vary from one organisation/function to the next, but the task force suggested that managers at all levels will need a high level of financial fluency and considerable capability in managing people, thinking creatively and decision making.

IRELAND: Information Technology Centre

The country's first Information Technology Centre is to be opened by AnCO later this year. This is designed to give all AnCO trainees some experience with basic computer skills, no matter what course they are taking. The rationale behind the decision to provide basic computer training for all AnCO trainees is that these skills will become more relevant for the majority of occupations over the next 10 years.

In preparation for the opening of the Information Technology Centre an experiment will be tried out to test the training capability of a video instructor system through which trainees with basic computer skills can teach themselves.

UNITED KINGDOM: White paper on "Training for Jobs"

The Government's White Paper, "Training for Jobs" published on 31 January announced reforms in **two key areas** of training:

- (i) to make training and vocational education more relevant to employment needs, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) will be given responsibility for a quarter of the £800m spent each year by local education authorities in England and Wales on work-related non-advanced further education.
- (ii) the Government has broadly endorsed the MSC's proposals for the reform of adult training. The adult training programme will be restructured in order to help 250,000 people each year by offering:
 - training more closely directed towards the skills needed by employers, and the skills needed in growth business areas;
 - more basic level training for unemployed people who need it to help them find work.

The White Paper looked at the progress towards and work still needed to achieve the **three objectives** set out in the 1981 White Paper "A New Training Initiative: A Programme for Action" (see inforMISEP no. 00). The objectives were:

- better preparation in schools and colleges for working life and better arrangements for the transition from full-time education to work;
- modernisation of training in occupational skills (including apprenticeships), particularly to replace outdated age limits and time-serving with training to agreed standards of skill appropriate to the jobs available;
- wider opportunities for adults to acquire and improve their skills.

The transition from full-time education to work

Good progress has been made both within education and outside it. The White Paper lists a number of recent developments including curriculum reform, a new Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education, the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI - see inforMISEP no. 3), and the new Youth Training Scheme. To build on these advances further steps will be needed, including:

- expansion and development of the TVEI;
- defining standards of performance and developing a system of certification which can be applied to both vocational education and the Youth Training Scheme and which will link with other training standards and qualifications.

The Government sees a continuing need for co-ordinated provision to help young people progress from education to work.

Training in occupational skills

The White Paper records the substantial progress some industries have already made towards modernising their training arrangements - for instance in electrical contracting and in construction. But more needs to be done to meet the target that by 1985 training for all significant skilled occupations should be based on achievement of agreed standards rather than time-serving.

The wider aim must be to open up access to training and to jobs through a comprehensive system of training standards and certificates of competence.

There are already indications that current levels of trainee recruitment in some industries will not be adequate to meet employers' needs for skilled people. This means, the White Paper says, that the training system must be able to respond swiftly and flexibly to changing needs.

Adult training

In the White Paper the Government endorses the MSC's proposals for an adult training strategy published last December:

- (i) the MSC will restructure its training provision into two main programmes:
 - an industry focused programme for both employed and unemployed people which would give them job-related training;
 - a programme to give further help for unemployed people who need training at a more basic level.
- This approach will tie training in more closely to local labour market needs and enable twice as many people to train and improve their job prospects.
- (ii) the MSC will act as a catalyst for action by others, for instance by improving on local training needs and training providers. This will need close collaboration between employers and providers, including local education authorities. The Commission's proposed national awareness campaign will help in this.

- (iii) The Government will consider the MSC proposals to incorporate more training or work preparation into the Community Programme which provides temporary work for long-term unemployed people. The Government will also examine, in collaboration with the MSC and others, the Commission's proposal to look at the possibility of establishing a loan scheme for adult trainees.

Roles and responsibilities

The White Paper makes it clear that the Government sees training as an investment. If the quality and quantity of training are to be up to the mark, that investment needs to be attractive financially. This means keeping costs down, among other things through the acceptance by trainees of realistic pay levels. It also means the removal of artificial restrictions on access to training, on the time taken to complete it and on the subsequent use of the skills learnt.

Improving training in this way will mostly depend on the decisions of employers, who have to take the investment decisions and who need to see that the training is right for their needs. It is the job of central and local government to use public money to ensure that general and vocational education are provided in ways which respond to the changing needs of employment; and, through MSC, to help the flow of information about skill needs, encourage the development of nationally recognised standards, fund experimental courses and provide special help for training unemployed and disabled people. Trainees have their part to play by accepting pay or allowances which reflect the value of the training they receive.

