

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:

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## Developments at a glance

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- Belgium** Wage moderation is continuing into 1986 with wage-earners having their first annual 2% index linked increases paid to the government (p. 3). To maintain both civil service recruitment and public expenditure within limits, the government has introduced an 80% working time and pay scheme (p. 13). Various aspects of recruiting and selecting procedures have been made compulsory by royal decree (p. 4).
- France** The decree of 17.07.84 appoints a single minister for the fields of labour, employment and vocational training (p. 3). The law of 3.01.84 gives wage-earners the right under specific conditions to take leave to create an enterprise or a sabbatical (p. 13). A new type of solidarity contract came into operation in July to encourage enterprises to reduce working time by at least 4 hours and increase investments by at least 30% compared with the past 3 years (p. 14). The decree of 27.06.84 brings in state aid for permanently hiring wage-earners for a 28-32 hour working week (p. 14). Two measures were brought in in April and May 1984 to facilitate workers' return to their country of origin (p. 10). Statistics provide a picture of the working of the geographical mobility supports which became operational in January 1983 (p. 15).
- Germany** An analysis shows that unconventional employment represents at most 10% of the total of the self-employed and independent professionals who in turn account for around 10% of the working population of some 25 million (p. 7). The repatriation law is encouraging the return of some 60,000 non-EC citizens - particularly Turks - to their countries of origin (p. 10). Amendments are being introduced to the Disabled Persons Act to provide those concerned with improved chances of finding a job or training place (p. 11).
- Greece** Within its job creation programme, the government is granting employers hiring recently returning migrants a daily amount equivalent to nearly 2/3 current wages for one year (p. 7). A detailed review is made of all vocational training activities receiving European Social Fund support, with particular reference to special categories of workers (p. 4).
- Ireland** The government has set guidelines for the 1984 round of pay negotiations featuring very limited increases (p. 3). A voluntary work scheme has been introduced to enable the unemployed to serve the community and develop their work skills (p. 4). The aim of the LINC training programme is to provide the maximum employment potential in a given locality (p. 5).
- Italy** New scales have been introduced for supplementary allowances (p. 3), and a special unemployment benefit has been introduced for frontier workers in Switzerland (p. 4). An act of July encourages young people to be hired or establish their own companies (especially in management services) in the Mezzogiorno (p. 8). Early retirement at 50 can now be taken in enterprises in various branches of the steel industry (p. 14).
- Netherlands** As in 1983, the Ministry of Social Affairs has run a campaign for school leavers with the motto "Get working now to get work" (p. 11). The last part of the "plough-back" experiment has now been approved by the government (p. 8). In certain industries a temporary reduction in working hours compensates for non-payment of price indexation (p. 14). Tripartitism in employment bodies appears to be coming in (p. 15). A proposal has been made to parliament to enhance the equality of treatment of men and women (p. 15).
- United Kingdom** The Disablement Advisory Service of small MSC advisory teams for employers became nationwide in March 1984 (p. 11). The Young Workers Scheme (wage subsidisation) has been modified to fit it better with the Youth Training Scheme (p. 12). The entry to the Enterprise Allowance Scheme to encourage business creations was boosted from 600 to 1,000 per week from May (p. 8). The main features of the MSC's adult training strategy are outlined on p. 6.
- European Community** On June 7, 1984, the Council of the European Communities adopted two resolutions, the one on action to combat unemployment among women (p. 12), and the other on the contribution of local employment initiatives to combatting unemployment (p. 8).

# Overall developments

## **BELGIUM: The policy of wage moderation (Royal decree no. 278 of 30.03.84)**

The government has once again imposed moderation on wage increases in 1984 and 1985 as well as conceivably 1986. Through the outcome the government is striving to restore public finance and bring about a sharing of the available work.

The decree foresees that in both 1984 and 1985 the first 2% increase in wages in line with the price index will not be paid to the wage-earners. In the public sector the 2% adjustment will be paid directly to the Treasury. In the private sector they will on the one hand be earmarked for the Treasury and for the social security system to the extent that there is no shortfall for either resulting from wage moderation. The remaining part will be earmarked for various approaches to sharing working time which will have been the subject of an agreement between the social partners.

Discussions are currently (July 1984) under way with a view to reaching a general agreement. The general framework will thus be determined for reaching agreements by sector or by enterprise which would enable realistic approaches to be decided on taking account of the diversity of situations.

## **FRANCE: New ministerial structure**

The decree of July 17, 1984 appointed M. Delebarre minister of labour, employment and vocational training.

Thus are brought together in one single ministry the tasks concerning labour previously performed by the ministry of social affairs and of national solidarity as well as those of the delegated minister entrusted with employment and those of the ministry of vocational training.

## **IRELAND: Pay discussions**

For the third wage round in succession, pay negotiations are being conducted on a decentralised basis at industry and company level. While the great majority of agreements under the previous wage round had terminated by June 1984 new agreements have initially been slow to emerge in any sizeable number.

Following discussions with employers and unions, the government issued a Background Paper on Employment in March 1984. This set out the broader economic context within which, in the government's view, movements in pay had to be viewed. It was followed by the publication of government guidelines on pay in April 1984. These guidelines stated that agreements should be run for a period of not less than eighteen months and should feature a long pay pause followed by a pay increase of not more than a few percentage points.

In a statement on pay issued in March 1984, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions advised affiliated unions to lodge claims aimed at protecting the living standards of workers in the light of the projected increase in prices. Unions were also advised to seek reductions in working time. The main employer association, the Federated Union of Employers, advised member companies to place most emphasis on the viability of the business and on the maintenance of competitiveness and employment. It rejected the concept of negotiating pay increases with reference to the Consumer Price Index.

It will not be possible to chart the outcome of the current wage round until details of all agreements are forthcoming. There is some evidence, however, of significant variations in settlement levels resulting from differences in the financial position of companies and industries.

## **ITALY: Modified scales for supplementary allowances**

Decree no. 70 of 14.04.1984 (see inforMISEP no. 6, June 1984) set out urgent measures regarding government controlled rates and prices and inflation compensation. It has now been converted into law no. 209 of 12.06.1984. This law modifies slightly the scale 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	2	3	4
	child	children		or more
amount per month				
up to 9,200,000	45,000	90,000	135,000	180,000
9,200,001 - 10,350,000	39,000	82,000	127,000	171,000
10,350,001 - 11,500,000	33,000	74,000	119,000	162,000
11,500,001 - 12,700,000	27,000	66,000	111,000	153,000
12,700,001 - 13,800,000	21,000	58,000	103,000	144,000
13,800,001 - 14,900,000	15,000	50,000	95,000	135,000
14,900,001 - 16,100,000		42,000	87,000	126,000
16,100,001 - 17,250,000		31,000	79,000	117,000
17,250,001 - 18,400,000		26,000	71,000	108,000
18,400,001 - 19,500,000		20,000	55,000	99,000
19,500,001 - 20,700,000		13,000	39,000	90,000
20,700,001 - 21,800,000			23,000	81,000
21,800,001 - 23,000,000			15,000	72,000
23,000,001 - 24,000,000				54,000

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# Aid to the unemployed

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## **BELGIUM: Recruiting and selecting regulations (Royal decree of 11.07.84)**

Collective agreement no. 38 concerning recruiting and selecting workers has been made compulsory by articles 1 to 6 and 19 of the royal decree of July 11, 1984. The aim of this agreement was to draft a system setting out the rights and duties of employers and applicants during recruitment and selection procedures.

