

informISEP

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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 (iM) 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 developments

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Short notes

Developments at a glance

- Belgium** To ensure that those with the lowest incomes do not contribute as much to income restraint as those at work, specified groups have been accorded premiums under an executive order of January (p. 3). The Social Recovery Law of January 1985 has extended the possibilities for flexible working time within the framework of collective work agreements (p. 10). A royal decree of April clarifies the position as regards social security benefits of those workers participating in experiments on working time (p. 12).
- Germany** The main provisions of the Employment Promotion Act, which came into operation in May, are outlined in as far as they add to what has previously been described: easing limited-term employment contracts; regulating part-time work; temporary work contracts and enhancing women's chances of re-integrating in the labour market (p. 3). The labour minister has stated why he is not in favour of having the unemployed paid wages at below collectively agreed rates (p. 5). Measures are being developed to enable foreign workers returning home to benefit from their house-building savings contracts (p. 7).
- Greece** Law 1545/85 enables in particular the young unemployed to draw benefits for up to 5 months and the 49+ year olds for up to 8 months (p. 5). Under the same law, OAED is seeking to enhance vocational training, particularly by 50% grants for training posts (p. 7). Henceforth, public bodies must have 80% of their telephone operators recruited from the blind (p. 8). The governmental change has created a ministry of labour and employment (p. 14).
- France** A new measure, mobilising existing and establishing new instruments, has been brought in for the training and help of the long-term unemployed (p. 8). A set of recent ANPE-commissioned studies brings out the reasons for relative success of ANPE placement efforts, particularly on-going personal relations with enterprises (p. 13).
- Ireland** The Irish Congress of Trade Unions is establishing centres for the unemployed, particularly the young (p. 6). The government has introduced a National Linkage Programme, starting in the electronics industry, to ensure that more components are manufactured locally thereby leading to more jobs (p. 7).
- Italy** A ministry of labour document sets out the main thrusts of a long-term employment policy (p. 4). 38 billion lire is earmarked in 1985 for pilot experiments in work creation in two regions and for computerising employment services (p. 14). 30 billion lire is being used in 1985 for experimental employment agencies (p. 14).
- Netherlands** The government is reforming the whole of unemployment and disability regulations from January 1986 (p. 4). Participants in youth employment schemes can now be relieved for up to 3 years of the requirement to register as a jobseeker at the labour office (p. 9). Integrating the handicapped into working life is seen by the government - in a draft bill - to be essentially the task of employers and employees (p. 9). School leavers are now finding work more quickly than in 1983 (p. 9). The experimental "JOB" scheme for providing temporary work experience to long-term unemployed youths is being extended (p. 13).
- United Kingdom** In 1984-85 some 7,650 persons received £4.5 million under the geographical mobility schemes (p. 6). The Voluntary Projects Programme to develop unemployed persons' skills will continue at least to 1988 (p. 6). A minister was appointed in 1984 to promote policies for growth of enterprise and the creation of jobs (p. 7). A review is provided of public employment and training for the handicapped (p. 9). The Equal Opportunities Commission's Code of Practice came into operation in April (p. 14).

Overall developments

BELGIUM: Measures accompanying income restraint for lower incomes

Royal decree no. 281 of March 31, 1984 lays down that from April 1, 1984 to December 31, 1986 the legal and regulatory provisions which link social security benefits and amounts to the consumer price index will have limits placed on them. Indexation will in fact be the same as for salary and wage-earners: in 1984, 1985 and, if necessary, in 1986 the first indexation of 2% will not be applied.

At the same time this decree brings in a number of correctives to the income restraint system in order to guarantee the purchasing power of the least well off. For this reason the following do not fall under this system:

- the minimum means of subsistence
- guaranteed income for the elderly
- the amounts of family allowances for orphans, the disabled and children of disabled, unemployed or pensioned heads of family.

The minimum means of subsistence, guaranteed income for the elderly and allowances for the handicapped have in fact been increased by 2% from January 1, 1985 and will be increased again on January 1, 1986.

The King can, furthermore, wholly or partly exempt specific social benefits from the application of the income restraint.

Finally, the decree opens up the possibility for granting a **flat rate premium** to specific beneficiaries whose social allowances are subject to the income restraint, in partial compensation for the loss of purchasing power ("prime de rattrapage").

An executive order of January 24, 1985 sets out the terms and conditions for granting this premium. It is given to the **disabled** (those who were disabled on January 1, 1985) and to **pensioners** (persons who had been pensioned for at least one year on January 1, 1985) who have a preferential rate called "VIPO": widows, disabled, pensioners and orphans.

The premium amounts to 3,000 Bfrs for heads of families and 2,000 Bfrs for those who are not. These two amounts have a ceiling of 12% of the "AMI" benefit (AMI: sickness and disability insurance) or of the current month's pension.

This premium may not result in the disability benefit or the pension on an annual basis amounting to 306,000 Bfrs (300,000 Bfrs indexed, with dependents) or 204,000 Bfrs (200,000 Bfrs indexed, without dependents) being exceeded.

The premium is thus only granted to a VIPO who draws an allowance or a pension which does not exceed indexed amounts of 300,000 Bfrs and 200,000 Bfrs respectively.

The premium is also granted to heads of families who are **unemployed** and to fully unemployed individual workers who have been continuously unemployed for more than one year (periods of sickness are obviously not considered as interruptions). The premium amounts to 3,000 Bfrs for heads of families and 2,000 Bfrs for the individual worker and has a ceiling of 12% of the unemployment allowance.

GERMANY: Coming into force of the Employment Promotion Act 1985

The Employment Promotion Act 1985 came into force on May 1. The purpose of the Act is to open up additional employment opportunities through changes in labour and social legislation. It is intended in particular that overtime and special shift working should be reduced and transformed into more employment opportunities for the unemployed. iM nos. 6 and 8 gave information on planned changes.

From the very beginning the bill was the subject of a lively political debate. The trade unions in particular rejected it because they saw it as intruding on well-established employee protection rights. The basic concept of the law is, on the contrary, that many of the state and autonomous regulations of labour law which are aimed at protecting the employee can nowadays have a negative impact on the willingness of the employer to take on workers. The regulations which intrude on current law most are limited in time to 1990, particularly since the employment promoting effect of the measures envisaged cannot be appraised with any precision in advance.

iM no. 8 provided details on the following regulations:

- Modification of the "Social Plan" regulation
- Broadening the compensation procedure for continued payment of wages
- Free of charge placement in training places on behalf of the Federal Employment Institute
- Broadening the promotion of employment creation measures
- Stiffened penalties on the illegal employment of foreign workers
- Extending the special conditions as regards contributions to the statutory pension insurance granted to single craftsmen when training apprentices
- Relaxing the 3-year period for health cures under the health insurance system
- Building companies - clarification in the "Protection Against Dismissal Act".

