

forum

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Dossier:
Work organization

Employment & social affairs



European Commission

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Editorial



by Pádraig Flynn

The theme of the first issue of DG V's new magazine is work organization, a hugely important component of the modernization of social Europe. I hope our examination of change in the organization of the workplace – and of how this can relate positively to developing new skills and competences, and to new patterns of demand, consumption and production – will help develop the debate on how to enable change to be managed well.

I want to take this opportunity, however, to share with you my first thoughts on some broader developments in the modernization of social Europe. The Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) has just completed its work in Amsterdam. I want to look at what this means, in terms of employment policy and the social dialogue.

Employment occupied centre stage at the Dutch Presidency Summit. The result was a well-defined Employment Title in the Amsterdam Treaty. It is also significant that the new European Council Resolution on 'Growth and employment', agreed by the Heads of State or Government at that meeting, places employment at the core of the economic decision-making process, and does so with immediate effect.

These developments can – with commitment and partnership – secure the Union's ability to integrate better macroeconomic, structural and labour market policies. A special European Council on employment will now take place under the Luxembourg Presidency to consolidate this process. I hope and expect that meeting to build from the Amsterdam decisions, and give Member States their first opportunity to show how the new Treaty, and Resolution, can be translated into budgetary planning for 1998.

This does not mean responsibility for employment policy shifts from Member States to the Union. This responsibility remains squarely where it belongs. Rather, it acknowledges that failure to fight unemployment effectively in one country has a negative impact on the economy and labour market of all Member States. It confirms that working more closely together is of mutual benefit.

The new Treaty offers a credible basis, and balance, for new economic and employment coordination arrangements in the Union. The Member States now have the ability to work more closely together in the central task of shifting decisively from passive to active employment policy. All of this offers a framework for cooperation, defining roles and responsibilities. It gives the Union, for the first time, clear objectives. It gives Member States and the Commission the tools with which to meet them.

The second clear success of the IGC, in social and employment policy terms, was the integration of the Social Protocol into the Treaty. The single, coherent framework represented by integration of the existing provisions concerning the social partners into the new Treaty is welcome. It will enable them to meet more fully their responsibilities – and potential – as agents of change and modernization in the Union. This is of great importance in the task of modernizing the European labour market. It is essential to balancing two fundamental components of the modernization process. The flexibility demanded by the new, more fast changing and fluid labour market, and the security of skills' development and renewal, which the workforce must have, and must perceive, if it is to apply that flexibility to ensuring enterprises achieve productivity growth. That balance, to which this edition of the DG V magazine is dedicated, constitutes a key component of Europe's long-run competitiveness.

We required two main things from the IGC in our pursuit of the further development of social Europe. The tools to enable the Union to contribute more fully to the modernization of our social – as well as our economic – systems, and the appropriate signals and guarantees to European citizens. We cannot judge, just yet, exactly what we will be able to achieve with the new provisions.

I, myself, am disappointed in some specifics, in the broader social sphere.

But I do believe that the IGC has marked important progress in demonstrating intent, and in fashioning the appropriate tools, for the work ahead of us, particularly in terms of the employment objective. The Union can now contribute more fully to the modernization of our social – as well as our economic – systems.

We must all work together to use these tools well, to ensure that the progress represented by the IGC is sufficient to enable the European Union to match the scale of both the problems we face and the potential we represent, in shaping a strong economic entity which citizens can clearly recognize as a Union.

Some of this concerns legalities, and some concerns institutional relationships and responsibilities. A great deal more relies on fully understanding and discussing the realities around us, so that change can add to, rather than inhibit, our capacity for continued social and economic progress.

The changes we face in the organization of work, and in the tasks they imply for the support and development systems which underpin our productive capacity, are high on the list of realities we must address if we are to do so.



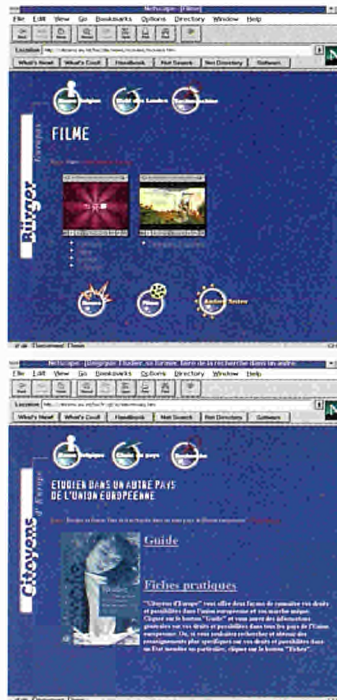
News



'Citizens first' continues

'Citizens first' is an information campaign launched in November 1996 by President Santer with the aim of making European citizens more aware of the rights and opportunities available to them in the European Union. There are currently three 'Citizens first' guides outlining citizens' rights to work, live and study in other EU countries. These are accompanied by detailed fact-sheets about the situation in each Member State, complete with relevant addresses and telephone numbers.

By August 1997 more than 630 000 citizens had contacted 'Citizens first' directly either by telephone or via the Internet, and more than 12 million documents had been distributed throughout Europe. Several thousand cases have also been dealt with by the 'Signpost service', which provides informal legal advice to citizens experiencing specific problems in exercising their rights.



Building on the success of the initiative, three new guides will be published in the autumn dealing with 'Buying goods and services in the single market', 'Travelling in the EU', and 'Equal rights and opportunities for men and women in the European Union'. The equal rights and opportunities guide will provide a simple, accurate description of the rights to equal treatment that male and female workers in the Union enjoy in the workplace, either in their own country or in another Member State.