Thus it is foreseen that expenses incurred by taking tests and exams organised for the selection procedure be covered by the employers if they have ordered them. In cases where an applicant who is being checked as regards his/her being unemployed takes part in a selection test, the employer is requested to give the applicant on his/her request written attestation indicating the dates and hours when he/she was present as well as, where necessary, the reason for not employing him/her. It is also foreseen that when an applicant is not accepted, the employer provides him/her within a reasonable period of time with the documents attached to his/her application. Furthermore, handing over copies of diplomas, certificates, attestations and other documents duly stamped and certified can only be required by the employer at the end of the selection procedure.

Articles 7 to 18 of the agreement concerning in particular information about the applicant, equality of treatment, respect of private life, confidential handling of data, the duties of the applicant, the length of the selection procedure, probationary work and travelling expenses have not been made compulsory by the royal decree. Although the non-respect of these clauses is not penally sanctioned, the complementary provisions bind the contracting parties.

## **IRELAND: Voluntary work for the unemployed**

A Voluntary Work Scheme has been introduced by the Department of Social Welfare. The objective of the scheme is to encourage people receiving unemploy-

ment benefit or assistance to do voluntary work. Many forms of voluntary work are covered under the scheme including the following:

- helping the elderly, sick or handicapped;
- helping church groups, youth clubs, residents or local development associations.

It is hoped that the scheme will be of benefit both to the unemployed people involved (by developing their existing skills or by providing them with work preparation) and to the community.

A person engaging in voluntary work must continue to satisfy the conditions for receiving unemployment benefit/assistance, i.e., being available for paid employment and actively looking for, yet unable to find, paid employment.

The success of the scheme will depend on the response of the voluntary organisations. It is hoped that these organisations will take this opportunity to look for ways of involving unemployed people in voluntary work. A very large number of enquiries have been received since the scheme was introduced but it is too early to assess the long-term effects.

## **ITALY: Frontier workers**

Law no. 228 of June 12, 1984 provides for a special unemployment benefit for Italian frontier workers in Switzerland who have remained unemployed following the termination of their work contract.

The workers must have been made redundant for economic reasons. They must have been engaged in an activity in Switzerland which is subject to contributions to the Swiss unemployment insurance scheme for at least six of the twelve months which preceded the beginning of their unemployment.

The amount of the allowance is fixed each year by the board of INPS, the National Social Insurance Institute.

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# Training

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## **GREECE: Vocational training**

Following recent laws, already mentioned in previous issues of inforMISEP, new programmes on vocational training, education and retraining are being implemented. These programmes have taken the present needs of the labour market into consideration. They aim to provide unemployed persons with a permanent job at the same time as satisfying the needs for modernising production and its adaptation to the new situation that has developed through the inevitable introduction of new technologies.

These programmes include either vocational training alone or vocational training combined with practical experience; they sometimes ensure a first job.

The breakdown of the special programmes implement-

ed by public services and organisations, as well as by private enterprises, according to categories of persons trained is as follows.

### **For young people under 25 years of age**

- vocational training programmes in business management, marketing, accounting, etc., for 32,110 people;
- training programmes and practical courses for 1,465 persons wishing to exercise one of the occupations offered by the merchant navy such as radio operator, engineer or officer;
- courses on complementary vocational training for 200 persons on naval electronic instruments;
- training programmes for 365 persons in banking occupations;
- programmes for 600 youngsters to be trained as nurses;

- programmes for 100 persons for employment in kindergardens and nursery schools;
- training programmes for 240 youngsters in occupations which will enable them to be employed locally (local initiative programmes) such as pottery, wood carving, handicrafts, silversmiths, weaving, etc.;
- programmes for 300 persons in manufacturing articles for the tourist trade and popular art;
- programmes for 432 persons on new technologies;
- programmes for 75 young people on co-operative management;
- programmes for vocational training as electrician, electro-technician or mechanical engineer;
- programmes for 700 persons for training in different occupations in hotels;
- programmes for 1,105 people for training courses aimed at improving the qualifications of the staff working on telecommunications;
- training programmes for 1,390 persons on the use of new railroad technologies;
- special programme for retraining architects and other construction occupations for the restoration of old and traditional buildings.

#### For people over 25 years of age

- special programmes for 1,000 unemployed people or people threatened by unemployment, for their training on naval electronic instruments;
- training programmes for 2,500 persons as merchant navy engineers and officers;
- vocational training programmes for a total of 2,300 persons on banking specialities;
- training programmes for 250 persons on agricultural co-operatives for a total cost of Drx 218m and for 25 persons on trade co-operatives;
- programmes for 1,120 persons in manufacturing for their training in the new production methods;
- special programme for training 53 adults in various occupations as technical advisers;
- vocational training programmes for 6,607 persons in various specialities to remain employed in "problematic" enterprises or work in agricultural co-operatives, etc.;
- programme for training 240 drivers to be used in urban public transport;
- special programme for training 203 persons in the use of statistical research on new technologies;
- programmes for retraining 750 aircraft engineers and trainers in high technologies;
- programmes for training 735 persons on the conversion and reconstruction of the railroads.

#### For women

- vocational training programmes for 630 women on new telecommunications' technologies;
- vocational training programmes for 1,000 women in "male" occupations such as electro-engineering, carpentry;
- vocational training programmes for women over 25 and under 30 years of age to become urban transport drivers;
- vocational training programmes on agro-tourism for 470 women over the age of 25 and for 40 women up to 25;
- vocational training programmes on handicrafts, clothing, food technology, the use of agricultural machinery, house painting, etc. i.e. training that gives the opportunity of local vocational employment in handicrafts. These programmes refer to 3,090 women over 25 and for 620 women under 25 years of age;
- vocational training programmes for 305 women under 25 on infant nursing as a career and for 860

- women on assistant nursing as a career;
- special practical experience programme for 82 students of technical schools on social welfare.

#### For disabled persons

Various special programmes are being implemented to train these people in specialities and occupations fitting their handicaps: telephone operators, potters, book binders, handicrafts, carpenters, etc. These programmes are planned for 525 persons.

Special programmes are also being run by private enterprises which offer more specialisation or retraining to their staff, according to their needs and sector of activities. These programmes have covered 5431 persons and have cost in total approximately Drx 685m.