New arrangements within vocational education

To help carry through successfully the important developments described in the White Paper public sector provision for training and vocational education must become more responsive to employment needs at national and local level. The Government has therefore decided to give the MSC new responsibilities by enabling it to purchase a larger proportion of work-related non-advanced further education provided by local education authorities. With its new responsibilities the MSC will be able to discharge the function of a national training authority.

The amount to be devoted by the MSC to such provision in England and Wales will increase to £155m in the financial year 1985/86, and to £200m in 1986/87. The intention is that the Commission should by then account for about one quarter of the total provision in this area. The resulting reduction in the need for local authority expenditure will be taken into account in settling the relevant rate support grant; the arrangements for this will be subject to consultation with the local authority associations. In Scotland the current arrangements for funding further education will remain unchanged.

The MSC is being asked as a matter of urgency to consider, consult and report to the Government on appropriate machinery at both national and local level for carrying out its enhanced responsibilities.

UNITED KINGDOM: The Youth Training Scheme in the Ministry of Defence

The Ministry of Defence (MOD), one of the largest single employers in the public sector, is keen to play its part in the Youth Training Scheme by planning to have 2,000 high quality **civilian** training places available by the end of the current academic year. These places are in addition to the 5,600 places available under the Armed Services Youth Training Scheme, which is a separate scheme (see inforMISEP no. 3).

Because of its long history of providing apprenticeship training (there are currently more than 5,000 apprentices in MOD establishments throughout the United Kingdom) the MOD has a wealth of experience in training young people, using the most up-to-date equipment and training techniques in some 90 specialist training centres throughout the country. As a Managing Agent for the Manpower Services Commission it aims to offer 16 to 17 year old school-leavers a choice of training in a wide variety of skills. Schemes will range from "broad skills" craft type training in engineering, motor transport maintenance, storekeeping, catering, clerical and many other skills. Linked to each scheme will be a complementary course enabling the trainees to gain a recognised qualification in their chosen skill, e.g. a City and Guilds or BTEC certificate. Some schemes are already operating: 15 youngsters are receiving "broad skills" craft training at the Royal School of Military Engineering in Chatham learning catering, and the Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment at Portland is running a "broad skills" craft training scheme for 19 youngsters. Smaller schemes are operating in other MOD establishments, whilst plans for others are well advanced with training places either already available or becoming available in time for this year's school-leavers.

Recently, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence Procurement, Mr John Lee, visited the Admiralty Underwater Weapons Establishment where, since September, YTS trainees have been receiving "broad skills" training in mechanical and electronic engineering and carpentry. The trainees all seemed well satisfied with the training they were receiving, their only complaint being that £25 a week was not sufficient. Trainees who do well on this Scheme will be invited to apply for apprenticeships at the establishment, starting in September 1984.

The MOD, with the full co-operation of the unions involved, is anxious to ensure that all the schemes introduced within the Department are "quality" training schemes designed to be of maximum benefit to young people by helping to make the transition from school to work as painless as possible and teaching them worthwhile skills which will make them attractive to would-be employers and enable them to find full-time employment at the end of their years training.

Job creation

BELGIUM: Unemployed persons assigned to specific assistance projects for small and medium-sized enterprises (A.R. no. 258, December 31, 1983)

The aim of this measure is to enable bodies with the recognised purpose of assisting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to offer broader services to business start-ups and developments. For it has been found that a large number of the self-employed and SMEs fail in their first years because of the entrepreneurs' inability to face up to both start-up and managerial problems.

Furthermore, the advent on the market of a large number of newly self-employed requires enlarging existing support so as to give those launching viable projects optimal chances.

The approach used to meet these needs consists in the State taking over a part of the pay and social charges of the unemployed persons recruited by bodies assisting SMEs so as to improve or extend their services.

Beneficiaries of the measure

An employer who can draw upon this measure is either

- a juridical non-profit body whose purpose is to help enterprises or economic development; or
- an organisation which is representative of employers.

Employers must prove that they have been providing a set of legal, administrative and economic services for SMEs for the last two years.

The State can contribute to the projects of such employers which provide assistance for small enterprise start-ups, transformations and developments. But they cannot do away with or have done away with jobs which were similar in function.

Workers who can be taken on by virtue of this royal decree must be fully unemployed persons drawing benefits. Unemployed persons who have been put to work, and workers under the "special temporary scheme" (cadre spécial temporaire) and the "third circuit scheme" (troisième circuit de travail) also fall into this category. These persons are then employed through a full-time, or part-time, working contract.