All the guides and information about 'Citizens first' are available on the Internet at <http://citizens.eu.int>. You can also contact 'Citizens first' on the following telephone numbers, most of which are toll-free:

Belgium, NL: 0800-92 038
Belgium, FR: 0800-92 039
Denmark: 8001 02 01
Germany: 0130-860 400
Greece: 00800 32 12 254
Spain: 900-98 31 98
France: 0800 90 97 00
Ireland: 1-8000-55 31 88
Italy: 1678-76 166
Luxembourg: 0800 25 50
The Netherlands: 06-80 51 (local rate)
Austria: 0660 68 11 (local rate)
Portugal: 0505-32 92 54
Finland: 08001 13 191
Sweden: 020-79 49 49
United Kingdom: 0800-581591

1997: European Year against Racism

The year 1997 has been designated as the European Year Against Racism (EYAR) to highlight the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. This is in response to the continuing presence of racial prejudice, discrimination and racist attacks in all aspects of society, which present a constant problem to the European Union. Racism is diametrically opposed to everything that Europe stands for in terms of protecting human dignity and promoting mutual respect and understanding.

The European Year marks the first time that concrete action has been undertaken by the European Union to combat racism in partnership with the Member States. A broad variety of activities have been supported, ranging from local grassroots projects to regional initiatives, national campaigns and high-profile events. Examples of planned projects include a governmental working group to investigate racial violence; a 'Youth against intolerance' fun run and symposium in Belgium; a poster competition in Denmark; special training for Austrian judges on racism and hostility to foreigners; an anti-racist pop festival in the UK; and a European week of anti-racist cinema in France.

Neneh Cherry, Linford Christie and Joaquin Cortes are acting as ambassadors for the Year.

The stated aims of the year are:

- to highlight the threat posed by racism to human rights and EU cohesion;
- to encourage discussion of anti-racist measures;
- to disseminate and promote the exchange of information on good practice and effective anti-racist strategies;
- to publicize the benefits of integration policies;
- to turn to good account the experiences of people who have suffered from racism, xenophobia or anti-Semitism.

'Racism is more than the denial of differences, it is the denial of a fellow human being because of those differences,' stated Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission. He said, 'that the fight against racism is part of building Europe, as racism is opposed to everything that Europe stands for in terms of democracy, tolerance and respect of human dignity'.

As a first result, the Council has adopted a European Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia, which will be set up in Vienna and closely monitor developments in Europe.

For further information, please contact: European Commission, European Year against Racism, DG V/D.4, rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200, B-1049 Brussels, tel. (32-2) 299 37 37, fax (32-2) 295 18 99.



Information society

Final policy report of the high-level group of experts

Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner Pádraig Flynn has welcomed the presentation of the high-level group of experts' final policy report 'Building a European information society for us all'.¹

Established by Mr Flynn in May 1995 to examine the social and societal changes associated with the information society (IS), the high-level group has analysed a broad set of issues confronting policy-makers as Europe moves towards the full development of an information society. Professor Luc Soete, who led the group, said: 'As in our previous interim report, the importance of social embeddedness remains central to our vision of a socially inclusive society. In this final submission, we have sought to take the debate a step further by proposing a policy framework that considers the broad range of opportunities and challenges the IS presents.'

The independent group of experts argues in favour of a European model of the information society characterized by a strong ethos of solidarity, and including all aspects of broader social integration of technological change. In its vision there is an urgent need to coordi-

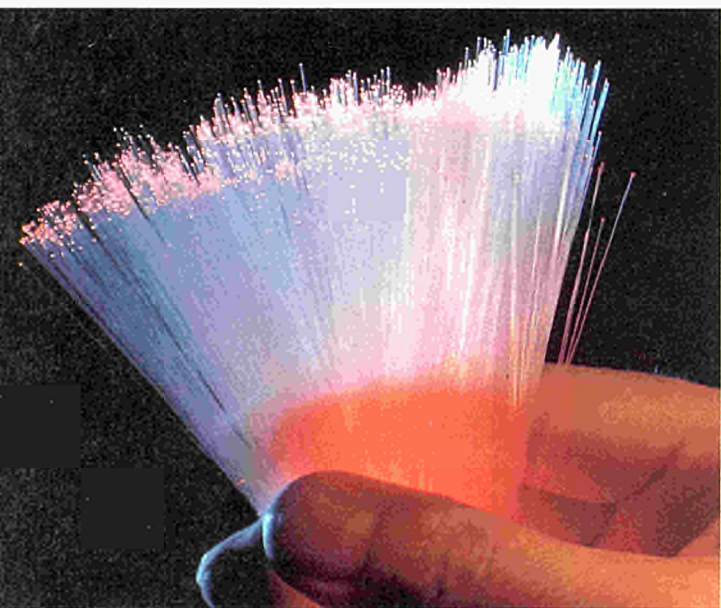
nate policies aimed at enhancing the job growth potential of the information society, and to make rapid progress towards establishing common minimum social policy standards as part of creating a level playing field in the social sphere.

The report contains 33 core suggestions for policy development, ranging from economic matters, such as employment policy and regional cohesion, to societal aspects, such as quality of life, social cohesion, health and democracy. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of investment in human resources and skills in information and communication technologies, based on a lifelong learning process starting from formal school age, and taking place both at work and at home.

Commission presents communication entitled 'The labour market and the social dimension of the information society: People first – The next steps'

In July 1996 the Commission published a Green Paper on social policy for the information society² to stimulate debate on the social and labour market implications of the information society. Following on from this, the Commission recently presented its communication entitled 'The labour market and the social dimension of the information society: People first – The next steps'.³ The core of its message is the need to diminish the risk of creating a two-speed society of information 'haves' and 'have-nots' resulting from new IS structures of production and employment that have an unequal effect on people, firms, sectors and regions.