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Finally, the **Manpower Employment Organisation (OAED)**, the institute responsible for adult vocational training, offers special intensive vocational training programmes for 4,380 persons over 25 and for 2,113 persons under 25 years of age, on different specialities, 15 of which are in the process of being introduced (i.e. staff in co-operatives, in hothouses etc.) It also provides facilities for retraining 277 persons under the age of 25. It offers preparatory training for 3,500 youngsters. It runs various programmes which include vocational training and practical experience for around 8,500 people. It has various programmes for the disabled as well as for people with mental illnesses. It also runs special programmes for training 800 unemployed women as electricians and carpenters.

As regards internal training, specialised courses have been run for 35 staff on OAED's activities; for 320 of its trainers on new courses being taught; and for 30 vocational guidance advisers.

The above programmes of OAED are planned to cost Drx 4,956,000,000.

The **Ministry of Education** also runs adult education programmes for 67,500 persons under 25 and 22,500 persons over 25 on agriculture, embroidery, etc., at the cost respectively of Drx 1,488,900,000 and Drx 292,700,000. It has also introduced two new programmes. One is on basic training in different specialities for 11,000 youngsters and the other, specialised technicians, for 100,000 people under 25 at a cost of some Drx 10bn.

All the above programmes are partly financed by the European Social Fund.

#### IRELAND: LINC training programme

The LINC programme is one of AnCO's major training initiatives. It aims to provide, through training, the maximum employment potential for the unemployed of a particular area. LINC achieves this by raising the skill levels of the unemployed over a wide range of business and life skills. Local voluntary steering groups are being set up and these will identify potential

projects offering employment and training opportunities. As a result of this new initiative in community based training, unemployed jobseekers can be linked through training and development to local job opportunities.

At present there are four regional LINC programmes which are fully supported by the representatives of the main State or semi-state agencies with an interest in the designated areas. In each region an area management board has been established which is comprised of representatives from these agencies. Some of the types of training courses being run are electronics/light skills, welding/light engineering, word processing, micro book-keeping, office procedures, sales/driving, craft studies and start your own business courses. A total of 2,000 persons to date have received training through this programme.

### **UNITED KINGDOM: Adult Training Strategy**

In April 1983 the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) issued a discussion paper, "Towards an Adult Training Strategy" which sought to raise awareness of the need for and importance of adult training and to stimulate thinking. Over 700 responses were received from a wide range of organisations and individuals.

MSC put proposals for taking forward action on adult training to the government in November 1983. In the subsequent White Paper ("Training for Jobs": Cmnd 9135 - see inforMISEP no. 6) the government announced that it generally endorsed these proposals.

The **main objective** of the Adult Training Strategy is to secure an adequate supply of people with up-to-date skills to meet the demands of new technology upon which economic growth must be based, as well as to increase the capacity to cope with continuing change.

Its **principal features** are:

- a national campaign to raise awareness of the need for adult training among employers, potential trainees and providers of training;
- action at national level to secure greater coherence and responsiveness in the machinery for providing adult training and education;
- encouraging collaboration locally between employers and providers of education and training to identify and meet the needs of local industry and commerce;
- restructuring the Commission's own adult training programmes so as to contribute more cost-effectively to meeting the needs of industry and commerce.

In future, MSC will be offering **training in two main categories**:

- an industry-focused programme of job-related training directed to known employment needs and to help in the creation and growth of businesses;
- a programme specifically to help unemployed people to improve their basic skills, retain employability, and to cope with the changing content of jobs and patterns of work.

The main components of the **job-related programme** are likely to be:

- **grant-aid to employers** available locally to part-fund the upgrading, updating or broadening of skills of employees;
- **national grants** to help employers train employees (including new recruits and sponsored trainees) in priority skills or skills where provision is best organised nationally or through industry training organisations;
- **skill training of unemployed people** to meet known local employment needs; this would build on the more successful elements of the existing Training Opportunities Scheme occupational training and offer increased prospects of success because of its focus on known employer requirements, on upgrading and addition to skills rather than training people from scratch, and on the skills of the future;
- **recruitment and training packages**, designed to equip unemployed people or people about to be made redundant with skills to meet specific employer needs. These packages would supply short periods of training closely related to particular job needs;
- **training for self-employment** or to start up and expand small businesses would be increased. New forms of courses for employed people would be piloted, as would training for key employees of small businesses;
- **access to information technology**: a pilot programme is to be run offering adults (regardless of employment status) enhanced access to existing facilities, for example in the evening, and aimed at increasing awareness of information technology but also offering some basic training;
- the **Open Tech Programme** will continue and develop as a key element of the job-related programme.

Many unemployed people will be helped directly or indirectly by such a programme, but others will find it hard to get jobs, often because they lack much of the broad foundation training and experience which the Youth Training Scheme offers to young people. The programme to help people specifically while they are unemployed will link and extend the different types of help available and relate them more closely to relevant provision made by the education and community services.

The needs for training to help such **groups** as women, ethnic minorities and disabled people, who may suffer **disadvantage** in the labour market will continue to receive special attention. Most of the help for the people in these groups will be through mainstream provision with appropriate access ensured, but special action where necessary will be maintained and made more effective.

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# Job creation

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## GERMANY: Trends in self-employment

The number of self-employed and independent professionals rose from 2,291,000 in 1978 to 2,324,000 in 1982, i.e. by 1.4%. They represent 9% of the working population. All economic sectors grew somewhat in numbers of self-employed with the exception of agriculture. Services were particularly well represented, as were manufacturing, trading and transportation. These were just the sectors which previously had a continuous fall in numbers of self-employed. The trade register indicated a 10% rise in firms founded in the first five months of 1983 compared with 1982. In the same period there were 10% fewer corporate collapses. These gross numbers do not show the flows entering and leaving self-employment.

The Federal Employment Institute has been following the figures for founding/take-overs and liquidations of firms with more than 16 employees since 1972. Numbers of firms created or closing go in waves and are mutually reinforcing: fewer creations coincide with more collapses. In fact from 1972 to 1981 there was a continuing increase in the loss of jobs. From 1977 onwards, however, the average numbers employed in new firms started to rise, rather than fluctuate as previously. For every new firm, two firms disappeared and for every new job there were three redundancies.

More than half the firms which closed in 1980 and 1982 were established before 1959. Every seventh manufacturing firm and every fourth building or service company is less than five years old. Newly established companies tend more often than previously to close down. But older companies are hit as much as new ones, small and medium-sized more than large.

Every second redundancy is in the consumer goods industry, above all clothing. Most jobs were lost in electronics and machine tools. This is indicative of the growing capital intensity of the production process with the increasing impact of high R&D costs.

An important condition for establishing a company is knowledge of the labour market situation and the discovery of market niches. Economic development without there being too much of a pick up in the labour market - with a trend to unemployment - seems to be particularly favourable for this. Thus, census data from 1970 showed that the ratio of self-employed to the total working population had been constantly declining, except in periods of crisis due to greater employment risks.