Payment (of the workers) and State contributions

Without prejudicing the clauses of more advantageous collective agreements, the contractual remuneration of the workers cannot be less than the initial wage paid to a State employee performing the same or a similar job. However, for workers fulfilling a function equivalent to those of level 1 of civil servants, payment cannot be less than 90% of the initial wage referred to above.

The State takes over for a maximum period of two years the payment and contributions of those taken on for carrying out the projects. The aid of the State amounts to 100% in the first and 75% in the second year. These rates apply to the minimum wage indicated above, but exclude possible supplements paid by the employer either voluntarily or in conformity with

a collective agreement.

This subsidy can cover a minimum of one part-time person and a maximum of eight full-time jobs. It cannot be cumulated with any other benefit which might be given by the State for the same putting to work.

General characteristics of the scheme

The general characteristics of the scheme are provided in royal decree no. 258, the detailed implementation clauses of which are being worked out.

The applicant asks for a form at the sub-regional employment service. He/she works out a project dealing in particular with:

- the description of the project and its duration; and
- the number of the workers, the qualifications required and a description of the functions.

He/she submits his/her request to the Small Business Ministry (Ministère des Classes moyennes) which asks for the opinions of the region in question.

The State subsidy is the subject of an agreement signed by the applicant, the Minister of Employment and Labour and the Small Business Minister.

GREECE: Revised job schemes

A recent decision of the Ministry of Labour has modified previous measures (see inforMISEP no. 00) subsidising employers who create new jobs. Henceforth, there will be **two programmes** of financial aid for private enterprises, local administration and collective utility bodies and enterprises, co-operatives and in general any employer who fosters the creation of new jobs.

The first programme aims to create 5,000 new jobs for the 18 to 25 year olds whereas the second aims to create 4,000 new jobs for persons older than 25 years.

The **rates of subsidy** for persons employed are determined as a percentage of the minimum daily pay of an unskilled worker which prevails during the year in which this decision is taken. This works out as follows:

- Drx 400 for men and Drx 500 for women who are hired by private enterprises in the tertiary sector (commerce and services);
- Drx 600 for men and Drx 700 for women who are hired by manufacturing and handicraft firms;
- Drx 700 for men and Drx 800 for women who are hired by exporting enterprises or to foster new technologies.

Conditions

Subsidies are given for a period of one year.

The employer who receives the aid will not have dismissed anyone during the three months previous to

the hiring and agrees to employ the person taken on for 18 months.

Similarly, the subsidy is discontinued in cases where the employer dismisses the worker if he has been newly hired or taken on previously and does not replace him within a period of ten working days. The employer has the same duty in the case of voluntary departure or departure for military service.

Persons hired to replace those covered by the scheme can remain employed under the scheme for the remaining months of the 12 month period of subsidy if they fulfil the conditions as regards age.

IRELAND: Pilot job-sharing scheme for the civil service

The Minister for the Public Service announced details of this scheme on 16 February, 1984. Its purpose is to provide new job opportunities in the civil service and to facilitate civil servants who wish to avail of a job-sharing arrangement.

Under the scheme, two civil servants may, in agreement with management, volunteer to share equally the duties and responsibilities of a particular post. In return each member of the job-sharing scheme will receive half of the pay and other benefits associated with the post. After a minimum of three years job-sharing, an officer may return to full-time employment.

The post released each time two full-time civil servants opt to share one post will provide a job opportunity in the civil service for a new recruit.

The likely level of participation by civil servants in the pilot scheme is not yet known, but in a preliminary survey undertaken last year several hundred civil servants expressed an interest in participating in such a scheme.

As well as introducing job-sharing for serving civil servants, it is intended that some civil servant posts will be advertised during the year on the basis that they are job-sharing posts. Staff recruited under the scheme will be offered full-time employment after about two years.

IRELAND: Changes in the Employment Incentive Scheme

An Employment Incentive Scheme has been operated by the Department of Labour since 1977, with the objective of increasing employment by encouraging employers to recruit unemployed workers and young persons through the payment of **wage subsidies** or premiums.