The communication was drafted in the light of the approximately 130 official responses to the Green Paper, and of the recommendations of the high-level group of experts' final policy report (see above). It fits in the overall context of the European information society strategy set out in the rolling action plan 'Europe at the forefront of the global information society'.⁴



Its aims are threefold:

- to coordinate the process of ensuring that the social and labour market implications of the information society are understood and acted upon;
- to mainstream an information society dimension into all social policies and actions, especially at European level;
- to identify specific actions to promote awareness of the potential of the information society and its relevance to the social policy field.

The Commission considers that it has a role to play in supplementing – not supplanting – existing local, regional, national and European strategies aimed at aligning structural and social policies with the new and evolving technological environment. In its communication the Commission therefore states that national governments are responsible for constructing an information society based on solidarity values, the establishment of adequate regulatory frameworks, or the development of new services. During the Green Paper process, this point has been central to the Commission's discussions with Member State authorities on strategies and programmes under way at national and regional level.

¹ 'Building a European information society for us all'; final policy report of the high-level expert group, June 1997. For sale: ECU 15, catalogue number: CE-05-97-907-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-0706-1 (EN).

² Green Paper 'Living and working in the information society: People first', July 1996. For sale: ECU 7, catalogue number: CM-NF-96-003-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-7869-X (EN).

³ Communication 'The labour market and the social dimension of the information society: People first – The next steps', September 1997 (COM(97) 930 final).

⁴ 'Europe at the forefront of the global information society: Rolling action plan', November 1996 (COM(96) 607 final).

The documents listed above are available in the 11 official EU languages (for details of how to obtain them, see the publications section in this magazine).



Overview of latest developments in European employment and social policy

Equal opportunities for women and men in the European Union

The Commission has adopted its first annual report (1996) on equal opportunities for women and men in the EU. It contains key data on the growing diversity in women's situations and the persisting disparities between women and men. Much has been achieved by the EU in this area: a relatively comprehensive legal framework on equal pay and equal treatment for women and men has been built up, and action programmes have been implemented by the European Commission and by Member States to raise people's awareness and encourage the exchange of good practice. But outstanding problems remain in the application of EU law, and a new, more integrated approach is called for if the real concerns of women in particular are to be met.

The report can be purchased (in 11 languages) (see the publications section of this magazine).

Women and men in Europe and equal opportunities: results of a Eurobarometer poll

Work is as important for women as for men. The two sexes also consider the private sphere, and particularly family life, to be of primary importance, and that equality of opportunity for men and women begins at home. Respect for the individual, and for the male and female identity, must be a priority for the European Union. These are some of the more striking findings of a Eurobarometer survey of male and female attitudes towards equality of opportunity carried out on behalf of the European Commission.

According to the survey, entitled 'Women and men in Europe and equal opportunities', women attach as much importance as men to initiative and independence at work, and to training and promotion prospects. This implies that unemployed women suffer financially and psychologically from their condition as much as men do. Another interesting finding is that both men and women find their private lives, and in particular family life, a

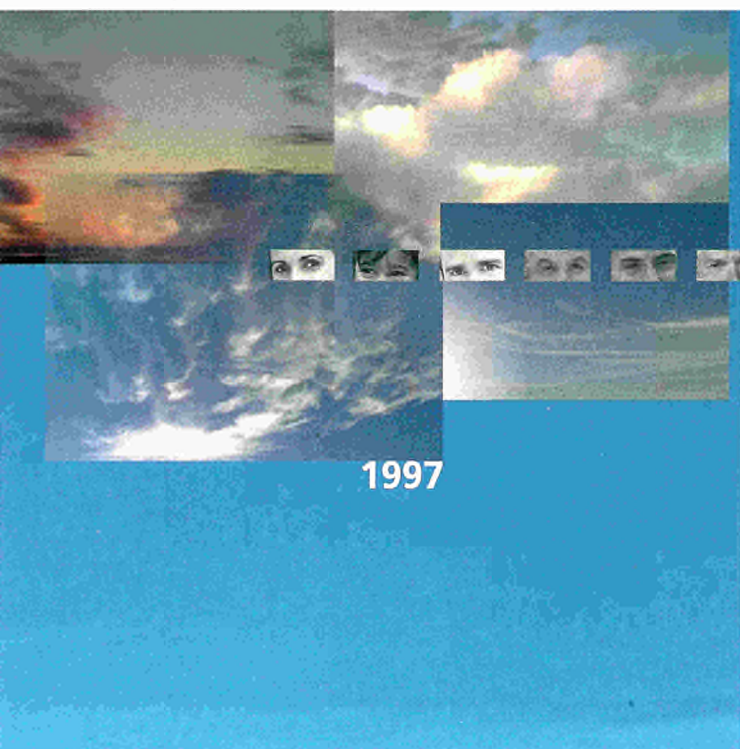


source of much greater satisfaction than broader social experiences. Almost half of the sample considered that equality of opportunity 'strengthens democracy, promotes personal development and improves human relations'. Almost two thirds reject the idea that such equality 'makes the daily lives of men and women more difficult'.

The survey is available in three languages from the DG V information centre.