They are not dealt with again in this article. The most important regulations as regards labour market policy which have come into force are as follows:

Facilitating the use of limited term employment contracts for new recruitment

The law provides that, for a transitional period until January 1, 1990, a one-off limitation of the employment contract for a duration of up to 18 months may be authorised if a new worker/employee is taken on or if an apprentice, for whom there is no permanent job, is kept in temporary employment by the firm which trained him. For newly established firms employing up to 20 workers the maximum duration of a limited term employment contract is two years. The law talks about "newly taken on" workers (whereas the bill spoke of "unemployed persons"), thus broadening the target group.

Labour law regulation of part-time work

Until now there has been no specific regulation under labour law for part-time work. Indeed, the new Act is also limited to the regulations which are indispensable for enhancing part-time work in areas where there is clearly a need for special protection. According to the

new law unequal treatment of part-time workers as opposed to full-time workers will only be authorised in the following two cases:

- the difference in treatment does not result from the part-time work itself but from other reasons, such as the qualifications, work experience, or differing demands of the job station;
- there are material reasons for the difference in treatment. Thus it could be possible for part-time workers to be excluded from the allocation of company-owned rented flats or additional allowances (for instance for illness).

Furthermore, two new types of part-time work which have developed over time will be integrated into social protection: flexi-time, or variable working time (KAPOVAZ) and job-sharing.

Change in the Temporary Employment Agencies Act

The changes provided for concern:

- the maximum length of time for which a temporary worker can be hired out to one and the same employer is being extended from three to six months until December 31, 1989;
- hiring-out temporary workers between employers of the same branch of industry and between companies in the same group ("Konzern") is exempt from the regulations of the Temporary Employment Agencies Act.

Improving the chances of women for re-entering working life (vocational reintegration)

Until now the claims of women to benefit from measures for returning to working life after having withdrawn from it to look after and bring up children have often fallen by the way. Under the new law, irrespective of the number of children being looked after at the same time, for each child a period of five years for childcare is taken into account without the entitlement to vocational further training, re-training or adaptation being lost.

ITALY: Employment policy for the next decade

The Minister of Labour has produced a document setting out the main lines of a long term action strategy. It indicates both the objectives and the instruments and courses of action to be followed to attain these objectives.

Employment is recognised as being the most important issue of modern society which at the same time has to pursue full employment and accelerate and intensify the process of modernisation.

There are two starting points: first, the market cannot do everything itself; nor can the state drop its active role in an active employment policy, be this its role of containing unemployment or of undertaking positive actions to develop and accelerate the development of demand for labour. The conclusion drawn is that the essential elements of the pattern of reasoning must be to see industrial policy and labour market policy as two sides of the same coin within the context of a pattern, the central theme of which must be the issue not only of growth but also of the redistribution of income. Such a redistribution of income presupposes above all a reorganisation and a redistribution of work.

Having analysed the characteristics of the transition, the essential features of a long-term strategy for the

country are outlined. Thereafter the employment situation in Italy is analysed and the thrusts of intervention on the labour market in the following areas are outlined: development of human resources, reorganisation and reduction of working time, job creation activities, policies of social protection and support of income, and the administration of the labour market.

NETHERLANDS: Reform of unemployment and disability regulations as of January 1, 1986

The Cabinet has proposed that, with effect from January 1, 1986, the unemployed will receive a benefit whose duration will depend on the age of the unemployed person and the duration of his/her previous work record. The rate of benefit will start at 70% of the last wage. After 6 months, this will be brought down in half-yearly steps to 70% of the statutory minimum wage. Then for a period of one year they will be entitled to the continued payment of this minimum level benefit, irrespective of the partner's income. A special Supplements Act ("Toeslagenwet") will make provision for persons with a dependent spouse or dependent children. Persons who at the moment of becoming unemployed are 50 years of age or older will no longer be covered by the Assistance Act ("Bijstandswet") but will receive a benefit on the basis of a new Incomes' Guarantee for the Older Unemployed ("Inkomensvoorziening voor Oudere Werklozen").

The duration and the rate of disability benefits will remain unchanged. The Cabinet proposes doing away with the unemployment part in these benefits; this would apply exclusively to "new cases" and to existing beneficiaries under the age of 30.

New Unemployment Insurance Act ("Werkloosheidswet")

The duration of the new unemployment benefit will depend (this far, at least) on the age of the unemployed person; it varies from six months to five years. The rates of the proposed benefit are indicated above. The rate of benefit is independent of the income of the partner. The opposite is, however, the case under the Assistance Act ("Bijstandswet") under which the unemployed fall once the unemployment benefit and the benefit paid in the intermediate phase have run out. The new Unemployment Insurance Act ("Werkloosheidswet") no longer differentiates between men and women and breadwinners and non-breadwinners.

Incomes' Guarantee for the Older Unemployed ("Inkomensvoorziening voor Oudere Werklozen")

The Cabinet is proposing a new Law on Incomes' Guarantee for Older Unemployed to take effect on January 1, 1986. Its purpose is to improve the situation of the long-term unemployed. The law will apply to those who become unemployed at 50 years of age or older and who have exhausted the maximum duration of benefit under the new Unemployment Insurance Act. They are entitled to a benefit at the social minimum level. This corresponds to 70% of the statutory minimum wage for single persons, 90% for one-parent families and 100% for two partners together. A (topped-up) benefit is paid if the earned income of the beneficiary and his/her partner taken together is lower than this benefit. Contrary to the provisions of the Assistance Act, capital savings (for instance in the form of one's own house) and other family income are not taken into consideration.

Supplements Act ("Toeslagenwet")

A benefit of 70% of the last wage can mean that persons with a dependent spouse or dependent children

receive a benefit below the minimum level applicable to them. In such a case, the minimum daily wage regulations under the Unemployment Insurance Acts and the Sickness Benefit Act as well as the supplements under the General Disability (AAW) provide for the benefit being topped up to the amount of the statutory minimum wage.

The Cabinet is proposing to do away with these regulations, replacing them by a special Supplements Act. The Supplements Act will top up the benefit being paid under the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Disability Insurance Act (WAO), the General Disability Scheme (AAW) and the Sickness Benefit Act to the minimum level according to the beneficiary and the number of dependents. For one-parent families this will mean that the benefit will no longer be topped up to the level of the statutory minimum wage but to 90% of this minimum wage; this is the rate of benefit actually being paid for single parents under the terms of the Assistance Act.

When determining whether a person is entitled to a supplement, the earned income of the partner will be taken into account. Married or unmarried persons living together are treated alike. The capital savings of the beneficiary and his/her partner are not taken into consideration.

Modification of the Disability (Benefits) Acts ("Arbeidsongeschiktheidswetten")

The Cabinet is not proposing any changes to the duration and rate of disability benefits for fully disabled persons. For persons with a disability of 80% or more the rate of benefit will remain 70% of the last wage up to the age of 65.

Modification of the National Assistance Act ("Algemene Bijstandswet")

The Cabinet is also proposing to modify the law with effect from January 1, 1986 to provide for equal treatment of married and unmarried persons living together under the terms of the National Assistance Act. This modification will mean that the social assistance benefit will be determined in the same way for married persons and unmarried people living together whose situation hardly differs from that of married people.