Since 1977, the scheme has assisted approximately 32,000 unemployed persons to secure employment. About half of those assisted have been young persons under 20 years of age. Another 20% have been in the 20/25 age group. After an **evaluation** in 1983, it was decided to structure the scheme in favour of smaller employers who are more representative of the average Irish economic situation. The evaluation had suggested that recruitment by larger employers had its stimulus in production or contractual necessity rather than the inherent incentives of the Scheme. Accordingly, assistance under the Scheme from April 30, 1984 onwards will be confined to the establishment of **two jobs per annum per employer**.

The revised scheme will be open to profit-making and non profit-making enterprises (including community, charitable and sporting organisations, etc.) in all sectors with the **exception** of the following activities: the public sector; banking; insurance; building societies and similar financial activities.

A feature of the Scheme since March 1982 has been the grant of a higher subsidy for the **older longer-term unemployed**. The grant has not been availed of as much as had been anticipated. Under the revised Scheme the grant is being made financially more attractive. A subsidy of IR£ 60 per week for 24 weeks will be payable in respect of persons aged over 25 and who have been unemployed for 12 months. A standard rate of IR£ 30 per week will be payable in all other circumstances, an improvement of IR£ 5 per week in the rate which previously obtained for those persons under 20 years of age and unemployed.

LUXEMBOURG: Creating socio-economically useful jobs (RDG of 4.04.84)

The law of December 19, 1983 concerning the income and expenditure of the 1984 State budget set up an experimental scheme for 1984 of the unemployment fund for creating socio-economically useful jobs (see inforMISEP no. 5).

As outlined in its introduction, the **purpose of this scheme** is to facilitate the start-up, operation and development of lasting projects for services and activities which are not currently being provided by public services and by for-profit enterprises.

All types of economic, social or cultural projects can be taken into consideration in so far as they meet needs which have so far not been met or they develop unused resources.

The **conditions** which have to be met for newly created jobs were outlined in inforMISEP no. 5. It should be noted that they are limited to the registered unemployed who are not yet older than 25 years of age. Furthermore, the aid is given for a maximum period of one year and is, in principle, non-renewable, except in duly justified exceptional cases which receive special exemption.

The Grand-Ducal regulation of April 4, 1984 sets out on the one hand the level and, on the other, the other modes for granting aid to create such jobs.

These regulations fix the **maximum amount** of aid at LFr 350,000 per full-time job created. For part-time jobs, the aid is reduced proportionately.

The decision to make the grant, taken by the Minister of Labour on a supporting file filled in by the applicant, can limit the number of jobs for which the grant is made within a single institution or same body or grouping of persons.

The aid granted is paid in three equal instalments in the form of provisional payments. The Minister of Labour can pay the full amount in a single instalment when:

- the conditions for paying the grant are fulfilled;
- failure to make the full payment would jeopardise carrying out the project;
- the applicant provides the necessary guarantees, in particular as regards repayment of the aid in case of cessation of professional activities during

the year for which the aid is given and, except for any impossibility duly observed by the Minister of Labour, in cases of ceasing activities during the two following years and, finally, in cases of the beneficiary acting fraudulently.

It should also be noted that when a worker holding a job for which the aid was granted breaks his work contract on his own initiative or is dismissed by the employer for a serious fault, the aid is maintained provided the employer replaces the worker in question within the eight days following the termination of the working relationship.

NETHERLANDS: Additional job opportunities in building and construction by means of unemployment benefit funds

In 1984 and 1985 a total of HFL 8m will be made available for additional employment projects in building and construction. This will cover house maintenance, restoring monuments, road construction and the construction and renovation of sports facilities, theatres and police stations. The projects will provide at least 7,100 man/years of work. Long-term unemployed construction workers will in the main be used. These projects are made possible by an additional government investment of some HFL 90m, using HFL 200m saved on unemployment benefit and HFL 500m made available by municipalities, housing construction corporations and private persons who will implement these projects.

This additional government investment in construction puts into effect an October motion of the Second Chamber of Parliament.

The proposed use of funds saved on unemployment benefits for the financing of employment projects, also termed "**ploughing back**", is experimental. An important condition for this ploughing back is that the **long-term unemployed** be drawn upon. One of the conditions for carrying out these projects is in fact that 70% of the labour has to be done by those who have been unemployed for longer than one year. **Other important conditions** of the projects are:

- they have to be supplementary, i.e. they would not have been carried out without the additional government investment;
- they must not lead to unfair competition;
- hiring unemployed persons must not lead to other dismissals;
- funds from third parties will have to be secured in addition to government investment and the unemployment benefits saved to complement the project's financing.