Particular occupations have been especially hard-hit by unemployment: teachers, sociologists, arts graduates, social workers, etc. Although not trained for it, the proportion of self-employed in these occupations has risen, whereas that of the typical self-employed occupations (farmers, carpenters, lawyers, etc.) has fallen.

A **new structure for the self-employed** is developing. This new group is typically aged 20-30, both sexes with above average education, in towns, with a liberal arts background. 40% of those concerned are graduates, one third being from the social sciences. These persons are helped to set up on their own (form-filling, training, etc.) by the Lutheran church, the trade unions,

social work agencies, municipal corporations and social welfare bodies. It is estimated that there are some 500 such protestant initiatives and between 30 and 50 initiatives by the unemployed who are producing and marketing goods. Their workshops often have older unemployed craftsmen as instructors themselves paid through ABM (job creation measures). Participants tend to be the most difficult to employ young people under 25 years. One estimate is that there are some 12,000 local initiative projects in Germany with some 90,000 members. Another, including one-man projects, is of 30,000 - 50,000 unconventional projects embracing 300,000 - 600,000 active persons.

Thus the ratio of unconventional projects' employment to total labour force is between 0.5% and 1%, there being many more in north than south Germany.

70% of unconventional projects are in the service sector, of which social services accounts for 22%. Small production accounts for 12% of activities: printing, repairs, arts and crafts, transport, etc.

Only 10% of all projects can cover at least their personnel costs, the rest being publicly or privately supported. One third of the persons are paid, two thirds being unpaid honorary workers. More than 25% earn less than DM 600 per month, which means they must also have other sources of support. Most earn between DM 1,200 and DM 1,800 per month, which is considerably below average pay in Germany.

Some Land and municipal authorities have put up money for such initiatives, e.g. the North Rhine Westphalia government has made DM 400,000 available.

The Marburg Labour Office and Economic Development Corporation has sponsored a project aimed at making available medical instruments to the third world which are being replaced in hospitals in Germany.

**Source:** Manfred Kaiser: Situation und Entwicklung von Arbeitsloseninitiativen, "neuen Selbständigen" und "alternativen Projekten", IAB, February 1984

## GREECE: Job creation programme for migrant workers returning home

According to decision no. 311411/18.04.84 of the Minister of Labour for "financing employers for the creation of new jobs" (cfr. inforMISEP no. 6) all enterprises whether private or public, local administrations, co-operatives, etc., receive financial support amounting to Drx 800 per day (Drx 1,285 is the current daily wage rate) for every person hired who has returned to Greece after at least two years of employment abroad and has settled in the country during the two years before his/her hiring. Subsidies are given for a period of one year.

The employer who receives the aid must not have dismissed anyone during the three months previous to the hiring; furthermore, he/she must agree to employ the person taken on for 18 months. The subsidy is discontinued in cases where the employer dismisses the worker newly hired or taken on previously and does not replace him/her 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 fulfill the above-mentioned conditions.

#### **ITALY: Bill to foster youth employment in the Mezzogiorno**

The Council of Ministers in its session of 30.07.84 approved a bill which contains provisions for the employment of young people in the Mezzogiorno. The measure is divided into two distinct provisions. The first aims at fostering the employment of young people in companies in the Mezzogiorno by means of incentives paid directly to the companies to the extent of 40% of the labour cost (60% of the labour cost in the more advanced sectors).

The second provision aims at encouraging new entrepreneurship in the Mezzogiorno and thus goes beyond simple assistance. Monetary and real incentives are foreseen for co-operative societies or companies set up in the main by young people between 18 and 29 years of age. The mechanism of giving incentives aims at progressively fostering the integration of initiatives into the mechanisms of the market.

Projects presented by the co-operative societies can concern all productive sectors with particular reference to the provision of services to companies (accounting, marketing, organisation and fiscal consulting and data processing services). Within the scope of the special plan, projects can be presented by local enterprises; however, certain requirements are specified for projects to avoid any degeneration of assistance. An amount of 3,000bn Lire has been earmarked for the scheme until the end of 1987.

#### **NETHERLANDS: Plough-back experiment**

The minister has approved the last part of the "plough-back" experiment (see inforMISEP no. 6).

At the end of 1983 the cabinet made available Hfl. 100m as an additional government investment in building. It was agreed to conduct at the same time an experimental "plough-back" of unemployment benefits. This means that through the employment of 70% of the long-term unemployed a considerable amount of unemployment benefit money is saved. Hfl. 90m has already been paid into a Hfl. 790m employment programme. The employment projects of Hfl. 10m which have now been approved result in an investment in building of Hfl. 209m, i.e.:

Hfl. 10m	government money
Hfl. 44m	saved unemployment benefits, and
Hfl. 155m	contribution from municipalities, foundations and private persons who commission the projects.

#### **UNITED KINGDOM: Enterprise Allowance Scheme: increase in number of places**

The Enterprise Allowance Scheme (see inforMISEP nos. 00, 2 and 5) provides a taxable allowance of £40 a week for a year to those unemployed people wishing to set up a business who may be deterred by the fact that they would lose their entitlement to unemployment or supplementary benefit.

The scheme is encouraging the **creation of new businesses** over a wide range of activities from traditional craft work to high technology microcomputer programming, though most businesses, as may be expected, are covering more conventional activities such as shops, cafes, hairdressing, light haulage, general building repairs and maintenance, motor repairs, clothes design and manufacture and contract cleaning. More imaginative ventures have included a private ambulance service, constructing architectural models, raising calves for beef and a workshop to help unemployed young people into self-employment.

On May 1, 1984 there were 29,000 people on this highly successful and popular scheme. It was therefore announced that the weekly allocation of places was to be raised from 600 to 1,000 from the beginning of May in order to cope with increased demand. The **future development** of this scheme is currently under consideration.

#### **EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: Council resolution on local employment initiatives**

On June 7, 1984 the Council of the European Communities adopted a resolution on the contribution of local employment initiatives to combatting unemployment:

##### **I. Aim**

1. The Council notes the communication submitted by the Commission entitled "Community Action to Combat Unemployment - the Contribution of Local Employment Initiatives".
2. It notes with interest the development of the phenomenon of local employment initiatives (LEIs); it recognises the contribution that these initiatives can make to the objectives of the fight against unemployment and the revival of economic activity by virtue of the possibilities they offer for the maintenance or creation of jobs, particularly in small undertakings, by encouraging the recovery of local economic and social situations.
3. It considers that the development of these initiatives should be supported and stimulated by the Member States' policies accompanied by specific measures at Community level.

