



*European Communities  
Commission  
Press Release*

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EEC PROVIDES £11¼m. OF GRANTS TO BRITISH COAL MINERS  
AND STEELWORKERS

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The Commission of the European Communities has recently approved the allocation of more than £11¼million in the form of grants to coal-miners and steel-workers affected by closures.

The grants are to assist coal miners and steel-workers who are made redundant, or who are redeployed to new work at new rates of pay, as a result of closures and re-deployment measures which fall within the scope of Article 56 (2) of the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty.

The grants supplement earnings where these fall below 90 per cent of previous earnings; provide payments to the unemployed; maintain earnings at 100 per cent for those undergoing re-training; and provide various travel to work and re-settlement allowances. Older workers may commute their benefits into enlarged pensions or annuities. The periods of these benefits vary according to age and circumstances, but normally range from 1 year to 3 years.

Coal-mining Industry

The grants to the coal-mining industry of £10.44m are for the 1973 and 1974 programmes of colliery closures; workers will, of course, already be receiving these benefits. The closures programme covers 27 complete closures involving the jobs of some 11,000 workers and 8 partial closures or mergers affecting the jobs of nearly 1,000 workers. About half the total numbers of workers affected are to be transferred to other pits and a substantial number of the others will receive early and enhanced pensions.

It should be stressed that decisions on colliery closures are the sole responsibility of the National Coal Board in consultation with the mining trade unions and with the agreement of the Secretary of State for Energy. When the closure programme has been agreed the UK Government then applies for financial aid in accordance with the convention on aid agreed by the Commission and the UK Government applying to the UK Coal-mining industry, 1973/1974.

Steel Industry

Similar grants have been made to steel workers. These total £837,193 and cover two closures, one at Workington, Yorkshire and the other at Irlam, Lancashire. This money comes from a £9 million budget already authorised for this purpose by the ECSC for the next 5 years. In July 1974 some £500,000 was paid from the budget to British steel workers.

The total number of workers requiring re-adaptation assistance in case of the two steel closures, which were undertaken in pursuance of the British Steel Corporation ten-year modernisation programme, is 2,440. These include 17 workers who were employed by a BSC contractor within the site at Irlam works on scrap recovery and processing.

APPENDIX 1 - List of Colliery Closures

A. Complete closures:

1973

	<u>Men on Books</u>	<u>Date of closure</u>
<u>SCOTLAND</u>		
Dollar	586	4 April
Auchincruive	151	13 July
Maxwell	64	12 July
Easton	545	13 July
Lochlea	157	6 November
 <u>NORTH EAST</u>		
Fenwick	493	31 August
Morrison Busty	492	6 October
Bardon Mill	234	23 November
Fishburn	623	30 November
 <u>YORKSHIRE</u>		
Gomersal	382	2 April
Shuttle Eye	211	26 April
St. Johns	601	29 June
 <u>NORTH WESTERN</u>		
Solway	531	26 May
Gresford	1,008	19 October
 <u>MIDLANDS</u>		
Cannock Wood	358	8 June
 <u>SOUTH WALES</u>		
Coed Cae	234	29 September
Milmerson/Writhlington	430	29 September

1974

SCOTLAND

Kingshill 3	550	11 July
Littlemill	310	26 June

APPENDIX 1 continued

NORTH EAST

Netherton	555	4 January
Whitworth Park	225	27 July
Nettlesworth	79	27 September
Kibblesworth	622	4 October
Usworth	484	8 August

YORKSHIRE

Barley Hall	333	31 May
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MIDLANDS

Oscroft	282	26 April
Glapwell	442	28 June

Total number of jobs lost: 10,982

B. Partial closures or mergers

1973 Jobs lost

NORTH EAST

Hawthorn (P)	384
Lambton preparation plant	16
Blackburn Fell ) (M)	35
Marley Hill )	
Ravensworth Ann ) (M)	307
Kibblesworth )	

1974

SOUTH WALES

Cynneidre ) (M)	27
Pentremawr )	

YORKSHIRE

Glasshoughton	170
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Total: 939

Manpower situation

The total number of industrials affected by these closures is as follows:

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>
Total closures	7,100	3,882
Partial closures	<u>742</u>	<u>197</u>
	<u>7,842</u>	<u>4,079</u>

11,921

APPENDIX 2 - List of Steel-Plant Closures

WORKINGTON

The plant is situated at Workington (on the west coast of the north of England). The acid Bessemer Steelmaking plant was built in 1934, had a capacity of 6,000 tons per week and was closed in July 1974.

The closures involve the discharge of:

- 52 staff members, and
- 215 manual grades.

Out of a total of 267 jobs lost, assistance is claimed for 238 employees. Out of that number 35 will be transferred within BSC and 203 will be made redundant.

IRLAM

The affected plant, which closed finally at the end of June 1974, comprises 7 Siemens Martin basic open hearth furnaces, each with a capacity of some 100 tons and ancillary processing units:

Open hearth steelmaking is no longer competitive in world markets and the decision to close the No.1 and No.2 steelmaking plants reflects this change in market conditions. The closure of the slab and rolling mills and ancillary plant is the natural consequence of the closure of the open hearth furnaces.

Out of the 2,400 job losses, 15 employees left at the normal age of retirement and 200 left of their own accord. Dispersal of the other 2,185 employees is expected to be as follows:

Employees transferred within BSC	84
Employees made redundant	2,101
(of whom 600 are to be retrained and a further 500 may accept early retirement).	

In addition to the above 2,185 employees of British Steel Corporation a further 17 were employed by a Corporation contractor within the site on scrap recovery and processing. Thus the total number for whom re-adaptation assistance may be required is 2,202.

The Company has instituted an intensive retraining programme to provide the redeployed workers with additional skills required for their new jobs.

The prospects of employment for younger men are good although they may suffer some drop in earnings, but older men are likely to experience more difficulty and will require either a substantial make up of earnings or unemployment benefit.