In a letter to the Second Chamber, the Minister also announced the final regional division of the so-called **1 Billion Programme** for 1984 through 1986 from the 1983/84 employment memorandum. This employment programme, for which funds have already been made available, makes no case for ploughing back unemployment benefits. But it does lay down the condition that 70% of persons involved in carrying out projects within this programme shall be long-term unemployed.

NETHERLANDS: Additional employment schemes

The regions of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Twente and Nijmegen will each receive approximately HFL 3m and the region of Helmond/Deurne approximately HFL 1.3m for additional jobs. The **purpose** is to involve as many long-term unemployed persons as possible in projects which will be important for stimulating lasting employment.

In the recent past most of the funds available for additional regional labour market policy has been assigned to the so-called ISP and PNL areas (the Northern provinces and Southern Limburg). These were the regions most severely hit by unemployment. However, there has of late been a change in the regional problems in the Netherlands with unemployment having increased in some parts of the country to levels comparable to the ISP and PNL areas.

This is the background to Minister de Koning deciding to decrease the RAMA (regional labour market agreements) funds for the Northern provinces and Limburg. These funds have now been allocated to the five above-mentioned areas which all face exceptionally high levels of unemployment.

UNITED KINGDOM: Local Enterprise Programme in Northern Ireland

The Local Enterprise Programme, which was launched on 8 November, 1983, was developed jointly by the Northern Ireland Department of Economic Development, the Local Enterprise Development Unit (LEDU) and the Industrial Development Board to provide support to local community-based groups wishing to play a more active role in encouraging economic development and job creation in their own areas.

The Programme, by introducing new forms of financial assistance for community-based organisations and co-ordinating the various forms of assistance already in existence, will help local groups to harness and mobilise local resources and skills and channel their activities into worthwhile projects, particularly in relation to small business development.

LEDU will be responsible for the management of the initiative and will serve as the point of contact for all groups interested in carrying out industrial development activities within their own areas.

The various elements of the initiative are as follows:

- (i) a grant of up to £2,000 per annum may be made available towards the running costs or promotional expenses of approved local groups. Applications for assistance would normally be limited to one suitable group per district and LEDU will have to be satisfied about the management and commercial abilities of each organisation;
- (ii) grant aid of up to 50% may be provided to local groups towards the purchase, rehabilitation and sub-division costs of factory accommodation or other suitable premises for small business units. The local groups will have to demonstrate their ability to manage their properties and agree with LEDU on qualifying tenant activities;
- (iii) where there is evidence of need LEDU will assist such groups in developing property into a local Enterprise Centre, incorporating common services, management advice, business counsel-

ling, etc. LEDU will be able to supplement the new forms of assistance introduced as part of this initiative with their existing grant-aiding powers;

(iv) LEDU will provide a focal point for advice and guidance to local groups and will channel them to appropriate contact points in Government as necessary.

Special categories of workers

DENMARK: Youth package

Late in the autumn of 1983 a special youth unemployment committee (RUA) was set up by the Government, composed of the Minister of Education (Chairman), the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Social Affairs and the Minister of Labour. One of the tasks of this committee was to prepare a programme to combat youth unemployment in 1984 and 1985.

This new programme was to be a follow-up to the initiatives comprised in the so-called "32 points programme" of February 1983 the main objectives of which were to give higher priority to education and training measures rather than employment measures, especially within the public sector. Training places are thus a very important element in the Government's so-called "youth package" from February 1984.

A total number of some 14,000 new education and training places have been proposed for 1984 and a further 5,000 new places in 1985.

Within the field of competence of the **Ministry of Education** about 8,000 new places will be made available within various lines of youth education and technical education; it will be made easier to conclude so-called "combination agreements" within the apprenticeship and basic vocational training field and a new experiment will be launched within the basic vocational training system, viz. the new industrial basic training. As from 1 August, 1984 pilot projects will be started at 17 technical schools all over the country. The training will take one year and be tailored to meet local needs; it will comprise alternating periods of theoretical instruction and practical training in an undertaking, mainly undertakings with unskilled labour.

Within the competence of the **Ministry of Labour** the "youth package" includes two measures:

The first is that in 1984 and 1985 there will be an increase of 10% in the number of young people admitted to the introductory work experience courses for young people. This means an additional 250 whole-year places corresponding to about 825 more trainees per year.

The second is that the Job Offer Act will be amended so that young persons under the age of 25 who are entitled to a job offer may choose to receive a training allowance of DKr 52,000 per year instead for up to 2 years.

