



## A NEWSHEET FOR JOURNALISTS • REPRODUCTION AUTHORIZED

Nº 36/81

BRUSSELS, October 26, 1981

Week of 19 to 24 October

### S U M M A R Y

- p. 2 ECONOMY : Building a new Europe  
The European Community's building sector, employing about 7 million people, has also been affected by the current economic crisis. Orders have fallen in most Member States, despite a very real shortage of lodgings in certain regions ...
- p. 3 RESEARCH : The challenge of the eighties  
Despite its human and financial resources, Europe lags behind its main rivals in the research, science and technology sector. The European Commission would now like to give a new push to Community research.
- p. 4 SOCIAL : EEC strategy for the handicapped  
The Commission has announced its intention of setting up a network of local services designed to facilitate the integration of handicapped persons in the social life of their particular region.
- p. 5 DEVELOPMENT : EEC code on marketing of breast milk substitutes ?  
The rapid growth in the utilisation of breast milk substitutes has been the cause of malnutrition and infant mortality in the Third World. The question has been taken up by the European Parliament.
- p. 6 LEGISLATION : Towards better protection of privacy  
The increase in data banks and computerised filing systems can become a threat to individual privacy. The European Parliament has called for specific action in this area.
- p. 7 ENVIRONMENT : Turning a deaf ear to helicopters  
The authorised noise levels for helicopters will now be limited all over the Community, in keeping with criteria set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.
- p. 7 EMPLOYMENT : Hundreds of openings  
We publish a new list of job offers in France and the Federal Republic of Germany. Conveyed to us by SEDOC (see Eurofocus 16/81), these jobs are open to all Community citizens.

This newsheet is published in six languages (English, French, German, Dutch, Italian and Danish) by the Directorate-General for Information of the

Commission of the European Communities,  
Rue de la Loi 200 - 1049 Brussels um.  
Tel. 736 60 00 - Telex 21877 COMEU B.

Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Community institutions.

Editor : Will. J. Reckman



ECONOMY : Building a new Europe

What better way for Europe to work its way out of its recession than by building from the ground up adequate housing and public facilities that in many cases are urgently required anyway.

Upgrading the substandard housing in so many decaying inner cities or undertaking the public works which are also necessary would give a boost to the construction industry which is one of the most important sectors in the European Community economy, but which has also suffered dramatically in recent years. A recent survey by the European Community's Economic and Social Committee noted that some 7 million persons, from the architect's study to the construction site, are involved in this industry and that if the building materials industry and other associated services are included, it means 13 percent of the 10 member states' gross domestic product.

If that seems a lot, the study reports, however, that this sector has been declining during the recent recession, resulting in a loss of 500,000 jobs since 1974. What's more, construction of housing has dropped in most countries after a massive renewal effort in previous years to represent a 24 percent decline, or 400,000 dwelling units, between 1974 and 1979. Housing construction, it was noted, was particularly hard hit in the United Kingdom, France and Italy, while in the latter two public works construction stabilised. Housing construction also stabilised in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands, according to the report. Naturally, all these sectors have suffered as a result of the poor investment climate, budgetary restrictions, inflation and other economic problems.

But the Committee feels strongly that more efforts should be undertaken at the European Community level to improve this situation. First of all, it's not as if there was no need for this industry to be working at full tilt. In certain countries there are signs of housing shortages. A massive effort needs to be undertaken just to rebuild the 250,000 dwelling units destroyed during the earthquakes of 1980 and 1981 in the Italian Mezzogiorno and in Greece. And there is much to be done in the building of infrastructure and energy conservation systems throughout the Community.

That's why it appeals for more coordination and use of the various Community funds to help construction work. It also recommends more attention to information sharing between member states, research into new materials and techniques and a dismantling of national standards and other obstacles that prevent firms in one member country from working or competing for public contracts in another. Much could also be done to promote contract work by Community builders to help the development of other parts of the world.

RESEARCH : The challenge of the eighties

During a period of economic crisis, there is tendency on the part of many to seek reductions in funds for scientific research in favour of programmes that show a more immediate return. This could, however, amount to a grave error because of the solid benefits for economic growth from technological development, which also has an impact on important social developments. For years, Member States of the European Community have recognised the crucial aspect of joint action in science and technology. Beginning in 1974, the European Commission undertook to coordinate national research policies and set in motion other programmes of common interest connected with Community activities, such as energy, the environment and raw materials.