Implementation

The Cabinet intends to entrust the industrial insurance boards with implementing the new Unemployment Insurance Act (including the benefit being paid during the intermediate phase of one year) and the Supplements Act. At present the benefit under the Unemployment Insurance Act (WW) is being administered by the industrial insurance boards whereas the municipalities implement the Unemployment Provisions Act (WWV). The Cabinet proposes that the Incomes' Guarantee for the Older Unemployed be administered by the municipalities which will also continue to be in charge of the benefits under the provisions of the National Assistance Act.

Financing

According to the draft bill, the benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act will in the beginning be financed by contributions from employers and employees. The Supplements Act and the Incomes' Guarantee for the Older Unemployed will be paid for by the State.

Aid to the unemployed

GERMANY: No wages below collectively agreed rates for unemployed workers

The Federal Minister of Labour and Social Affairs has come out against the proposals from the ranks of the liberal coalition partner to employ jobless workers at below collectively agreed rates. The top employers' and trade union organisations have also opposed these proposals.

The demand for paying the unemployed wages below the collectively agreed rates was put forward to achieve greater flexibility on the labour market. As against this, the government stresses that the principle of equal pay for equal work must be applied to all workers. Nor can there be any wavering from this rule when an unemployed person is employed under a limited term work contract. What might be discussed are demands to differentiate collective agreements more according to branches of industry and regions or to pay more attention to individual companies' ability to pay. But there is no need here for any action on the part of the legislator.

There is presently a great number of collective agreements which differ very considerably among branches of industry and regions. The rate of collectively agreed and real wages and salaries differs considerably from branch to branch. And also under the existing law there is a variety of possibilities open to the collective

bargain itself to take into consideration the differing economic circumstances within its area of coverage.

GREECE: Changes in unemployment benefits

Parliament has now voted the bill (see iM no. 10) proposed by the government modifying the system of unemployment benefits.

- (1) **Law 1545/85** provides for help for young unemployed persons who are entering the labour market for the first time.

Area of application and conditions of entitlement: the measure covers unemployed men and women who:

- on claiming benefit are aged between 20 and 29 years;
- have been registered as jobseekers for three months from the moment they are 20 years of age, or have finished their military service (for men) or have finished or interrupted their studies (pupils and students);
- remain enrolled as jobseekers for 12 months.

Duration and rate of benefit: the maximum period of benefit is 5 months. The amount varies between 8 and 20 daily unemployment allowances per month. A ministerial decree fixes the amount

by taking age, number of dependents and regional problems into account.

Disqualification for benefit: unemployed persons lose their entitlement to benefit if they have worked, even occasionally, for more than 80 days during the 12-months' period or if they refuse to accept a training proposal or a job offer in works of collective use.

- (2) The law furthermore provides for an unemployment benefit to be paid for a period of eight months to persons insured against unemployment who are **more than 49 years of age** and have contributed for 210 working days during the 14 months preceding the onset of their unemployment. Those receiving an unemployment benefit for the first time must have contributed for 350 working days during the preceding two years.
- (3) The new law also improves the conditions of entitlement to unemployment benefit for **building and public works' workers** as well as **employees in the tourist trade**.
- (4) Finally, the **discriminatory calculation** of the unemployment benefit according to whether the beneficiary draws a wage/salary or a daily wage has been abolished.

IRELAND: Centres for the unemployed

Following a request from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), the Youth Employment Agency (YEA) has agreed to provide finance for centres for the unemployed which are set up and managed by local Trades Councils under the auspices of the ICTU.

The centres will provide a focal point where unemployed people can make contact with each other. The centres will be staffed primarily by volunteers and officers of local Trades Councils. They will assist the unemployed by giving advice and information, facilitating education and training and encouraging people to use their leisure time constructively. Special efforts will be made to attract young unemployed people to the centres. It is planned that activities will be developed in co-ordination with relevant voluntary groups and will complement those of State manpower agencies.

These centres will be located in the most densely populated urban areas. Two centres have already been set up and it is expected that a further eight will be established. The YEA will provide up to IR£11,000 in the first year of operation for each of these centres.

European Community reference: Council Resolution of December 19, 1984 on action to combat long-term unemployment.

UNITED KINGDOM: Job Search and Employment Transfer Scheme

The aim of the Job Search Scheme and the Employment Transfer Scheme is to encourage unemployed people who would not otherwise have done so to move home to take up jobs which cannot be filled by local people. Assistance is given, under certain circumstances, with fares to interview, under the Job Search Scheme, and with costs involved in moving home to

take up a job, under the Employment Transfer Scheme. A transfer grant is payable in four stages during the year following the move. Assistance is subject to a number of rules e.g. to people seeking jobs paying less than £225 per week.

In 1984/85, expenditure on the two schemes was £4.5 million. 4,346 people received assistance under the Job Search Scheme, and 3,299 under the Employment Transfer Scheme.

UNITED KINGDOM: Voluntary work for the unemployed

The **Voluntary Projects Programme** (see iM no. 2) aims to improve the ability of unemployed people to compete for employment by providing them with constructive activities through which they might develop existing skills or learn new ones. It is to continue at least until March 1988, subject to annual review, with a budget of £12m per year.

In the light of **experience** gained during the first year, the Manpower Services Commission reviewed the operation of the Programme early in 1984 to identify the kind of projects which proved most effective in helping unemployed people prepare for work. Local authorities, the voluntary sector, and other sponsoring organisations were consulted. The emphasis of the Programme has now been shifted more towards funding projects where the benefits to unemployed people are clearly evident, for example those providing opportunities for informal education and training or involvement in voluntary work in the community.

At the moment, support is being provided for just over **300 projects** which attract some 13,000 unemployed volunteers each week. Many of these, however, attend for short periods of less than 6 hours, and in the course of a year around 63,000 unemployed volunteers participate in the Programme. The characteristics of these volunteers differ somewhat from volunteers generally. Though fairly evenly divided between the sexes, programme volunteers tend to be younger (nearly half are aged 25 or under) and semi or unskilled. However, most recognise that participation in the Programme has helped to improve their confidence, widen their experience, and restore their motivation. Indeed, over 40% of the 15,000 who have left the Programme in the 12 months to April 1985, have gone into employment or formal occupational training.

Since November 1984 efforts have been made to **develop the Programme** by setting aside funds for projects which involve a substantial commitment of time and effort by volunteers and also for those projects which prepare unemployed people for self-employment and provide advice and support for their new businesses. Provision is being made for 30 to 40 of these projects. Discussions with sponsors are continuing and, at the moment, agreement in principle has been given for 13 projects and 12 have already started to operate.

Further development is planned for the **future**. In March 1985 the Government announced its intention to focus the Programme more directly on those who have been out of work for a year or more. To progress this theme, proposals are currently being considered involving structured schemes designed to meet the special needs of long-term unemployed people. These will allow for the payment of an allowance to participants.

Training

GREECE: Revising training posts

OAED, the national employment body, is continuing its efforts to improve the system of vocational training. In this context, law 1545/85 opens up the possibility of training places provided by public or private sector enterprises being subsidised up to the rate of 50% of the daily wage of an unskilled worker.