##### **II. General characteristics**

1. The Council notes that LEIs:
  - are most often the result of action by individuals or groups of individuals who are either unemployed or threatened by unemployment and are often supported by local promoters;
  - are consequently implemented by persons who are not necessarily conversant with the management or administration of an undertaking and who have no personal capital of any significance;
  - are particularly important for persons whose chances of integration or reintegration into the labour market are very slight;
  - differ widely in their modes of organisation;
  - involve a wide variety of activities which are normally centred on local needs and adapted to local conditions;



- are often important in places suffering from serious unemployment or under-employment as a result of special development difficulties;
  - often involve, especially at local and regional levels, co-operation by public authorities, both sides of industry and other parties, including youth organisations;
  - have as their prime objective the creation of economically viable jobs;
  - may rebuild confidence and produce skills, qualifications and capacity for enterprise.
2. It acknowledges that the contributions made by public authorities during the start-up period of LEIs to facilitate the creation of new jobs, while respecting the conditions of competition, are in general more than offset by the advantages which they offer in terms of job and income creation, the use of human and local resources and reductions in the cost of social benefits.
  3. It considers that support provided at regional and local level, in particular to meet management and training needs, is especially important for the development and success of small, locally generated undertakings.
  4. It recognises the contribution that both sides of industry can make to facilitate the economic and social integration of LEIs.
  5. It recognises the usefulness of spreading the various current ideas, techniques and experience in the field of LEIs.

### **III. Action by the Member States**

The Council invites Member States to adopt within the framework of their policies and practices the following policy guidelines for the promotion of LEIs:

1. Take account, in their policies relating to employment creation, local and regional development and local labour market management, of the potential contribution of LEIs to fight against unemployment, the revival of local economies and the alleviation of social problems. Public recognition of LEIs with a view to promoting their development and encouraging others to follow the same path should be accompanied as necessary by appropriate legal provisions.
2. Promote the establishment of close communication between all those involved in encouraging employment creation, especially both sides of industry and public authorities, particularly at the level of the local labour market, in order to improve the level of co-operation and the transfer of useful experience.
3. Taking account of the responsibilities of, and possibilities open to, local and regional authorities, encourage the development of local support structures for LEIs by means of practical measures such as:
  - making available information and guidance on the existing potential for aid;
  - developing services - where appropriate, by means of aid for the creation of development agencies - which are capable of providing sup-

port to those seeking to launch LEIs, and of facilitating access to the various forms of aid available:

- making available suitable premises for small undertakings and workshops, for example by encouraging the conversion of vacant buildings;
  - improving conditions and extending the possibilities for tendering for public contracts.
4. Ensure that measures to improve access for small and medium-scale undertakings to finance and to provide public financial support involve criteria, conditions, decision-making procedures and delivery systems which make it possible for LEIs to benefit from them.
  5. Using existing possibilities for providing public support, encourage projects for the vocational and social integration and reintegration of particularly disadvantaged categories, in particular by adapting and simplifying the procedures for providing such support.
  6. Examine possibilities for resorting to new methods of providing finance for LEIs, which are likely to make it easier to launch them (e.g. aid, during the period when their projects are being started up, to hitherto unemployed persons who have set up or are setting up LEIs, creation of special funds, or support for initiatives to attract local savings into such funds).
  7. Examine the extent to which national legislation facilitates the creation of undertakings, including co-operatives and undertakings of a collective nature, and offers legal and financial provisions such as will encourage the creation of such undertakings.
  8. As part of the commitment already entered into by the Member States to make increased efforts to promote and develop the supply of training facilities, examine the extent to which training systems take account of the requirements of LEIs, paying particular attention to:

- co-operation between the bodies concerned in order to remedy any lack of training or qualifications on the local labour market;
- opportunities for access to training or qualifications at local level particularly in order to facilitate the employment of the least-skilled among the unemployed and to promote training, including management training, for those responsible for LEIs;
- the skills and qualifications of trainers and vocational guidance and placement officials.

### **IV. Action at Community level**

1. The Council encourages the Commission to support action by the Member States mainly:
  - through more systematic use of existing Community instruments for promoting LEIs;
  - through the promotion of LEIs by means of consultation and the exchange of information on a Community-wide basis;
  - through evaluation and research designed to

- provide a useful guide for future policies and action.
2. The Commission is therefore invited in particular to:
    - (a) support, with the assistance of the European Social Fund, specific innovative projects aimed at facilitating the development of LEIs, particularly those directed towards:
      - the application or production of new technologies;
      - the use of under-exploited local resources;
      - the employment of particularly disadvantaged categories;
      - back-up measures for these initiatives, particularly the development of innovative training and support methods adapted to their needs;
 by providing for a continuous exchange of experiences resulting from these projects in order to assess their impact on employment;
    - (b) develop its programme of consultation and information transfer in order to facilitate the direct exchange of experiences at Community level, while co-ordinating it with the projects of the OECD's Co-operative Action Programme on Local Employment Initiatives;
    - (c) complement these actions by carrying out specific studies which help to guide and assess the action, such as:
      - the most apt methods of providing finance for LEIs;
      - legal and fiscal encouragement for the establishment and development of enterprises including co-operatives and other forms of collective enterprise;
      - the types of product and services which LEIs provide and their impact on traditional transactions from the point of view of competition.
  3. The Commission is requested to inform the Council periodically of progress made in the implementation of these actions.

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## Special categories of workers

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### FRANCE: Repatriation schemes for immigrant workers

Two arrangements have been made to facilitate the return of foreign workers to their country of origin:

- public aid brought in by the decree of April 27, 1984;
- aid by written agreement following a convention signed on May 14, 1984 between the trade unions and employer organisations.

**Public aid** is added to the measures taken by the employer for reintegrating a foreign worker in his/her country of origin according to an agreement with the State or the national immigration office - ONI. Public aid is thus subordinated to there being such an agreement. (One such agreement has been signed by the Citroen company and another by the trade association of public works; negotiations are underway at Renault). Public aid consists of:

- an allowance "which should cover all or part of the beneficiary's expenses to ensure his/her successful reintegration in his/her country of origin" (vocational training, purchase of equipment), the amount of which cannot exceed FFr 20,000;
- an allowance for covering travel costs (air ticket for him/herself, his/her spouse and under-aged children) and removal costs (a lump sum amounting to at most FFr 6,700 for Europe and to FFr 10,000 outside Europe).

**Aid by agreement** complements public aid and, like it, can only be given to workers whose employer has signed an agreement with the State or ONI. Such aid is provided by the unemployment insurance system. It consists of a one-off payment of the two thirds of the unemployment allowances the worker would be entitled to on the date of his/her departure.

### GERMANY: Foreigners repatriation scheme's progress

The number of persons applying for repatriation allowances and repayment of contributions to the statutory pensions insurance rapidly rose in May. The allowance (see inforMISEP no. 4) amounts to up to DM 10,500 per unemployed or short-time working foreign worker from non-EC countries and DM 1,500 per dependent child provided the application is made by June 30, 1984 and the country left by September 30, 1984.

By May a total of some 9,900 foreign workers - including some 8,400 Turks - had applied for repatriation help. This represented an increase of almost 2,500 over the April figure, when the rise was higher than average.

The pre-financing of 75% of the repatriation aid has been operating since the end of March by the Federal Employment Institute. Since then more than 1,200 foreign workers have made use of this scheme.