As a result, several thousand researchers in the Community member countries now work in concert on major programmes. In 1980, the Community allocated close to £ 177 million to finance these activities which supplement the funds spent by the national governments. The energy research sector absorbs 72 percent of these funds.

Despite the amount and quality of this effort, Europe has witnessed a growing gap between itself and its main competitors. The reason for this lag is not a lack of money or manpower. In fact, there are an estimated 1,100,000 persons working in research jobs in the ten European Community countries, as compared with 619,000 in Japan and 1,520,000 in the United States. As far as public expenditures are concerned, they are only a trifle lower in Europe than in the United States and three times more than in Japan. The reasons for Europe's delay are more likely to be found in the inefficient dispersal of its efforts, the non-adaptability of university and other research organisations and structures and its lack of relevance to industrial needs.

This is the analysis just formulated by the European Commission in a report sketching the major outlines of the Community's research programme for the 1980s. The Commission also intends to step up current programmes and develop new long-term activities, especially in the agriculture, chemical, automobile and other sectors. The details of this plan will be debated by the Member States, but already the Commission has underlined the advantages offered by European coordination and integration. According to the Commission, there are no alternatives to facing up to the changes that will confront European societies and economies between now and the end of the century.

SOCIAL : EEC strategy for the handicapped

Social integration will be the key theme of the European Community's medium term strategy for the handicapped, according to Ivor Richard, Europe's Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs.

Speaking in the Netherlands recently on the preparation of handicapped children and young people for adult active life, Richard announced that Commission proposals for a new strategy for the disabled would be ready for ministerial discussion by December 8 this year. The strategy will be the Community's main contribution to the International Year of the Handicapped. The cornerstone of the Community strategy will be improved coordination, especially at the local level, because it is at this stage that most of the services for the disabled exist. Such coordination between EEC countries is expected to cover a whole range of policy areas, including health, welfare, employment, education and training, housing and transport, application of new technologies and information.

"Our plan", indicated the Commissioner, "is to set up a network of locally-based development actions which will act as demonstration models for the whole Community on how to tackle social integration for all the disabled in a given district in respect of all the policy areas involved - and to do this without the injection of vastly privileged resources which would make it in practice impossible to transfer any successful outcomes elsewhere. I am thinking then, of a network of somewhere between 15 and 20 districts, each with a population of perhaps about a quarter of a million people", he concluded.

The problem of the Community's handicapped has been a major EEC preoccupation in the past. In 1980 some £ 41 million were granted from the Social Fund for training or retraining activities of the handicapped. In 1981, the figure was upped to £ 53 million.

Social Fund support has made a vital contribution to innovations of a world-wide significance in the devising of new strategies for the disabled to enter the open environment and the creation of modular training systems, added Richard.

DEVELOPMENT : EEC code on marketing of breast milk substitutes

Once considered "backward", breast-feeding is back in fashion again - for very sound health reasons. This is particularly true in Third World nations where bottle-feeding is believed to be responsible for malnutrition and an increasingly high incidence of infant mortality.

Breast-feeding is best, agree experts from the World Health Organisation (WHO). This is also the firm opinion of the members of the European Parliament who held a debate on the question at their plenary session in Strasbourg recently. Working on WHO reports indicating that bottle-feeding does not provide new born babies with the same broad measure of protection against diseases as that given by mother's milk, European Parliamentarians called on EEC Member States to take measures to stop European producers of breast milk substitutes from marketing their products in the developing nations.

An international code of marketing of breast milk substitutes was adopted by WHO in May this year, despite opposition from the United States. The Parliament would now like EEC countries to ensure that the code is fully respected by European firms.

The message seems to have been well-received by Karl-Heinz Narjes, representing the European Commission. He told the Parliament that the Commission planned to draw up proposals designed to restrict the marketing of breast milk substitutes, based on the code recently adopted by WHO.