This measure strives to increase the number of practical training places offered by enterprises and at the same time to enhance the contents of work performed by apprentices.

These training places will be manned by young people attending vocational training programmes for apprentices within the various OAED centres.

Job creation

IRELAND: National Linkage Programme

In the White Paper on Industrial Policy (see iM no. 8) industry is clearly identified as the primary wealth creator in the economy. Wealth creation alone, however, is of little value unless complementary policies are adopted which seek to retain as much of the wealth as possible within the economy. In this regard, linkage has been identified as an area of considerable opportunity in the development of Irish industry and so the National Linkage Programme has been launched.

Ireland imports large amounts of industrial raw materials and components each year. While Government agencies and industry have been active in the area of industrial linkages over a number of years, it is clear that these activities have been insufficient and a more co-ordinated approach is necessary. Linkage is basically about maximising the amount of components and services sourced locally by manufacturing industry.

The National Linkage Programme is co-ordinated by the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and involves other State agencies such as the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards (IIRS), Irish Goods Council (IGC), and Shannon Development (SFADCo).

The programme will initially concentrate on maximising the sub-supply potential of the **electronics industry**. This sector was selected because of its high growth potential, its scope for increased linkages and the keenness of the industry itself to develop a successful programme. The programme target is to raise the proportion of components/services sourced locally by the electronics industry from approximately 17% of total purchases at present by at least 1% each year for the next five years, with an overall target of achieving the average for Irish industry as a whole (i.e. 33%) within ten years. The new programme will be selective and will concentrate on supplier companies who have the potential to succeed.

UNITED KINGDOM: Lord Young and the Enterprise Unit

Lord Young was appointed Minister without Portfolio and became a member of the Cabinet in September 1984. Prior to this he was Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission from April 1982.

The Prime Minister identified a number of areas to which, after discussion with the other Ministers concerned, she asked Lord Young to give immediate attention in pursuing his remit to promote policies for the growth of enterprise and the creation of jobs. These areas of work include:

- i Reduction of controls and regulations imposed on business;
- ii Measures to increase competition;
- iii Promotion of employment in the tourism and leisure industries;
- iv Promotion of education and training particularly for 14-18 year olds; the application of new technology to education and training, and the development of more pronounced links between industry and education;
- v Revival of enterprise through improved co-ordination in the public and private sectors;
- vi Encouragement of small firms.

Lord Young is working in close consultation with the Departments concerned and the Prime Minister's Policy Unit. For each of the areas mentioned above he has established a working group under his chairmanship. The working groups are reporting with conclusions and recommendations to the appropriate Cabinet Committee by whom decisions will be taken.

Lord Young is being supported by a small group of officials known as the Enterprise Unit.

Special categories of workers

GERMANY: Resettlement assistance in house-building for returning foreigners

The federal government has passed a Bill providing for a resettlement assistance in house-building for returning foreigners. According to this Bill, returning foreign-

ners can use a savings contract concluded with a building society in the Federal Republic of Germany for building or purchasing a dwelling also in their own country. By means of this measure the federal government is contributing towards improving the re-integration opportunities of the returning worker in his/her

country of origin. The following specific measures are provided for:

1. The measure is open to foreigners who have decided to return to their country of origin which is not a member of the EC. This concerns the following nationals: Yugoslavs, Koreans, Moroccans, Turks and Tunisians.
2. The building society contractant can use the amount specified in his savings contract for building purposes in his country of origin without forfeiting any tax or premium concessions.
3. The amount available under a savings agreement for building purposes in the country of origin is limited to 60,000 DM.
4. The law applies to savings agreements for building purposes whose settlement will have commenced by December 31, 1993.
5. The loan granted under the savings contract will only be paid to foreigners who return home within four years from the beginning of the settlement of the amount specified in the savings contract.

It is expected that this law will be taken up especially by Turks. At present there are some 185,000 savings agreements with building societies which have been concluded by foreign workers in the Federal Republic falling under this law (of whom 13,000 are Turks). Were only half the foreigners who have concluded a savings agreement with a building society in the past and all the foreigners who conclude a new agreement, to leave the Federal Republic in the next ten years, there would be considerable relief of pressure on the labour market amounting to an estimated 150,000 to 200,000 workers.

GREECE: Blind telephone operators

Public services, legal persons under public law, banks, public utility bodies and local authorities will henceforth be required to fill up to 80% of their needs in telephone operators with blind persons graduating from a special centre.

FRANCE: Long-term unemployed training and reintegration aid programme (Ministerial circular no. 20, July 1985)

The government is very concerned about both the lengthening duration of unemployment which is affecting all categories of jobseekers and the growing selectivity of labour markets. So it has decided to bring in a specific training and reintegration aid programme for long-term unemployed jobseekers (Ministerial circular no. 20 of July 9, 1985 of the Minister of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training).

The programme offers long-term unemployed jobseekers (LTUs), particularly those registered for more than a year at ANPE, the opportunity of participating in a process of training and active help to move back into working life. To this end, and given the wide range of people concerned, different instruments managed by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Vocational Training are being mobilised: the training programme for the 18-25 years olds; ANPE upgrading programmes; and LTU employment-training contracts for the over-25s. The LTU activities of the National Employment Fund and a special programme of modular training

constitute innovations. The aim is to have 100,000 persons starting on training by the end of 1985.

The major innovation in the programme is that the training periods are more in keeping with the idea of a vocational reintegration than a training approach. For the aim is to have "volunteer" jobseekers go through an entire integration process. This integration process is made up of a co-ordinated set of complementary actions in the form of modules: evaluation of strengths and weaknesses ("évaluation-bilan"), encouraging re-entry to employment, educational and/or vocational upgrading, modernising skills and adapting to technological change, broadening skills enabling a vocational shift towards an adjacent trade, and employment search techniques and help. This set of actions is aimed to raise the employability of the jobseekers and should lead to employment.

The training periods as such are aimed at:

- putting LTU jobseekers into a position of actively looking for reintegration;
- combatting training and employment selectivity;
- drawing up and putting into operation with the target groups concerned a realistic approach towards reintegration in line with the characteristics and experience of these groups at the same time as taking account of trends on the local labour market.

Under these circumstances, the programme is particularly geared towards all jobseekers who have both been enrolled at ANPE for more than one year and are "motivated" to try out this path towards becoming reintegrated in employment, whatever might be the person's starting level. Special attention is focused on persons who are least favoured as regards when they last worked, by the lack of receiving benefit and by the precariousness of their financial situation. Such persons are given priority access to training.

ANPE is entrusted with arranging the training periods, it having to:

- determine the major groups of trades where the LTU jobseekers are to be found. In agreement with the Delegation for Vocational Training, it puts forward outline co-operation agreements for the Minister to sign with national training bodies and for the regional "préfets" to sign with regional bodies. In case of need, it can call on local training bodies and enterprises which have training facilities;
- identify jobseekers qualifying for this programme to inform them of the new opportunities, particularly when interviews are being held in the 13th and 25th month of unemployment;
- become involved in certain phases of the training operation, particularly during that of the evaluation and that of helping with job search.