The demographic situation in the European Union in 1997

On 9 July the Commission adopted its 1997 report on the demographic situation in the European Union. The report focuses on three main areas: the impact of demo-



graphic change on the labour market; the regional dimension of ageing; and the demographic situation in the countries which have applied to join the European Union. The analysis covers the period 1995-2015 and predicts that, after the year 2010, there will be more people leaving the workforce than entering it. It shows that demographic decline has stronger effects in most of the peripheral regions of Europe, interacting with the relatively poor economic performance in these regions. Countries which have applied to join the EU will also experience a significant fall in the working population after 2010. Commenting on the report, Commissioner Pádraig Flynn said 'the report shows that significant changes in the demography of the working age population have to be expected. This will have a profound effect on the labour market.'

COM(97) 361 final. Available in 11 languages from the DG V information centre.

Social protection in the European Union: modernization and improvement

In early March the Commission adopted a communication 'Modernizing and improving social protection in the European Union', bringing out the conclusions of a wide-ranging debate launched in October 1995 by an initial communication on the same subject. In the light of this debate, the Commission notes that there is a strong demand for social protection in the Member States, with a perceived need for enhanced levels of protection. It affirms that Member States can and must maintain existing social protection systems, which nevertheless still need to be reformed substantially in order to adapt to the prevailing economic and social requirements.

As Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner Pádraig Flynn explained, 'the threat to the European social model, of which social protection is a fundamental element, does not come from international pressures or from globalization. The real danger lies in its inability to respond to current problems.'

COM(97) 102 final. Available in 11 languages from the DG V information centre.

Part-time work: Commission adopts a proposal for a Directive

On 23 July the European Commission adopted a proposal for a Council Directive designed to transpose the social partners' framework agreement on part-time work into European law. This agreement was concluded by UNICE (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe), CEEP (European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation) and ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation) on 6 June 1997, and is the second time that an agreement reached by the social partners at European level has been submitted to the Council for adoption, the first having been on the issue of parental leave. The aims of the new agreement between the three organizations are: to prevent any form of discrimination against part-time workers and to improve the quality of part-time work; and to facilitate the development of part-time work on a voluntary basis and, in doing so, contribute to a flexible organization of working time.

The agreement requests the Member States and social partners to identify and review obstacles of a legal or administrative nature which may limit opportunities for part-time work and, where appropriate, eliminate them. Employees should have the choice to work part-time or full-time. Employers should give more consideration to workers' requests to transfer from full-time to part-time or vice versa, facilitate change by providing sufficient information on vacancies, and improve access to part-time work at all levels of an enterprise, including skilled and managerial positions.

Background

The importance of new forms of flexible working, especially part-time work, has increased substantially over recent years, and the trend continues on national employment markets. On 29 June 1990, the European Commission submitted three proposals for Council Directives relating to certain employment relationships (e.g. part-time and temporary). For over four years, these proposals were discussed in the Council in considerable detail, but only one Directive was adopted. Since no progress was made in the Council meeting on 27 September 1995, the Commission decided to launch the first stage of consultation of the social partners according to the procedure laid down in Article 3 of the Agreement on social policy, which is annexed to the Treaty on European Union by the Social Protocol. The second stage of consultation was launched on 9 April 1996. On 19 June 1996, UNICE, CEEP and ETUC announced their intention of negotiating a collective agreement on part-time work. Agreement was reached nearly one year later on 6 June 1997.

COM(97) 392 final. Available in 11 languages from the DG V information centre.



White Paper on sectors and activities excluded from the working time Directive

In a White Paper published on 15 July the Commission concludes that action should be taken at European Union level to ensure the protection of the health and safety, with regard to working time, of all employees currently excluded from the working time Directive. These are employees in air, rail, road, sea and inland waterway transport, sea fishing and offshore sectors, and doctors in training. Commenting on the White Paper, Pádraig Flynn said that ever since the working time Directive was adopted in 1993 the Commission had been seeking to ensure that the health and safety of all workers in the EU were not impaired because of excessive working hours or inadequate rest. 'The exclusion of certain categories of workers from the general protection provided by the Directive is an anomaly which needs to be corrected,' he said. 'The White Paper constitutes an important element in the development of social Europe.' The Commission invites comments on the course of action proposed in the White Paper by 31 October 1997. As well as seeking the views of the other EU institutions, the Commission has sent the White Paper to the social partners at European level for consultation and will subsequently consult management and labour on the content of any proposal envisaged.

The working time Directive

On 23 November 1994, the Council adopted Directive 93/104/EC on certain aspects of the organization of working time, based on Article 118a of the EC Treaty. This Article requires Member States to 'pay particular attention to encouraging improvements, especially in the working environment, as regards the health and safety of workers...'. The essential aims are to ensure that workers are protected against adverse effects on their health and safety caused by working excessively long hours, having inadequate rest or disruptive working patterns.

The Directive provides in particular (Articles 3 to 8) for:

- a minimum daily rest period of 11 consecutive hours a day;
- a rest break where the working day is longer than six hours;
- a minimum rest period of one day a week;
- a maximum working week of 48 hours on average, including overtime;
- four weeks' annual paid holiday; and that
- night workers must not work more than eight hours in 24 on average.

The Directive contains a number of further provisions relating to the protection of the health and safety of night workers and shift workers. It also requires measures to be taken so that the organization of work according to a certain pattern takes account of the general principle of adapting work to the worker. The Directive makes extensive provisions for flexibility in applying the principles it contains to specific situations, in particular by means of derogations and, especially in the case of the 48-hour week, long 'reference periods' over which the average can be calculated.

Member States were required to implement the Directive by 23 November 1996. By August 1997, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden had communicated their national transposition measures to the Commission.

COM(97) 334 final. Available in 11 languages from the DG V information centre.