The purpose of this new scheme is partly to channel young people with little or no vocational training background into the training system and thus improve their future chances on the labour market, and partly to take some of the pressure off the job offer scheme.

FRANCE: First results of extending the action programme for long-term unemployed

Following from the approach aimed at the long-term unemployed between September 1982 and March 1983, ANPE launched in May 1983 an action programme aimed at jobseekers respectively in their 4th and 13th months of unemployment (see inforMISEP nos. 2 and 4). As of March 31, 1984 the results of this programme were as follows:

1) Summons to meetings

The objectives set by the public authorities for ANPE on which they based their budgetary commitments foresaw a gradual rise in the programme for 1984 and 1985.

The 1984 objective was for 1,200,000 individual interviews over the year, paced from 100,000 per month at the beginning of the year to 200,000 per month in December.

Six months into the programme the number of individualised interviews could be seen to be progressing satisfactorily and will reach 100,000 interviews per month by mid-1984. 72% of those interviewed were jobseekers entering their 4th month and 28% their 13th. This corresponds overall to the relative proportions of jobseekers in each of these two categories. It furthermore meets the programme's aim for preventing long-term unemployment.

84% of the jobseekers summoned responded by coming to the interviews. This response is 4 or 5 percentage points higher than that normally experienced for summonses by placement services. It shows the interest that jobseekers who have experienced trouble in returning to the labour market have shown for ANPE's specific actions for them.

2) The mechanism

During the individualised interviews ANPE seeks to discern the handicaps which the jobseeker is faced with when looking for a job, particularly those which can lead him/her to long-term unemployment. To help him/her in this respect, ANPE can draw on a number of well-tested services. These proved their value during the 1982/83 programme and have been incorporated into the permanent operational mechanism:

- appraisal of the levels of vocational competence ("ENCPI") by a vocational questionnaire and a practical test;
- the job search technique session ("TRE");
- the in-depth guidance session ("SOA").

Since 1983 the TREs have been carried out by ANPE.

The other techniques have been performed by a mechanism bringing together contributions from ANPE, AFPA (vocational education agency) and other partners:

- SOA: 1984 objective - 10,000 jobseekers to be seen by ANPE, 12,000 by AFPA and 12,000 by other partners;
- ENCP: ANPE does not have its own expert staff for practical tests. It draws on AFPA and has signed 127 agreements with other partners (Ministry of Education, chambers of industry and commerce, chambers of trades and various public and private training bodies).

Parallel to these services the jobseeker can, after an interview, be put in touch with an employer, be guided to a training course or be sent for monitoring by the departmental directorate for labour and employment (DDTE).

3) The results

Between October 1, 1983 and March 31, 1984 504,000 jobseekers had been summoned and 84% had responded:

- during this period 41,427 jobseekers were taken off the files without direct action by ANPE for "refusing employment";

- ANPE action:

51,399 persons were put in touch with an employer (12% of the jobseekers received) of whom 11,483 (22%) were placed.

48,485 persons were guided to a training course organised by AFPA or another body (i.e. 11.4% of the jobseekers received); of these, 11,709 (24%) actually took up training;

142,110 (33%) were guided towards complementary services:

- 73,736 (17.4%) to a vocational adviser or an information officer;
- 34,651 (8.2%) to a TRE;
- 16,232 (3.8%) to an ENCP;
- 11,429 (2.7%) to a SOA;
- 6,062 (1.4%) to a works doctor;
- 3,059 (0.8%) to the DDTE for monitoring.

In total, taking into account that a single jobseeker can draw on one or more services, half of the persons made use of an ANPE action following an interview.

GERMANY: Training grants for unemployed youths

Federal funds for training have been available since the beginning of June 1982 - limited in time to the end of 1984 - for young unemployed persons. This special measure to combat youth unemployment has now been strengthened. Through a change in the law the target group has been enlarged so that better use can be made of the available resources.

The **new act** provides for:

- young unemployed persons who have not previously been in a contributory employment of at least four months to be included in the measure albeit with the income of the persons obliged to

pay maintenance being taken into consideration;

- young people who fulfil the condition required till now to have previously paid contributions being given priority for grants;
- the costs of the measures to be reimbursed for participants in part-time training measures connected with part-time job creation measures;
- the total duration of the law being extended to the end of December 1987.

The Federal Government is providing **DM 205m** for this programme.