At the same time, ANPE must find out where job openings lie, drawing in particular on employers' federations. As regards procedure, ANPE has to negotiate, manage and sign outline agreements with the training support bodies.

Overall, trainees will have the status of a "vocational trainee" ("stagiaire de la formation professionnelle") for the length of the training period. Hence, pay will fall under the system of common law of recurrent vocational training.

European Community reference: Council Resolution of December 19, 1984 on action to combat long-term unemployment.

NETHERLANDS: Youth employment schemes and social benefits

The Secretary of State for Social Affairs and Employment has issued a decree whereby unemployed youths aged 18 to 23 who are participating in so-called youth employment schemes and who, under certain conditions, can claim a (topped-up) benefit under the State Group Regulation for Unemployed Workers (RWW), can be temporarily relieved of their obligation to register as a jobseeker at the labour office and of looking for work and having to accept suitable work.

This decree follows from the national agreements reached by the social partners within the Foundation of Labour to combat youth unemployment. Overall these agreements aim at attempting to create additional placement opportunities for young people so as to reduce the number of long-term unemployed youths. This can be achieved by creating additional jobs (possibly part-time), by extending the apprenticeship system, by developing training in industry schools and by creating in-company training places and "growth" jobs, i.e. jobs that gradually develop from part-time into full-time jobs.

Dispensation can be granted for the duration of the employment in question up to a maximum period of three years, provided that the unemployed youth can produce a written agreement with an employer based on a collective agreement. This may be a work agreement, a combined training-work agreement or a training agreement, according to the kind of job in question.

Youth employment schemes should in as far as possible be a combination of training and work.

NETHERLANDS: Integrating the handicapped into working life

The Cabinet has expressed the opinion that to reduce regulations for and alleviate the burden of trade and industry several modifications have to be made to the bill on work for handicapped workers (WAGW).

In the modified bill employers and employees are being asked to co-operate in taking measures fostering the integration of the handicapped into working life and maintaining, recovering or improving their capacity for work.

If this is not done satisfactorily, a specific sector of the economy or part thereof, or a part of the collective agreement sector can be required to employ handicapped persons to a certain percentage of the workforce, ranging from 3% to 7%.

A similar new regulation is intended for the public sector. The Cabinet assumes that the WAGW will come into effect on January 1, 1986 at the latest.

NETHERLANDS: School leavers find work more quickly

School leavers who registered with the labour office in 1984 moved off the register more rapidly and in greater numbers than those who had left school during the previous year. Particularly in the second half of the year there were clear signs of school leavers moving more quickly on to the labour market. 1984 would also appear to have seen the end of the tendency to stay on at school because of high unemployment.

This results from the 1985 School Leavers' Letter (see iM no. 7), of which 6,500 copies were sent by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment to careers masters, employers and employees. The letter informs leavers on how to enter the labour market.

In addition to the school leavers' letter the ministry is running an information campaign aimed at the 275,000 odd young people leaving school. Under the motto "Get working now to get work", young persons are urged to start looking for work themselves and to register with the labour office in good time. Indeed, they are reminded that registration is a condition for claiming benefit or child allowance.

UNITED KINGDOM: Public employment and training services for the disabled

Employment and training services for disabled people in the UK are provided through the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in Great Britain and the Department of Economic Development in Northern Ireland. Access to services at local level is through Jobcentres and Jobmarkets respectively. The following describes services in Great Britain, but similar provisions exist in Northern Ireland.

Disabled people are able to benefit from the full range of employment and training services which are available to the general population. However, additional assistance, exclusive to disabled people, is available to help them prepare for, select, get and keep suitable jobs.

Most disabled people receive help in finding jobs through the general jobcentre service, but those whose employment problems are significantly different from those of able-bodied people can obtain special assistance from the **Disablement Resettlement Officer (DRO)**. The new **Disablement Advisory Service (DAS)** is also able to help with the retention of disabled people who are already employed.

DROs and the DAS can call on expert guidance on individual cases from the Employment Medical Advisory Service, or can arrange a programme of assessment at an **Employment Rehabilitation Centre (ERC)**.

ERCs provide facilities for those who have been ill, or who are disabled, to receive guidance and preparation for a return to work. Each client has a programme of assessment and practical work experience in simulated industrial and commercial conditions individually designed to meet his or her needs. Practical training is also given in jobseeking activities. For those areas not served by one of the 27 ERCs in Great Britain, 3 **ASSET (Assistance Towards Employment) Centres** are being set up. These will provide assessment and job search training on the premises but will commission local employers and other organisations to provide work experience placements.

There are **special training measures** for those disabled people for whom the mainstream training provisions are inappropriate. These include training at one of 4 Residential Training Colleges which are independent establishments receiving financial support from the MSC; individually designed training for up to a year with a particular employer, who must guarantee at least 6 months employment afterwards; financial assistance to train for a professional career, such as law or accountancy, for those with the necessary educational requirements but who cannot get a grant from the local education authority; financial help for employed

disabled people to train or retrain, either for a newly disabled person who needs to retrain in order to stay with the same employer, or for a disabled worker who needs further training to help his or her career development. The Royal National Institute for the Deaf and the Royal National Institute for the Blind provide certain types of training for deaf and blind people with financial help from the MSC.

There is a **quota scheme** to help registered disabled people to get and keep jobs for which they are suitable. Employers with 20 or more workers have a duty to employ a quota of registered disabled people - currently set at 3% of the employers total workforce.

When below quota an employer has a further duty to engage suitable registered disabled people if any are available when job vacancies arise. To help give effect to these duties, an employer who is below quota must obtain a permit before recruiting anyone who is not registered as disabled. Also an employer must not discharge a registered disabled person without reasonable cause if he is below quota or if he would fall below quota as a result. The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, which established the Register of Disabled Persons and the Quota Scheme also enables entry into particular occupations to be designated and entry to them restricted to registered disabled people. Two occupations have been designated - passenger electric lift attendant and car park attendant.

There is a wide **range of assistance** on which DROs and DAS can draw to overcome the difficulties faced by individual disabled people at work. The kind of help needed will, of course, vary and may take the form of financial or material help either for the disabled person or the employer.

- Registered disabled people who cannot use public **transport** to get to work because of the severity of the disability can be given financial assistance towards the extra cost - usually of taxi fares. MSC pays 75% of the cost up to a maximum of £60 per week.
- **Special tools or equipment** can be issued on free indefinite loan to registered disabled people to help them do their jobs. A special aid can be any item which would not be needed by an able-bodied person doing the same job.
- Financial assistance can be given to an employer who needs to **adapt his premises or equipment** in order to employ a specific disabled person. The employer will not usually have to pay more than half the cost. The maximum grant is £6,000 per adaptation.
- An employer who has genuine doubts about the ability of a particular disabled person to do a specific job, but who is prepared to offer a **trial period of employment** may be paid a grant of £45

per week during the trial. Usually this lasts for 6 weeks but it can be extended to 13 weeks if necessary. Use of this scheme is at the discretion of MSC staff. The employer does not have to guarantee retention of the disabled person after the trial.