Information and consultation of employees at national level

The European Commission decided in June to consult the social partners at European Union level on the issue of information and consultation of employees at national level. The Commission wishes to examine with the social partners the need to create a framework to complement national practices and underpin existing EU legislation, which provides for information and consultation in specific circumstances (transfer of undertaking, collective redundancies). This consultation follows a wide debate which was initiated by the Commission's communication of 14 November 1995 on worker information and consultation.

This consultation also follows the detailed analysis made by the Davignon Group on the related issue of worker involvement in relation to the European Company Statute.

*The Davignon report can be purchased (three languages; for details of how to obtain them, see the publications section in this magazine). 'Group of Experts 'European systems of workers involvement' – Final report'. For sale: ECU 15, catalogue number: CE-06-97-739-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-1113-1 (EN).*

The social dialogue in 1996

The first annual review of the social dialogue at European Union level, adopted by the Commission on 6 May, shows that the social dialogue began to produce significant results in 1996. It emphasizes the need to improve the links between the European-level dialogue and the national and industry levels, and notes that it is time to create a European industrial relations culture and integrate Europe into the social partners' strategies and dialogues at all levels.

'1996 was a particularly fruitful and productive year' for the social dialogue at European level, according to the review submitted to the Commission by Pádraig Flynn. 'The performance was enhanced and new actors came on to the European social stage, particularly within the sectoral social dialogue.'

However, the review also highlights the fact that 'the various forums where the European social partners come together and these endeavours towards dialogue and, in some cases, negotiation represent only the background of a European-scale industrial relations system which still has to be erected'.

SEC(97) 843. Available in 11 languages from the DG V information centre.





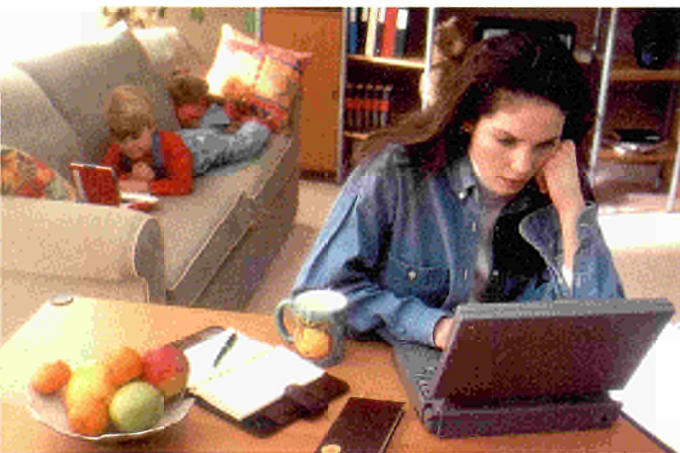
New forms of work organization

Across various sectors, be it in manufacturing or services, public or private enterprise, many experiences have demonstrated not only how productivity, growth and employment increase when one learns how to work in a better way but also one is more committed and concerned about work, thus enriching one's working life.

Why new forms of work?

Work organization is one of the key issues extensively debated amongst managers, trade unions and workers, since recognition that we have to be more flexible in our work. Companies have to be able to adjust their products to the ever-increasing demand of fastidious consumers. Workers ask for more flexibility in their working hours to adapt work schedules to private life. Women, in particular, are concerned about the options they have in their workplace of combining work with childcare and work at home.

In this magazine, a number of cases are illustrated where new forms of organization have been developed. These cases illustrate how enterprises in both the private and public sectors have developed new forms of work organization to meet the wishes of consumers, workers and entrepreneurs.



Women, in particular, are concerned about the options they have in their workplace of combining work with childcare and work at home

Why is it then that companies have to change their organization of work? What are these changes about and what are the consequences for the people involved? These are some of the questions the cases described try to answer.

Our economics are in the process of being transformed. We are departing from standardized production towards a very diversified production of goods and services to meet consumer demands. The production of goods and services requires increasing information and knowledge. We are entering what is termed a 'knowledge-based' economy. Information and communication technologies give us tremendous opportunities to develop this knowledge-based economy and thereby improve productivity, real wages and create new jobs.

Consequences of failure

However, firms in both manufacturing and services have, for a long time, had great difficulty in implementing these new technologies. The consequences are that the opportunities of increasing productivity and growth offered by these technologies are not used to full advantage. At the same time, the slow growth of competitiveness leads to limited increases in real wages: we should not forget that it is the production of added value which provides the basis for increasing wages in real terms.

Consumers are not satisfied. They demand products of a technical standard which cannot be delivered. Entrepreneurs lose market shares and are unwilling or cannot afford to invest and create new jobs.

The main reason why the new technologies and, in particular, information and communication technologies have not led to improved competitiveness, growth and better job creation is the lack of adequate organizational transformation. Enterprises have not managed to develop new forms of work organization which can bring such advantages.

Social and human assets

In new forms of work organization, workers perform a range of tasks rather than pass from one job to another. Enterprises are being transformed from hierarchical and complex organizations with simple jobs into less hierarchical, more decentralized organizations with more complex jobs. The new forms of work require team work and dialogue across the whole company spectrum. Greater participation by all employees is required to integrate the social and human assets as productive factors. Workers, together with management, possess these social and human assets, developing and employing them whenever the right form of work organization is implemented. Where firms in manufacturing and in services have succeeded in integrating these assets, they have been rewarded by increasing productivity, growth and real wages and also by new and better jobs.

Trust and commitment

One particular critical component of the new organizational challenge lies in the sphere of industrial relations. These relations are greatly dominated by mass production perspectives where the dominant trust has to enforce compliance rather than to see shopfloor workers as agents of improvement and change. New attitudes are required by both management and the labour force; this often translates into industrial relations requiring enhanced levels of both trust and commitment.