The Parliament was especially critical of the methods used by babyfood manufacturers to promote and sell their products. European companies launch massive advertising campaigns aimed directly at consumers, or a number of other techniques used more frequently in the pharmaceutical field, including the giving away of free samples, visits by sales personnel dressed as nurses, and gifts or commissions to doctors.

The effects of such aggressive advertising can be disastrous. WHO estimates that some one million children in the Third World die every year because of the utilisation of baby foods. Apart from providing less vitamins than mothers milk breast milk substitutes are more expensive and need to be diluted with uncontaminated water, which is not always available in the developing nations.

LEGISLATION : Towards better protection of privacy

There are certain things one discusses with lawyers and doctors which should not be revealed to all and sundry. Private lives have to be protected against unwanted intrusions. This is as true for "ordinary people" as it is for "stars", often tracked down by reporters and photographers. For some years now, the rapid growth of data banks and computerised filing systems has increasingly threatened peoples' private lives. Insurance companies, the police force, banks, hospitals, multinational firms and a host of public and private bodies possess an enormous amount of information on the private lives of their clients, members, workers, etc.

This clearly requires the elaboration of laws to protect private rights of citizens. Specific legislation on the subject has been adopted by several European countries, but not by all of them. Certain EEC states still lack adequate laws protecting the privacy of their citizens against the accumulation of personal statistics by diverse organisations.

The laws vary considerably from country to country. Their effectiveness is restricted by the fact that they are only applied on national territory, whereas the data, in fact, circulates freely beyond national frontiers. This has prompted the Council of Europe, an organisation for intergovernmental cooperation composed of 22 countries, to draw up and approve a convention for the protection of persons against computerised information of a personal character. The convention, adopted in 1980, has been signed by Denmark, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Luxembourg, as well as by Sweden, Norway and Turkey. It defines a certain number of basic principles covering the legal accumulation of data, the registration and utilisation of information, etc. The convention also bans the accumulation of so-called "sensitive" information dealing with political opinions.

In May 1979, the European Parliament came out in favour of the adoption of Community legislation on the protection of privacy. But Community authorities did not want to take a decision until the Council of Europe convention entered into force.

The Parliament has just reopened debate on the issue by adopting a report which criticises the convention and calls for specific Community action. The report points out that while the convention is an important step forward, it does not adequately protect the privacy of EEC citizens. Moreover, it allows contracting parties access to certain data if they meet certain given requirements. The Parliament calls on the Community to introduce the notion of responsibility for damages caused, and to make utilisation of the data banks conditional on prior authorisation. But will the Parliament's arguments be heard ?

ENVIRONMENT : Turning a deaf ear to helicopters

Within the context of its environmental action programme, the European Community has just undertaken to fight against the pollution and noise caused by aeroplanes. Measures aimed at reducing the noise made by helicopters and subsonic aeroplanes have already been adopted.

The European Commission has just introduced new proposals which would require that all helicopters operating in the Community would keep to noise levels recently approved by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation. The move will surely be welcomed by all those who live near airports ...

EMPLOYMENT : Hundreds of openings

The following is a new list of job vacancies in France and the Federal Republic of Germany which are open to all citizens of European Community countries. Candidates may obtain more information by contacting the following addresses :

- For the United Kingdom : MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION, SEDOC SECTION  
Employment Service Division, Overseas  
Placing Unit,  
Pennine Centre  
20-22 Hawley Street, SHEFFIELD S1 3 CA
- For Ireland : NATIONAL MANPOWER SERVICE (Dept. of Labour)  
SEDOC SECTION,  
50 Mespil Road, DUBLIN 4

## Workers sought

<u>Number</u>	<u>SEDOC Code</u>	<u>Occupations</u>	<u>Languages required</u>
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY			
50	0.23.05	Electrical engineer	German & English
50	0.24.10	Mechanical engineer	German & English
530	0.61.10	Medical practitioner +	
	0.61.20	Medical specialist	
250	0.71.10	Nurse	
25	4.51.26	Sales assistant (watches, jewellery, toys)	German & English
25	8.33.20	Turner (metal)	
FRANCE			
4	0.24.10	Mechanical engineer	French
10	0.28.50 IV/455	Engineer (oil and natural gas)	French & English
250	0.28.50	Engineers & technicians in all scientific disciplines	French & English