Some 57,000 foreign workers - including nearly 48,000 Turks - have so far (June 1984) applied for repayment of their (employee) contributions to the statutory pensions insurance. Preliminary information from companies indicates that the rise in applications for repatriation help continued in June.

Irrespective of future developments, the federal government does not intend to take any initiative to renew this law.

The strict criteria for repatriation aid - bankruptcies, corporate closure or lengthy short-time working were deliberately chosen to minimise possible take-up effects, i.e., having foreigners apply who were in any case intending to return home. For these reasons repatriation aid is only given to those persons who met the legal conditions once the law was in force.

## GERMANY: Amendment to the disabled persons' act

In June 1984 the draft of an amendment to the disabled persons' act was sent out for comment to the provincial governments ("Länder"), the social partners and the associations concerned. This act has now been in force for ten years. During this period, the number of recognised disabled persons has risen to about 4.5m. Of these some 1.1m belong to the labour force. In May 1984 136,694 disabled persons were unemployed.

The **main objective** of the amendment is to offer disabled persons better chances of finding a job or a training place. The bill seeks to ensure that the experience gained be turned to good account, that problems which have become apparent during the implementation of the act be rectified and that employment obstacles be reduced.

The draft bill makes the **following provisions**:

The amount of the compensation which employers have to pay if they, contrary to their legal obligation, do not employ disabled persons or do not employ them to the extent laid down by law, will be increased from DM 100 to DM 150 in line with increases in gross wages since 1974. The aim is to put increased pressure on those employers having to employ a certain quota of disabled people to hire and employ these people to the extent laid down by law.

Training places will no longer be taken into account for calculating the minimum number of 16 workplaces and the number of disabled persons to be employed. The aim here is to increase the readiness of companies to train people.

The aids granted to disabled trainees will be increased. One disabled trainee shall count towards two quota jobs. Furthermore, the provision of training places for disabled persons in companies will be fostered by means of additional financial aids granted from the compensatory funds.

The special protection against dismissal for disabled persons is maintained. To give employers the opportunity to try out disabled persons at a specific workplace, general protection against dismissal will come into force, i.e., after a six month period of employment.

There will be an additional holiday for disabled persons of one working week, this including health cures. This has been done to increase the employers' readiness to hire and employ disabled people, bearing in mind that the basic holiday has been extended considerably since 1974.

Financial incentives from the compensatory funds are intended to bring about the hiring and employment of disabled persons. What has been achieved through four special programmes should now become a continuous legal scheme.

The legal status of the disabled persons' representative is being strengthened. The representative makes a special contribution to unemployed disabled persons being offered a training place or a job. Experience has shown that the legal status of the representative has to be improved in order to enable him/her to fulfil his/her task responsibly.

## NETHERLANDS: School leavers' campaign 1984

In 1984 250,000 young people have either left or will be leaving school which is less than previously estimated. This is mainly due to the fact that young people are staying on longer because of high unemployment. This creates a so-called "waiting-room effect" so that in a few years' time there will be more school leavers than forecasted on the basis of numbers of births. Around 1987 the number of school leavers will peak, thereafter declining as a consequence of fewer children having been born after 1970 than before.

In the campaign young people are urged to register with the employment offices, the motto being **"Get working now to get work"**. Registration is indispensable for obtaining unemployment benefits or family allowances. Files with tips and information especially for the young are available at the employment office where they can also obtain the "1984 guide to work". This guide informs school leavers about questions such as collective agreements, social insurance, minimum (youth) wages and works councils.

Moreover, the campaign makes use of advertisements, posters and TV ads to advise young people above all to start to look for a job in time. This year, too, an appeal will be made to employers to think of school leavers especially as vacancies occur in their companies.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment has sent out a "1984 school leavers' letter" to employers' and employees' organisations, regional employment offices, education-labour market contact centres, youth advisers and 4,000 headmasters. The letter shows that unemployment of school leavers under the age of 23 has increased from an average of 76,147 in 1982 to 115,763 in 1983. The share of school leavers in total youth unemployment rose last year to 47%. At the end of February 1984 117,700 school leavers under 23 years of age were unemployed. Of these, 31,300 had been registered at the employment office for more than one year. The possibilities of LBO/MAVO (lower vocational education/intermediate general secondary education) school leavers in particular to take up vocational training will increase considerably through agreements with public authorities, industry and education aimed at doubling the number of youths (up to 50,000) who join the first stage of the apprenticeship system. An increase in the number of K-MBO (short intermediate vocational education) trainees from 8,100 in 1983/84 to 15,000 in the academic year 1984/85 is also foreseen.

## UNITED KINGDOM: Disablement Advisory Service

The United Kingdom believes in the importance of a programme of educating and persuading employers about the abilities and achievements of disabled people as a means of improving their employment opportunities.

In order to give clearer expression to their **"Fit for Work"** campaign of public education, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) has introduced a new service for employers. This service - **The Disablement Advisory Service** - comprises small teams of two to three staff whose job is to provide the employers in their locality with practical advice, guidance and help on how to make full use of the skills and abilities of disabled workers. The service was introduced on a phased basis throughout 1983, and became available nationwide in March 1984.

The Disablement Advisory Service complements the work of **Disablement Resettlement Officers** (DROs), who are responsible for giving advice and guidance to disabled jobseekers with special employment problems, and of **Employment Advisers** in Jobcentres who can help those disabled people who do not consider themselves to be in need of special assistance.

Staff of the new service are able to give employers **expert advice** on:

- the wide range of practical and financial help available from the MSC to help overcome problems associated with disability at work (e.g. special aids for employment, cash grants towards the conversion of premises or equipment);
- ways in which employers can retain the services of a good employee who has become disabled or whose disability has increased;
- employing disabled people under the MSC's Community Programme which helps the long-term unemployed gain valuable work experience on projects of benefit to their local community;
- the establishment of a Sheltered Industrial Group on employers' premises for severely disabled workers;
- the Fit for Work Award Scheme and how employers might participate in it;
- employers' legal obligations towards employing disabled people.

The **view of employers** on the new service will be sought in its early stages so that any changes might be considered in the interests of making the service as effective and cost-effective as possible.

#### **UNITED KINGDOM: Young Workers Scheme (YWS)**

The Young Workers Scheme (see inforMISEP no. 3 for further details) provides financial incentives to employers who recruit young people at wage rates that reflect their value to an employer.

To ensure that the scheme complements more closely the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), changes were made to the YWS conditions with effect from April 1, 1984. These changes aim to encourage employers to provide young people with training under YTS, and permanent jobs when the scheme has ended.

To be **eligible for the Scheme's support**, a young person must be:

Under 18 years of age on the date the job starts and have been away from full-time education for at least a year if he/she left school at 16 years of age;

or

17 years of age on the date he/she left full-time education.

For all jobs starting on or after April 1, 1984 employers who **pay** an average weekly wage not exceeding £50 a week may claim payment of £15 a week for a period of up to **one year**.