- Blind and partially sighted people may be paid a grant towards the costs of employing a part-time **personal reader** where this is essential in the job.

Sheltered employment is provided for those registered disabled people who are unlikely at any time or until after a long period to be able to get and keep jobs except under sheltered conditions. About 15,500 severely disabled people are employed in over 220 sheltered workshops and factories run by Remploy Ltd, local authorities and voluntary organisations, and in Sheltered Placement Schemes.

Remploy Ltd was formed in 1945 to provide industrial work on a national scale. The company receives a subvention grant from the MSC to cover operating losses and to provide for capital expenditure. Local authorities and voluntary organisations which run sheltered workshops also receive financial help from the MSC.

The **Sheltered Placement Scheme** is proving a very popular means of providing sheltered employment. Under this scheme a severely disabled person works in an ordinary industrial or commercial setting alongside the rest of the able-bodied workforce. The disabled person is employed by a sponsor, who must be a local authority, a voluntary organisation or Remploy. The firm providing the work pays the sponsor according to the output of the disabled person. The disabled person receives the same wage as the able-bodied people with whom they work. There are over 1,100 severely disabled people in this scheme.

There is a very limited scheme whereby grants may be made to severely disabled people to help them **set up their own businesses**. It is designed for those who are unable to find work either in open or sheltered employment. This help cannot be given until all other sources of resettlement have been fully explored and where resettlement in a business on own account is clearly a last resort. The proposed business must be seen to have a good chance of succeeding. Help is given in the form of a one-off grant towards the cost of materials, tools etc. which are necessary to enable business to start up.

The emphasis throughout the UK is to promote the employment of disabled people in all types of occupation according to their abilities and to provide a range of assistance which can be used as necessary to help overcome the employment problems of the individual disabled person.

Working time

BELGIUM: Flexibility in working time

The flexibility of working time is an important concern for the government which is considering simplify-

ing regulations on the length and hours of work. The Social Recovery Law of January 22, 1985 considerably relaxes regulations in this area.

To put the changes taking place in their new legal context, the main characteristics of the general regulatory framework are set out below.

1. Normal length of work

The normal length of work has been fixed by law at 8 hours a day and 40 hours a week (in a six-day week). When a collective agreement (CCT) provides for a shorter working week (e.g. 36 hours), it is these limits of the CCT which constitute the normal length of work.

The labour regulations (which result from the CCT) give a clear view as to how the normal length of work is spread over the work cycle.

2. Exemptions

The normal length of work can only be exceeded in a limited number of cases. These exemptions are laid down by law. There are **foreseeable instances** of exceeding the normal length of work: the 5-day week, preparatory and additional work, transport work, loading and unloading, shift work, continuous working, which it is impossible to carry out within normal limits, etc. Other instances are **unforeseeable**: extraordinary increases in work, urgent work or repairs (by the workforce or on behalf of third parties) undertaken to face up to an accident which has happened or is likely to happen or carried out on machines or materials.

Royal decree no. 225 of December 4, 1983 brought in new regulations for overtime working (see iM no. 5):

- Each hour worked in excess of the normal working time which has been properly authorised is overtime.
- Overtime must be recouped through time-off during the same quarter. This can take place in the following quarter, if the overtime has been caused by an extraordinary increase in work or by work for a third party aimed at preventing or facing up to an accident or, again, repairs to machines or material.
- An overtime rate of 50% above the wage is due for work exceeding 9 hours a day or 40 hours a week (or exceeding the limits set out in the CCT) except when it is a matter of foreseeable instances for exceeding the normal working hours.

3. The Recovery Law of January 22, 1985

The system of overtime was fundamentally changed in one point by this law.

A CCT can from now on extend up to a maximum of one year the time period in which compensatory rest must be given. This can be done separately for each exemption legally authorised. When the CCT in question does not provide for any extension of the compensatory rest period, the provisions of royal decree no. 225 remain in force (compensatory time-off within the quarter).

Flexible working time

Over and above the regulation on overtime, the law of January 22, 1985 introduced a new system of flexible working time. A sector or enterprise CCT can extend the normal length of work (as this was laid down by the law or the CCT) provided that the average weekly length of work is respected on an annual basis (or over a period of 12 consecutive months).

For instance, a CCT can fix a 38-hour working week. Applying flexible working time cannot lead to the basic annual average of 38 hours of work per week being exceeded.

Limits to the extension

- The maximum daily hours of work (as they are set out by law, CCT or the work rule which results from it) can be increased or decreased by a maximum of 2 hours without exceeding 9 hours per day.
- The maximum working week can be increased or decreased by a maximum of 5 hours without the working week being able to exceed 45 hours.

N.B. A CCT could very well only authorise a one hour increase, but accept there being a maximum decrease of 2 hours per day.

Calculating the length on an annual basis

Calculations must always be made over a 52-week period. Certain days are treated as days worked (public holidays, recognised days of absence, etc.) and are hence taken into account when calculating the average working week. But others are not taken into account such as some overtime work, additional leave in connection with a reduction in working time, etc.

Compensatory time-off

Hours worked over and above normal hours resulting from applying flexible working time give rise to entitlement to the same number of hours of compensatory time-off. This compensatory rest period is given in the form of a flexible schedule providing for reduced working time; for the weekly working hours must be respected when averaged out over the year. Thus, an enterprise having a 38-hour working week which has been applying a flexible schedule of 43 hours for a certain period, must compensate for these additional hours by applying another flexible schedule of less than 38 hours.

Compensatory time-off must be given within the calendar year or within 12 month periods, the beginning of which is set out in the CCT. Limits can be put on this period by a CCT.

As for the regulations concerning overtime, workers cannot be put on short-time working ("partial unemployment") for as long as they have to take compensatory time-off. The employer who nevertheless wants to bring in a system of short-time working must first of all give the hours worked in excess of the average in the framework of flexible work schedules in the form of complete compensatory rest days off.

Pay

The "flexible" limits constitute the normal length of work within which there is no overtime. Flexible hours are thus only paid at normal wage rates, without 50% premiums (or 100% in cases of working Sundays and public holidays).

In all other aspects royal decree no. 225 applies:

- **Deferred payment:** Wages for flexible working time are only paid at the moment the compensatory rest period is taken. Thus, no account is taken of weekly working time for paying the wage. At the end of each pay period, the employer pays a wage calculated on the basis of the average working week provided for by the CCT.

At the end of the period foreseen, the maximum being one year, the worker will have a wage equal to the number of hours of work worked in that period multiplied by the normal hourly wage.

- **Indexation:** The hourly wage is adapted to the index and to increases in scales. Furthermore, in cases of termination of a work contract:
 - a. Should, on the day the work contract ends, the worker have worked less than the average working hours set out by CCT, the wage paid to the worker remains his and cannot be deducted from the wage which is still owed him;
 - b. if, on the other hand, the worker has worked more hours, the wage for those hours must be paid to him.