IRELAND: Activities of the Youth Employment Agency (YEA)

State Agencies will effect training, work experience and employment programmes for up to 60,000 young people this year. While maintaining overall responsibility for the co-ordination of these programmes the YEA also continues to develop its own directly managed programmes in the enterprise and job creation fields:

- under the **Community and Youth Enterprise Programme** funding for Enterprise Workers and planning grants for communities continue to be approved by the Agency;
- under the **Youth Self Employment Programme** some 100 projects have been approved for loan finance. (See inforMISEP nos. 4 & 5 for further information on these programmes.)

With funding provided by the YEA employment is provided by the National Co-operative Farm Relief Services Ltd. for young people as farm relief service workers. In addition, the Agency is continuing its sponsorship and direct involvement in similar schemes such as **Marketplace** and the **Young Scientists and Technologists Employment Scheme** this year. (For further information on these programmes see inforMISEP no. 5.)

Careerrevision

Careerrevision, a new careers information initiative from the YEA, was recently officially launched by the Minister for Education, Ms Gemma Hussey, T.D.

This project was initiated by the YEA to help overcome the lack of well produced Irish career guidance audio visual aids. The first phase involves the production of a number of videos and printed support material, together with introductory workshops on their usage for guidance counsellors and teachers. This phase will be substantially completed by the summer and during this period, the YEA in the light of ongoing developments will determine its future policy in the area.

NETHERLANDS: Philips Youth Plan

Philips, the Dutch-based electronics multinational, is showing its willingness to contribute to the fight against youth unemployment by its Youth Plan. This has the following three prongs:

- part-time work, through which more young people can be employed;
- "acquaintance contracts" (limited duration work agreements of at most one year); these offer young people the possibility of gaining work experience, thereby enabling them to improve or maintain their chances on the labour market;
- training: the transition from school to working life will be improved, which will eventually enhance young people's opportunities for inclusion into the labour market.

All company units have to make their own contributions. This represents 1% (i.e. some 700 persons in total) of the present number of employees.

The Minister of Social Affairs has taken the following stance: Philips is primarily responsible for financing its Youth Plan. In incidental cases and depending on the judgement of the director of the regional employment office (GAB), the SOB scheme (joint government-industry training) can be applied. No central funds have been earmarked for this. The decision of the GABs to assist in such cases will have to be financed from their own budgets.

Working time

BELGIUM: First results of experiments to rearrange working time (A.R. no. 179)

Purpose and nature of the measure

The purpose of what have become known as the "Hansenne experiments" is to create jobs through restructuring and rearranging working time. The decree enables enterprises to introduce or test new forms of work organisation aimed at lowering their costs through more intensive use of fixed assets.

The two fundamental elements characterising the system are:

- 1) its experimental character: projects are authorised for a limited time period which must not exceed two years;
- 2) its contractual character: an agreement is reached between the Minister of Labour and Employment, the employer or his representatives and the representatives of the workers of the enterprise.

The key condition for reaching an agreement on working time is the requirement of the employer to hire, through work contracts, new workers.

To enable working time to be organised differently, employers can be given temporary dispensation from certain legal and regulatory requirements provided that workers continue to be protected. When an agreement on rearranging working time foresees a greater than 5% reduction in working time as well as a reduction in the workers' pay, the loss of pay will be divided between the State, the employer and/or the workers themselves.

Finally, a financial contribution is foreseen in fixed costs brought about by taking on new workers.

First results

By mid-April 1984 16 such working time agreements

had been signed representing a little more than 300 additional jobs. This means that on average job creation was above 5% of the existing labour force.

The different agreements can be classified into two types of experiments:

- 1) those which lead to rearranging working time spread over the week such as the week of 3 x 12 hours or of 4 x 9 hours 15 minutes;
- 2) those which organise work over the weekend, with different formulas being used such as 2 x 12 hours, or 2 x 12 hours plus 4 hours on Friday or every second Friday, or again 2 x 12 hours plus 6 hours every second Monday.

It should be noted that these various approaches have maintained the same income as normal full-time working.

The most frequently accorded exceptions concern Sunday working, the length of the working day and the number of holidays.

The financial contributions have, for the most part, been limited to fixed costs brought about by hiring new workers. Only one enterprise has received financial contributions foreseen as compensation for the loss of income.

DENMARK: Working time

In January 1984 the Danish Government submitted a working time policy report to the Folketing (the Danish Parliament). The background for the preparation of this report was a parliamentary debate in May 1983.