#### **EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: Resolution on combatting unemployment among women**

On June 7, 1984 the Council adopted the following resolution on action to combat unemployment amongst women:

##### **I. General objectives**

1. The Council takes note of the Commission communication on unemployment amongst women in the Community.
2. It notes that unemployment amongst women is a worrying aspect of the general employment situation in the Community and can only be resolved satisfactorily within the framework of a general policy designed to achieve economic recovery and employment growth. Given the particular characteristics of female unemployment, it is also necessary to make specific efforts to remove the handicaps affecting the employment of women and to promote equal opportunities on the labour market in order to reduce gradually and significantly the rate of unemployment among women.
3. It emphasises the principles which must underlie the measures to be promoted, namely:
  - the equal right of men and women to work and, by the same token, to acquire a personal income on equal terms and conditions, regardless of the economic situation;
  - the extension of equal opportunities to men and women, in particular on the labour market, in the context of measures to stimulate economic recovery and to promote employment growth;
  - the development of positive measures to correct *de facto* inequalities and thereby improve female employment prospects and promote the employment of both men and women.

##### **II. Guidelines for action**

1. The Council considers that the following guidelines for action in particular should be implemented or continued within the framework of national policies and practices:
  - (a) in respect of job creation and recruitment:
    - ensure that the measures aimed at encouraging the recruitment of additional labour, especially young people, in the private sector, allow for a more balanced representation of men and women, particularly in jobs in which women are under-represented and in skilled jobs;
    - focus recruitment premiums, where they exist, on the people at the greatest disadvantage on the labour market, many of whom are women;
    - adopt adequate measures to promote increased representation of women, in order to achieve a better balance in the industries of the future, especially the high-technology industries;
    - make efforts in the public sector to promote equal opportunities which can serve as an example, particularly in those fields

where new information technologies are being developed;

- endeavour to ensure that initiatives aimed at the reduction and re-organisation of working time make a positive contribution to the promotion of equal opportunities in the area of employment, by permitting *inter alia* greater flexibility in working hours;
- ensure that voluntary part-time work does not lead to increased sexual segregation on the labour market;
- enable women to have equal access to financial and other facilities available for the creation of businesses, particularly in the context of local initiatives to create employment, including those taken on a co-operative basis, which offer women worthwhile employment prospects and working conditions;

(b) to promote, in the fields of education, vocational training and guidance, measures with a view to:

- giving women a wider choice of jobs to enable them to participate more equitably in growth sectors and in industries of the future;
- ensuring more appropriate qualifications for female workers particularly affected by industrial restructuring and innovation, for those from less-favoured areas, for unemployed women seeking to return to work;
- promoting increased representation of women in training programmes in order to achieve a better balance in those sectors where they are under-represented, especially sectors connected with the introduction of new technologies;

(c) adopt the necessary measures to ensure that placement, guidance and counselling services are staffed with skilled personnel in adequate

numbers in order to provide a service based on the necessary expertise in the special problems of unemployed women;

(d) improve quantitative and qualitative information on the situation of women on the labour market and the assessment of the impact of policies to combat unemployment on the employment of women in order to be able to monitor progress in the sexual desegregation of employment and identify female unemployment trends more accurately.

2. The Council stresses the importance it attaches to the positive contribution of the European Social Fund to the implementation of these guidelines for action.
3. The Council considers that the principles and guidelines set out above should apply to action undertaken at every level, also by encouraging, where possible, both sides of industry.
4. The Council stresses the importance of accompanying measures, especially regarding social infrastructure and means of encouraging greater sharing of responsibilities in the light of the general objective of improving female employment.
5. The Council asks the Member States to develop, where appropriate in co-operation with the Commission, information campaigns aimed at encouraging the change in attitudes needed to improve equality of opportunity in employment. The Council emphasises the essential role of positive action, by national committees and bodies for the promotion of equal opportunities, which must be able to act as effectively as possible.
6. The Commission is requested to organise an annual exchange of information between Member States on measures taken under this resolution to reduce unemployment among women, and on the means of monitoring, research and assessment.
7. The Council asks the Commission to report to it at regular intervals with a view to taking stock of progress accomplished not later than three years following the adoption of the resolution.

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## Working time

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### **BELGIUM: Reduced working time during the first year of working life in public administrations (Royal decree no. 259 of 31.12.83)**

During their first year of employment in public administration, both the duration of working time and the salaries of new recruits are now limited by decree to 80% of those of persons working full-time.

This measure will enable the costs of recruitment covered by the State budget to be reduced. It is a part of the actions aimed at improving public finances. It has enabled recruitment to be resumed, which thus contributes to safeguarding employment while at the same time respecting the general desire of moderating public expenditure. Within the budgetary constraints, promoting a form of compulsory part-time work seems to be a positive approach to maintaining employment.

### **FRANCE: Enterprise creation and sabbatical leaves**

The law of January 3, 1984 gives salary and wage-earners the right, under certain conditions, to take leave to set up an enterprise or to take a sabbatical leave. The government sees this law as a contribution to the struggle for employment from two angles:

- a new incentive for creating enterprises and hence jobs;
- an encouragement for vocational mobility and for the voluntary reduction of working time.

The new law strives for a balance between strengthening the new rights opened up to the workers and the requisite guarantees for enterprises.

The core characteristic of **enterprise creation leave** is

that the purpose has to be clearly defined: it can be taken by salary and wage-earners who intend to create or take over an enterprise.

The **sabbatical leave** on the other hand does not have to have a specified purpose. This gives shape to an essential change in attitudes and constitutes a step in the promotion of the working time chosen.

Right to both types of leave is open to those salary and wage-earners in private enterprises who have worked there for at least 36 months and have been working for a minimum of six years.

The length of the enterprise creation leave is one year (which can in certain circumstances be extended to two); that of a sabbatical leave can range from six to 11 months. In both cases leave is **unpaid** and **work contracts** are **suspended**.

At the end of the leave, the salary and wage-earner comes back to his/her former job or to a similar job and is paid at least the same as before.

The employer can put off departure for leave (six to nine months at most) and in small and medium-sized enterprises (less than 200 employees) the granting of leave can be refused, should it be considered - after consulting with the representatives of the wage-earners - that leave would have prejudicial effects on the enterprise's production and operations.

#### **FRANCE: New system of solidarity contracts concerning the length of work**

The decree of May 30, 1984 brings in a new type of solidarity contract for reducing working time. This took over on June 30, 1984 from the solidarity contract created by the decree of December 16, 1982.

This 1982 decree achieved far from negligible results - 5,200 jobs created or maintained in 1983, but they fell short of the objectives set by the Plan, in particular because of the strict conditions laid down by the December 16, 1982 decree.