At the heart of many of these developments is the direct participation of employees. The increasing importance attached to direct participation is clearly documented in the European-wide survey of about 5 000 work plans on direct participation in organizational change carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin.

The study shows how direct participation can bridge hitherto conflicting objectives. For employees, with their long-standing demands for improvements in the quality of working life, direct participation encourages the hope of more challenging and rewarding jobs, together with ongoing training and development opportunities. For management, competing in an increasingly global market, direct participation offers the prospect of improving business performance by producing high-quality goods and services. One could argue that the need for direct participation in the organization of work has become a 'new conventional wisdom'.

What then are the obstacles to developing new and better forms of work organization?



*European Foundation for
the Improvement of Living
and Working Conditions*

Lack of awareness

The major obstacle is, without doubt, lack of awareness of the potential of the new forms of work to improve the economic performance of enterprises. Managers may also rightly be cautious about innovations which alter systems and procedures currently delivering an acceptable level of performance, compared with entering an unknown realm of uncertainty about how to complete the process of change and how long it will take.

There are no 'turn-key' solutions.

The very flexibility of the technologies means they must be embedded in the social organization of the workplace in order to achieve a competitive combination of productivity, performance and quality. The key question, therefore, is how to increase awareness of the potential of new approaches to organization of work.

This magazine is one, albeit modest, effort to do so.

The legal and contractual framework

Alongside the question of raising awareness of the potential of new forms of work organization, we also need to provide the corresponding legal and contractual framework. We need to look at labour laws and collective agreements in order to allow firms and individuals more flexibility, whilst providing adequate security for workers. Labour laws and agreements based upon the standard model of full-time, workplace-based employment of indefinite duration can no longer entirely respond to the needs of a more knowledge-based production of goods and services. Work location has diversified; working time practices have to be individualized to respond to particular needs of entrepreneurs as well as workers; time-based remuneration may, in some cases, be replaced by task-specific remuneration.



Conclusion

It is generally recognized that new forms of work organization might, for enterprises, be the most promising solution to improving their performance. Across various sectors, be it in manufacturing or services, public or private enterprise, many experiences have demonstrated not only how productivity, growth and employment increase when one learns how to work in a better way, but also one is more committed and concerned about work, thus enriching one's working life. Meeting challenges brings people to discover they have many, hitherto unknown, strengths on which they can draw. Policy-makers in the private and public sectors have a great responsibility to realize the potential of putting these strengths to good use.

Lars Erik Andreassen

New forms of work organization and the protection of workers' health

In adopting new forms of work organization, the crucial aspect of the protection of workers' health must not be overlooked.

Changes in work organization raise a number of challenges and uncertainties for the protection of the health of workers. One major contribution to a healthy work environment could be the development away from low autonomy, repetitive work cycles to a more open-ended process, leading to greater participation by all employees.

On the other hand, it has to be said that the current legal framework is based on an employer relationship. It is the employer who has the duty of managing the prevention of occupational ill health. This legal base may well prove too narrow where changes in work organization lead to an increase in subcontracting and self-employment.

It may be necessary to develop economic incentives or other methods to assist these employers in getting the knowledge of health and safety risks. In addition, the incorporation of health and safety within early education and within the life-long learning approach will be increasingly necessary to ensure that workers are adequately trained given likely changes in employment and employment status.

Opportunities lie in the use of new forms of work organization to:

- expand ergonomically friendly working conditions, and
- reduce the negative health impact of repetitive work on the musculoskeletal system.

Threats are health risks arising from isolation, stress, checking and control that might be caused by new forms of work organization. The flexibility of new work organization in practice often means a flexibility to meet the changing demands of production and not the needs of workers. Flexible workers are required to change patterns of working when necessary for the enterprises. Not everyone can cope with these demands. Some people react favourably to increased responsibility, while others find it more difficult to cope with, especially when combined with long or irregular hours of work.

The challenge will be to take into account both the opportunities and threats offered by new forms of work organization, flexible working time and employment contracts.

Putting words into action

The EU's ADAPT and Objective 4 projects

Industrial change and how to live with it are central preoccupations of European firms. In a rapidly evolving context, human resources play a fundamental role: their capacity to reorganize and adapt to the new situation is the key to a successful transition. The European Union can and does contribute to encouraging and facilitating this crucial process, both on a political and on a more practical level, by co-financing innovative projects in this field, with particular attention to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Faithful to the old saying that one demonstration is worth more than 1 000 words, the contribution of the European Union to the diffusion of innovative forms of work organization does not stop at the theoretical discussion level. While promoting a Union-wide debate with its Green Paper on work organization – essential to bring home the need to rethink old-fashioned ways and prepare for the future – the Union is busy helping companies to put what it preaches into practice throughout its territory, supporting projects aimed at introducing new forms of work organization in European firms.

This is done through the European Social Fund (ESF), the EU's main financial instrument in the field of employment and social policy. The aspects of innovation and organizational change are addressed by the ESF through the ADAPT initiative and the so-called 'Objective 4' of the Social Fund, both specifically aimed at anticipating and dealing with industrial change.