4. The internal limit of 65 hours

Royal decree no. 225 provides for a limit to the total number of overtime hours which a worker is authorised to work. This internal limit is fixed at 65 hours a year.

Flexible schedules

To see how this rule works out on flexible schedules, two cases need to be distinguished:

- a. The enterprise makes use **only of flexible** schedules. Under these circumstances it does not have to take account of the internal limit of 65 hours overtime. This limit can be exceeded. Indeed, the 65 hours must be overtime; but flexible hours are not overtime.
- b. The enterprise **combines flexible working hours with overtime** (in royal decree no. 225). In this case the 65 hour limit has to be applied and the overtime is computed on the basis of the number of hours worked in excess of the normal working time.

To establish the limit of 65 hours:

- **Overtime** is taken into account when the only hours of work are overtime (royal decree no. 225);
- **flexible working hours** are not taken into account when the only hours of work are these flexible hours;
- and **overtime and flexible hours** are both taken into account when both types of hours are worked.

5. The credit system

Royal decree no. 225 provides for the possibility of closing the quarter with a maximum of 65 hours of overtime which can be recouped during the following quarter. But this is only possible in the following cases:

- exceptional increase in work;
- carrying out for a third party either works to face up to an accident which has happened or is likely to happen or urgent repairs to machines or material.

Relaxed work schedules (law of 22.1.85)

When in the above cases there has been a combination of overtime and flexible hours, overtime hours do not have to be recouped within one or two quarters. Compensatory rest periods need only be given within a period of one year (the maximum) as set out in the CCT bringing in the flexibility. But carrying overtime hours over to a new period of one year is not possible.

6. Procedures

Flexible working time can only be brought in if certain procedures are respected.

If there is no specific CCT, flexible working time is not possible.

Should there be such a CCT, it has to set out the framework in which flexibility as regards working time can be achieved within the enterprise.

The works council sets out different schedules of flexible working hours and must agree to those hours which are put in the work regulations.

The employer who wishes to apply one of these schedules of flexible working hours as set out in the work regulations must inform the workers by putting up a notice in line with previously determined practice.

BELGIUM: Social security and experimental re-organisation of working time

A **royal decree of April 22, 1985** lays down the social security status of workers who have adapted their working time by making use of arrangements for redistributing the available work and of experiments in re-arranging working time (cfr. iM no. 2, p. 12 and iM no. 6, p. 19).

These experiments on **working time re-organisation** are authorised under **royal decree no. 179** of December 30, 1982. Enterprises are thereby enabled, under specified conditions, to depart from the legal provisions and collective agreements on working time. In most cases the aim is to have the machines work around the clock. This requires additional recruitment. In a considerable number of enterprises which try out such experiments with the agreement of the workers, there is a continuous work organisation of five shifts, three during the week and two at weekends. Others have brought in an additional shift which works at the weekend. They can thus be seen to bridge the gap between activities from Friday evening to Monday morning. In still other enterprises work consists on average of three days, each of 12 hours, Saturdays and Sundays being included in this rotating system. Finally, workers' activities are sometimes spread over four days in a six-day cycle: each shift works four shifts of 9 hours 15 minutes in rotation in a six-day working week, with only Sundays not being worked.

These workers work almost as many hours as in normal time schedules but for fewer days each week. Yet most social security rights are established by taking into account the number of days worked per week or per month.

The **royal decree of April 22, 1985** guarantees the rights to social security of workers who are considered to be working full time and are paid as such but who only work for a limited number of days. But some workers work for a number of days below that required for specific social rights. In **sickness insurance**, where the entitlement to allowances is subject to a probationary period of 120 days or 400 working hours to be carried out during a reference period of six months, it has been laid down that workers taken on in accordance with a collective agreement concluded within the scope of the above mentioned decree no. 179, are considered to work a number of days equal to the number of days worked within the framework of full time work, if the wage they are being paid under the collective agreement is equal to that of similar full time work.

The insurance systems for **accidents at work** and **occupational diseases** provide that the wage on which the computation of the allowances is based corresponds to the normal full pay for full time work within the framework of an experiment. This provision is aimed at avoiding that, in determining the basic wage, the remuneration corresponding to that of full time employment is not completed by part of a fictitious wage per missing working day.

Finally, in line with legislation in this area, **family allowances** are granted for each day actually worked for at least three hours.

In a series of cases specified in the legislation, some days are classed as working days actually worked. Days for which a wage is paid which is subject to social insurance contributions have now been added to this list.

NETHERLANDS: The Youth "Growth Jobs" Scheme

The "Growth Jobs" Scheme for young people ("Jeugd-Ontplooiingsbanenplan"), termed "JOB" (see iM no. 9), which was started at the end of 1984 on an experimental basis in the catchment areas of the Veendam, Enschede and Nieuwe Waterweg-Noord (Schiedam) labour offices, is being continued and extended gradually and on a limited scale in other regions. Regions with high unemployment will be given priority. "JOB" provides long-term unemployed youth with work experience through the temporary employment agency system.

"JOB" is intended for long-term unemployed persons under the age of 25. Through START, the partly state-run temporary employment agency, young people can be placed in temporary employment in the market sector or the collective sector in jobs which range from 20 to 32 hours per week. The employers receive a subsidy amounting to 33% of the minimum (youth) wage for the person concerned.

Placement

FRANCE: How placement functions

Despite a high level of unemployment, some enterprises are experiencing trouble in filling their vacancies. The Board of ANPE, the national employment agency, has examined this situation and its directorate of studies and statistics has launched a set of studies focused on the ways in which ANPE collects and computes the job vacancies it registers.

A statistical analysis aimed at trying to characterise vacancies which are difficult to fill indicated the desirability of tackling the problem from different angles rather than adopting a single approach which would hardly be adapted to take the full complexity of the question into account.

Two of these studies have been monographs. They have sought to grasp the problem of dealing with job vacancies within a single, medium-sized employment basin corresponding to the area covered by a local agency. Thus the study by Bernard Fourcade of the Legal and Economic Studies Centre of Employment on job vacancies which are difficult to fill dealt with the Tarbes employment basin. The starting point was a statistical analysis which showed quite clearly that the rate of placement is independent of the characteristics of the job vacancies. Fourcade then identified the factors explaining placement failures in the ways in which job vacancies are dealt with. The analysis of the local agency of Vichy was of 3,510 matchings which had given rise to 1,000 placements. This enabled Pascal Lièvre to bring out the importance in filling job vacancies of the existence of direct personal relationships with the enterprise, the role of broker between the employer and the jobseeker played by the placement officer and the determinant character of the nature of the information available within ANPE: "relational" ("relationnelle") or "mediatised" ("médiatisée"). "Relational" means information exchanged between two or more persons at one single place whereas "mediatised" signifies information linked to a material support such as a newspaper, an advert, a telephone or television.

Even though these two studies are monographs with the limitations thereby implied, because of the relatively small size of the Tarbes and Vichy basins the basic principles governing the functioning of labour markets have nevertheless been brought out.