The new provisions seek to get the solidarity contracts for reducing working time going again by making various alterations:

- such contracts can now be drawn on by enterprises for which reducing working time enables the employment situation to be improved without having to completely maintain employment overall;
- financial incentives are increased and vary in function of:
  - . the actual reduction of hours worked so as to bring about significant (at least four hours) reductions;
  - . commitments made in employment terms so as to foster enterprises which commit themselves to maintain or increase their workforce;
- actions combining reducing working time and modernising equipment are especially encouraged: the financial incentive is increased when, in parallel to a reduction in working time, an enterprise makes a significant investment (a 30% increase over the rate of investment of the previous three years, one part of the investment being

aimed at bringing in an automated production process).

#### **FRANCE: Aids to hiring within a reduced working hours contract**

The decree of June 27, 1984 brings in aids from the State for every hiring of a wage-earner by a working contract which foresees an average length of real weekly working time of between 28 and 32 hours.

This scheme seeks to develop reduced hours' work as an element of an active employment policy, as part-time work currently concerns only a relatively small proportion of the workforce: 5.1% of jobs in establishments with more than 10 wage-earners according to a survey carried out in 1982.

Developing forms of reducing working time to around 30 hours would seem to be particularly worthwhile from the employment viewpoint. Less marginalising as regards occupational integration than traditional half-time work, it should hence be encouraged.

The amount of the aid is set at FFr 6,000 per employee hired. This is only given to enterprises with a part-time workforce not exceeding 25% of the total workforce. Granting the aid is subject to there having been no redundancies during the three months which preceded and the 12 months which follow the hiring.

#### **ITALY: Early retirement**

Law no. 133 of May 31, 1984 sets out measures for rationalising the iron and steel sector and the intervention of the GEPI S.p.A.

The law specifies the nature of the companies where early retirements can be taken by wage-earners who are 50 years of age at the date the law came into force (June 6, 1984):

- industrial companies in the iron and steel sector;
- companies having a permanent activity mainly concerned with services to and maintenance of iron and steel works;
- coking coal companies;
- companies producing refractory materials;
- companies manufacturing artificial graphite electrodes for the iron and steel industry;
- companies which employ more than a thousand workers and will deal exclusively in iron and steel products.

#### **NETHERLANDS: Reduction of working hours in 1984 in depressed and subsidised sectors**

According to the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment it will be possible in 1984 to agree in certain sectors to a 1% reduction of working hours in connection with the non-payment of price indexation. As from 1985 the reduction in working hours should in principle be fully recovered, with the 1% of wages being made available to this effect. Due to a delay in filling the created vacancies, this percentage could be somewhat lower in 1984.

The Second Chamber has accepted a motion whereby part-time workers in the collective agreement sector

who voluntarily work 32 hours or less shall be excluded from reductions of working hours with cuts in wages.

## Placement

### FRANCE: New system of geographical mobility support

The system brought in in January 1983 has three major characteristics:

- limiting the following small grants:
  - free travel vouchers (train and recognised bus transport);
  - allowances for job-search consisting of an allowance to cover travel if a means other than train or bus is used, and a board and lodging allowance;
- having ANPE manage the whole mechanism, with a ceiling in both 1983 and 1984 of FFr 50m. ANPE can appraise and decide on giving grants which are seen as a tool available to ANPE to foster redeployment;
- redefining the criteria for making grants, due to the limited sum available. ANPE's board of directors laid down the following criteria:
  - priority is given to jobseekers having particular problems in finding a job locally;
  - ANPE can only issue transport vouchers and give allowances for job-search under three conditions: when the Agency itself convenes the jobseeker; when travel is required to meet an employer following a matching action by ANPE and in such cases the job offers must be registered at ANPE; when ANPE sends the user to a location for specific activities (cfr. inforMISEP no. 2):
    - in-depth guidance sessions (SOA)
    - vocational competence level assessments (ENCP)
    - techniques of job-search.

### Results

As an indication of how the new system is used, the number of grants made in two months in 1983 for the three conditions is given below:

less than 100 km away	1 = 1,652 (1 = convocation) 2 = 1,485 (2 = matching) 3 = 1,537 (3 = ANPE activities)
between 100 and 300 km distant	1 = 171 2 = 1,503 3 = 297
more than 300 km away	1 = 77 2 = 1,287 3 = 143
	<u>8,152</u>

The breakdown according to the types of aid is:

Travel voucher only	1 = 1,118 2 = 1,716 3 = 1,197
Allowance for job- search	1 = 673 2 = 993 3 = 352
Travel voucher + lodging allowance (without meal)	1 = 59 2 = 742 3 = 112
Allowance for job- search + lodging allowance + meal	1 = 50 2 = 824 3 = 316

### NETHERLANDS: Tripartite manpower administration

Tripartite manpower administration at both the national and regional (employment offices) level is advised by the Labour Market Council (SER) in its interim opinion to the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment. Parallel to this it advocates tripartitism for the social security administration. The future merger of these bodies is not excluded. The idea is to bring about and integrate the tripartite bodies at the same time.

## Miscellaneous

### NETHERLANDS: Proposal for an improvement in equal treatment of men and women

At the end of 1984 the two existing commissions on equal treatment of men and women at work (in the public and private sectors) will be merged into a single new commission. Unlike the current situation, this commission will be directly empowered to set up an inquiry into possible unequal treatment. In future, organisations of the people concerned, such as work councils and trade unions, will be able to turn to the commission. Until now, the individual employee has often had to stand up to the employer on his/her own.

This proposal has been made to the Second Chamber by the Secretary of State on behalf of the Minister of the Interior. At the same time, the Secretary of State holds out the prospect of new guidelines for drafting vacancy notices in order to prevent differences being made, directly or indirectly, in advertisements. The commission's power to initiate actions against faulty advertisements will be enhanced. According to the proposal of the Secretary of State, the commission will in future be able to disclose its judgement on serious infringements.

**Rough currency conversion rates**

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

•Belgium	45 Bfrs
•Denmark	8.2 DAKs
•Germany	2.24 DM
•Greece	88 Drx
•France	7.00 FF
•Ireland	0.73 IR£
•Italy	1375 Lit
•Luxembourg	45 FL
•Netherlands	2.5 Hfl
•United Kingdom	0.59 UK£

**MISEP correspondents:**

Belgium	Alfons Verlinden, Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
Denmark	Soren Hess, Arbejdsministeriet
Germany	Magda Kugler Dabrowski, Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung Lutz Vogt, Bundesanstalt für Arbeit
Greece	E. vangelia Hadziantoniou, Ypourgion Ergasias Angelos Zisimopoulos, O.A.E.D.
France	Denise Annandale, Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi Claire Aubin, Ministère de l'Emploi
Ireland	Padraig Cullinane, An Roinn Saothair
Italy	Teodosio Zeuli, Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza Sociale
Luxembourg	Jean Hoffmann, Administration de l'Emploi
The Netherlands	Chris Smolders, Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
United Kingdom	Ron Sirett, Department of Employment
European Commission	Andrew Chapman, DG V/A/1
Technical secretariat:	European Centre for Work and Society (Heinke Hubert)