The report gives a detailed account of the discussions which the Minister of Labour has had with the organisations on both the private and the public labour market. The employees' organisations stress the need for a reduction in working hours which they find will

lead to an improvement in the employment situation. This view is not shared by the employers who stress the need for rearranging working time in order to improve competitiveness - which may subsequently form the basis for increased investments and employment.

The Danish Government agrees with the social partners that the question of the length and arrangement of working time is a matter which should be the subject of collective bargaining and consequently the Government has no wish to interfere in this matter. The Government is sceptical as to any positive effects on employment and the national economy of a reduction in working hours, but finds, on the other hand, that more flexible working time arrangements could have some positive effects on employment.

The report has been the subject of two debates on working time policy in the Danish Folketing - in February and March 1984. The debate in March resulted in adopting a resolution inviting the Government to initiate tripartite negotiations with the social partners prior to the start of the collective bargaining rounds which are due early in 1985 with a view to renewal of the collective agreements now in force.

The resolution enumerates the following elements which should be made the subject of tripartite nego-

tiations: tight incomes policy, working time reduction on the basis of analyses of the consequences both on the private and the public labour markets and investment and employment policy.

It has still not been decided when these tripartite discussions will take place nor how they should be organised.

GERMANY: Early retirement law

The early retirement law came into force on May 1, 1984. The only major change to the bill outlined in inforMISEP no. 5 is the lowering of the age to 58 years - instead of 59. From now on, when, on the basis of a collective or individual agreement between the worker and the employer, a firm grants early retirement to a 58 year old (or more) worker, it receives a subsidy from the Federal Employment Institute, provided it replaces the retiree by an unemployed person. The subsidy is calculated on the basis of an early retirement allowance of 65% of the last gross salary/wages of the worker. It amounts to 35% of the early retirement allowance plus the employer's contribution to health and pension insurance. The trade unions and employers are being requested to work out the requisite agreements.

Miscellaneous

GREECE: International agreements on social protection

The Greek parliament has recently passed a series of laws ratifying international texts and work conventions which improve the level of social protection of all persons without any discrimination.

Thus, the law 1426/84 ratified the **European Social Charter**. This guarantees rights relating to the length of working time, weekly rest, annual paid holidays, work safety and health conditions, fair pay for work, the protection of young people and women at work, vocational guidance and vocational training, family protection, health protection, social insurance and the protection of migrants and their families.

Law 1424/84 ratified the International Labour Organisation's convention 111. This foresees the complete **abolition of employment discrimination**, the right of all to pursue improved individual well-being and career advance, with equal opportunities independent of sex, colour, race, religion, political beliefs and ethnic or social origin.

Law 12 1423/84 ratified the International Labour Organisation's convention 122. By this Greece undertook to practice a policy aimed at **safeguarding productive employment for everyone**, freely chosen and conforming to their qualifications and possibilities, independent of race, colour, religion, etc. It agreed to take appropriate measures in co-operation with employers and workers to fight unemployment and the under-utilisation of the labour force with the aim of improving the position of the workers.

The new law 1429/84 aims at resolving the problems related to the social **protection of Greeks who are working in African and Asian countries** under particularly difficult conditions because of the climate and in the absence of sufficient social protection. This law applies to work conventions and relationships established between enterprises which are headquartered or have their economic interests in Greece and Greeks who are hired to work in African and Asian countries. The purpose of the law is to guarantee these persons with a minimum threshold of rights.

According to the new regulations, such conventions must also be written in Greek and embrace working conditions and regulations which are no less favourable for the worker than the conditions and regulations foreseen under universally applied Greek law. Furthermore, the conventions which exclude arbitration by Greek tribunals for cases brought under this working relationship or for any other cause stemming from these regulations are declared null and void.

Enterprises are required to deduct from workers' pay their contributions to the OAED (the employment office) and to pay them together with the employers' contributions. Enterprises are also required to insure their workers against illness and occupational risks at the central insurance body within the country of employment or, should such a body not exist, a private insurance company.

Penalties are foreseen for those not respecting this law.

Rough currency conversion rates

One European Currency Unit (ECU) was roughly equivalent to the following amounts of national currencies in May 1984:

● Belgium	46 Bfrs
● Denmark	8 DAKs
● France	6.9 FF
● Germany	2.3 DM
● Greece	88 Drx
● Ireland	0.73 IR£
● Italy	1384 Lit
● Luxembourg	46 Lfrs
● Netherlands	2.5 Hfl
● United Kingdom	0.59 UK£

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