The work of Sami Dassa and Manix Dressen of CNAM (the national conservatory of arts and trades) was to collect the experiences and opinions of ANPE officials on the types of vacancies which are difficult to fill and the reasons for this. In addition to the opinions of the officials, this study brought out better the informal approaches used by local agencies in facing up to problems for filling certain vacancies.

Finally, the study of Jean-Pierre Brouat and Pierre Valarie of Coop Recherche analyses the impact of one tool in employment policy - the solidarity contract - on the relationships between ANPE and enterprises. They bring to the fore the different approaches operating within the Agency and the different ways in which ANPE is used by enterprises. They show just how important it is for ANPE to become a real partner for the enterprise in helping its manpower management as well as the importance of partnership in developing job matching.

All in all, these studies provide more objective knowledge of the placement and working mechanisms used by ANPE in this field. Furthermore, they put the concept of "difficult to fill" vacancies in its proper context: the difficulties experienced in filling certain jobs are intrinsic neither to one characteristic type of vacancy nor to a specific way of dealing with it.

Summaries of these studies have been collected in a publication which will provide food for thought in ANPE's current debate on diversifying its relationships with enterprises and improving dealing with and matching job offers.

ITALY: Computerisation of the public employment services

Law no. 143 of April 22, 1985 has allocated for 1985 a sum of 20 billion lire for financing pilot experiments of work creation in Campania and Basilicata and for computerising the employment services. This is in addition to the 18 billion lire allocated by law no. 430 of August 4, 1984 for the year 1984.

It is intended to improve the performance of the public employment services of the Ministry of Labour by making use of technologies suitable for setting up a computerised system for the whole of Italy. The system will handle the institutional aspects of the labour market, including the Earnings Supplement Fund (CIG).

The Ministry has planned a special project of computerisation for the region of Campania, in which a special experimental labour market management measure is in force (law no. 140 of 16.4.1981). This project is for the complete automation of the employment services and the statistical surveys.

Another general programme of computerisation is also planned to cover the whole of Italy, to be carried out

from the region of Piedmont. This will provide for the computerisation of the employment services and the statistical surveys.

Simultaneously experiments are going on in the regions of Piedmont and in Liguria, Toscana and Sardinia with a view to restructuring the statistical surveys.

ITALY: Experimental employment agencies

Law no. 110 of March 9, 1985 has authorised the expenditure of 30 billion lire for 1985 for setting up experimental employment agencies in regions characterised by very high levels of unemployment and very acute restructuring processes. The agencies are being promoted by the regional employment commissions (see iM 9) through agreements with the Ministry of Labour, local bodies and the regions.

Agencies will be established in priority in the regions indicated in the agreement of intent of February 14, 1984 and particularly in: Piedmont, Liguria, Campania, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Sardinia and Friuli-Venezia Giulia. They will be entrusted with experimenting with and evaluating ways of stimulating the process of matching labour supply and demand and of promoting initiatives aimed at increasing employment.

Miscellaneous

GREECE: Ministerial changes

The name of the ministry has been changed to that of "labour and employment". The new minister is Mr A. Tsochatzopoulos. The body for workers' housing ("Ergatiki Katikia"), previously under the minister of labour, has been transferred to the ministry of urbanism and public works.

UNITED KINGDOM: The Equal Opportunities Commission's Code of Practice

The Equal Opportunities Commission's Code of Practice for the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of sex and marriage and the promotion of equality of opportunity in employment came into operation, after approval by Parliament, on 30 April 1985.

The Code is in two parts, with a legal annex briefly describing the relevant provisions of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975. The first part explains the requirements of the legislation and recommends ways in which employers can ensure that they comply, for example by formalising selection procedures to avoid assumptions based on sex. The second part gives advice on good employment practices to promote equal opportunities, such as providing special training for women employees in areas, such as management, where women are under-represented in the employer's business.

The Code does not extend the law, but may be taken into account by industrial tribunals.

Rough currency conversion rates

One European Currency Unit (ECU) was roughly equivalent to the following amounts of national currencies in August 1985:

. Belgium	45 BFR
. Denmark	8.1 DKR
. Germany	2.2 DM
. Greece	105 DRA
. France	6.8 FF
. Ireland	0.72 IR£
. Italy	1,490 LIT
. Luxembourg	45 LFR
. Netherlands	2.5 HFL
. United Kingdom	0.58 UK£

Short notes

Germany

1. Among the most significant labour market **instruments** of government are job creation ('ABM'), training and re-training ('FuU') and short-time working ('KuG'). Their **employment impacts** (in thousands of persons) are estimated as follows:

	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985*
ABM	63	46	67	100	116
KuG	108	202	216	138	138
FuU	111	120	117	124	134
Total	282	368	400	362	388

(*) calculations based on the budget of the Federal Employment Institute.

2. The Federal Employment Institute has earmarked DM 775m for subsidising **early retirement** in 1985 (see iM no. 8).

Netherlands

1. So far there are 310,000 workers who are currently working or will be working on the basis of various agreements on a **36-hour working week** (annual average). This represents 10.5% of the 3 million workers in the private sector. Some 18,600 workers are already working a 36-hour work whereas for some 290,000 workers such agreements have been signed or jointly agreed to by employers and workers.
2. By July 1, 1985 all labour offices were applying the same **accelerated dismissal procedure**. The procedure is based on a recommendation of the Foundation of Labour on streamlining and accelerating dismissal procedures of the labour offices. For

instance, by "hearing" the parties concerned as much as possible in writing and by using standard letters and forms it will generally be possible to settle the dismissal procedure within four to six weeks.

United Kingdom

1. The formation of a **Review Group to look at Vocational Qualifications in England and Wales** was announced in the White Paper "Education and Training For Young People", published on April 3. The review is expected to concentrate initially on improving the structure of qualifications to meet the needs of the extended Youth Training Scheme. The Group is being asked to report within a year and membership will be representative of the major interests involved, particularly the educational validating and examining bodies, as well as other interested bodies, employers and trade unions.
2. The **White Paper "Employment - the Challenge for the Nation"** was published on March 28, 1985. It brings together in a coherent form the Government long-term strategy for employment, what has so far been achieved and what remains to be done. The White Paper gives the facts about UK employment trends and present patterns in the labour market.
3. The Council of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) has assumed responsibility for the **Work Research Unit (WRU)** as from May 1, 1985. The WRU was established in 1974 to promote, jointly through employers and unions, improvement in job satisfaction and in the quality of working life. The decision has been taken because the knowledge, experience and expertise in the WRU can be more widely and effectively deployed within ACAS and closer association would benefit both organisations.
4. A £1½ million scheme was announced in April to help **voluntary organisations** provide an employment placement service for **disabled people**.

MISEP correspondents:

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Denmark	Erik Lyngse, Arbejdsministeriet
Germany	Magda Kugler Dabrowski, Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Sozialordnung Lutz Vogt, Bundesanstalt für Arbeit
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Ireland	Padraig Cullinane, An Roinn Saothair
Italy	Teodosio Zeuli, Ministero del Lavoro e della Previdenza Sociale
Luxembourg	Jean Hoffmann, Administration de l'Emploi
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)