Last May in Athens, the first ADAPT European conference, jointly organized by the European Commission and by the Greek Ministry of Labour, brought together the representatives of 60 of the approximately 1 400 ADAPT projects now under way in the 15 Member States of the Union. This was to present the results of their ESF-funded programmes and to discuss the twin challenges of how to respond to industrial change and how to anticipate its effects on employment and industrial qualifications from the point of view of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The SME paradox

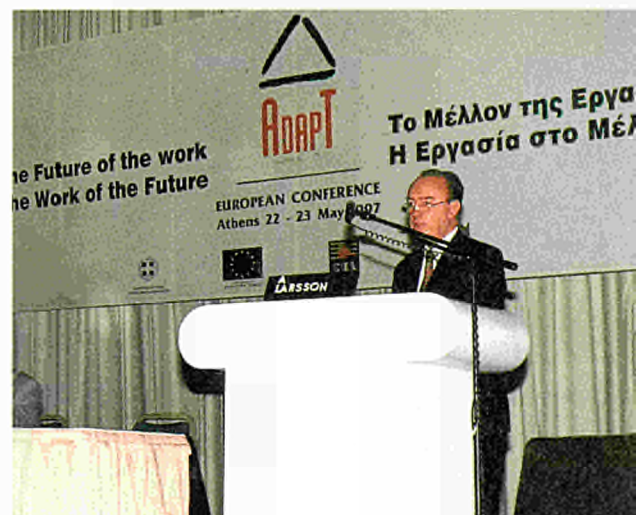
Nowhere is the ESF support more needed than in the sector of small and medium-sized enterprises. While big firms are often at the forefront in renewing their systems of work organization, and are able to invest heavily in training and expertise, SMEs are often lagging behind, clinging to old-fashioned management concepts and lacking the financial means and the expertise needed to support organizational change.

The full implications of this state of affairs can be easily grasped if we consider that, according to the European Community Statistical Office (Eurostat), more than 99% of the 15.7 million EU business are SMEs, and that more than 66% of all EU workers are employed in SMEs, with the largest concentration in southern Europe. On top of that, while in the period 1988-95 large companies lost on average some 225 000 jobs annually, companies employing less than 100 workers created some 259 000 new jobs every year. Still, when it comes to innovation and training, these percentages shrink to a small fraction of the levels found in larger companies.

DG V Director-General

Allan Larsson addressing the

Athens ADAPT European Conference



Paradoxically then, the sector constituting the backbone of the European economy is the least equipped to respond and adapt to the potentially threatening changes currently taking place.

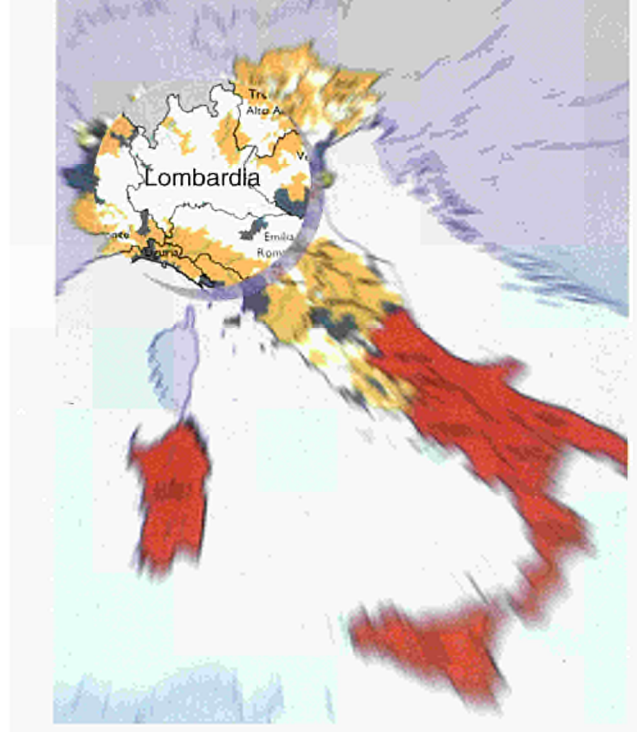
The reasons for this are manifold. 'Many SMEs see organizational innovation as a luxury they cannot afford,' says Roberto Grieco, a researcher at the ISTUD Institute of management studies in Milan. Mr Grieco was in Athens to present 'ADAPT DevelopNet Lombardia', an ADAPT project currently being implemented by ISTUD, aimed at starting and facilitating the process of organizational change within 120 SMEs in the Lombardy region of Italy, with the objective of strengthening their competitiveness and sustaining employment.

'The problem with SMEs,' explained Mr Grieco, 'is that they have remained largely unaffected by the drastic changes in organizational and competition logic which are transforming larger firms. The introduction of organizational changes in the SMEs of our region is either a consequence of the adoption of new work patterns by the big companies they supply, which leaves them no choice but to reorganize themselves accordingly, or they represent isolated cases which do not have the potential of turning into a systematic approach.'

A second problem is that the existing training and management tools designed to facilitate the transition to new organizational patterns were often developed by and for large companies, and they are generally of little use to SMEs.

'ADAPT DevelopNet Lombardia', promoted by the regional confederation of industries Federlombarda, aims at addressing this imbalance by concentrating on technological and organizational innovation, human resources and skill development, and on the development of training and management tools specifically adapted to each of the SMEs involved.

The interventions will be 'personalized', designed and developed on the basis of an assessment of the different needs of each company. However, the project has shown a pattern of common concerns and interests shared by the majority of the SMEs involved. 'The great majority of our SMEs are family-run,' explained Mr Grieco, 'in the strictest sense of the word. The owner-manager often runs the company almost single-handed, and this is one of the reasons why about a third of SMEs do not survive their original founder. This is why one of the issues addressed by ISTUD's ADAPT project is how



to prepare the ground for the transition from one generation to the next, from a highly personalized to a more integrated type of management.' This involves training owner-managers to share responsibilities, to transfer their know-how and experience to the firm as a whole, and to rely more on teamwork.

According to Mr Grieco, if SMEs are to stay competitive, they must rethink their organizational structure. They must improve their managerial skills and the personal and professional skills of the workforce, and acquire effective tools to plan ahead, to assess their long-term organizational and training needs and to address the contradictions which are typical of the family business.

Bigger SMEs, with a more complex hierarchy, have their problems too. Here as well, with the support of the ESF, several projects have been launched to review and improve systems of work organization. Ms Helle Ibsen, from the AMU vocational training centre in Aarhus (Denmark) is currently involved in the implementation of an ADAPT project which concentrates on the training of middle managers.

'The changes taking place in the technological and organizational development of SMEs result in new qualifications needed at every level in the organization,' explained Ms Ibsen. 'In a more flexible organization with fewer hierarchical levels, middle managers find themselves threatened both from the top and from the bottom, and need to increase their management skills to adapt to their changing conditions.'

The overall objective of the project is to enable middle managers (foremen, production managers) in the manufacturing industry to adapt to their new role in a changing context, characterized by the advent of global competition, of new forms of work organization and of the information society.

Particular emphasis is put on anticipating future needs. Ms Ibsen's team identified the new skills needed by middle management: the ability to cooperate horizontally and vertically in the enterprise, the ability to communicate adequately (in terms of both medium and message) at every level, the ability to solve conflicts and the ability to develop and support partially and fully self-supporting work groups.

In order to achieve this, the AMU centre has chosen a methodology which combines theoretical and practical exercises such as role-playing and case studies and incorporates as far as possible the participants' own job experiences. Then there is the 'homework', whereby participants are encouraged to apply the new theories on the job. Feedback from superiors is actively sought and every effort is made to ensure that top-level management is closely involved in the process.

Ms Ibsen's assessment of the project, now in its second stage of implementation, was very positive, particularly regarding the full commitment shown by the enterprises from the very beginning. 'The bottom-up approach – by a steering committee consisting of human resources personnel – commits the companies to release participants so that they can follow the programme and to support them actively in the changes of their managerial roles in the workplace,' she said. She also found it extremely enriching to see how the middle managers involved experienced a growing awareness of their role, and how previously hidden human qualities and resources can be revitalized and activated to serve both the individual manager in his or her personal development and the enterprise, by offering a more professional management in tune with the changing demands. 'We are confident that as a result of our ADAPT project participants will be able to delegate tasks and to give the appropriate instructions, to cooperate and build teams, and to inform workers adequately,' concluded Ms Ibsen.

The reinforcement of management in SMEs, using new organizational models, establishing quality systems and giving new emphasis to human resources development, was a common feature of the ESF projects presented at

'We are confident that as a result of our ADAPT project, participants will be able to delegate tasks and to give the appropriate instructions, to cooperate and build teams, and to inform workers adequately'



the Athens conference. In France, for instance, the training organization Agefos-PME has launched 11 local projects in the context of an integrated programme for the development of employment and training in SMEs, financed in the framework of the Social Fund's Objective 4 (anticipation of industrial change). The projects cover most of the national territory, from Brittany to Provence. 'Our projects are strongly rooted in the social and economic context of the regions concerned,' said Mr Abdellah Mezzouane, the programme coordinator, 'but they are all based on a common denominator, that is on the need to enable SMEs to face industrial change in a period of great uncertainty, when the traditional organization and production systems can no longer assure a firm's competitiveness.'

The challenge posed by industrial change is particularly felt in those regions whose economic activity is dominated by one specific sector. One such case is the region of Auvergne, in the Haute Loire department, where Agefos-PME has launched a project aimed at enhancing the competencies of semi-skilled workers threatened by changes in the textile industry. 'The region's economy has traditionally been dominated by the textile sector,' explained Mr Mezzouane, 'and its current fragility, due to strong competitive pressures, has potentially severe repercussions on the other industrial sectors of the area (particularly clothing and leather) and therefore on employment. Almost 1 000 unskilled and semi-skilled jobs may be at risk unless enterprises can anticipate their future organizational and training needs in a concerted fashion and reorganize themselves accordingly.' For this reason, the project concentrates on developing the organizational side of the enterprises concerned, restructuring and redesigning the working environment

so that the new skills and roles of the workforce, and particularly of semi-skilled and unskilled workers, can be immediately integrated into the organizational structure. Here as well, a great emphasis is placed on decentralizing and delegating responsibilities, gradually substituting a model based on flexibility, teamwork and workers' participation for the traditional rigid division of tasks.

Changing the system from within

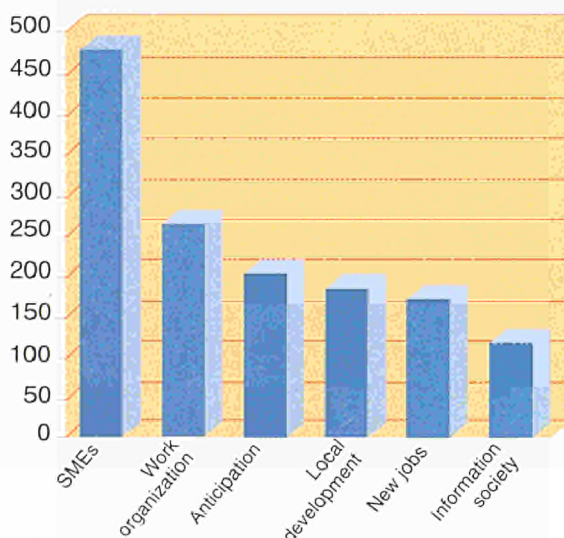
Flexibility, simplification of hierarchical structures, workers' involvement and a renewed emphasis on the development of personal and professional skills: if the perceived key requirements for European SMEs to stay competitive and fight unemployment are broadly the same throughout the EU, so are the obstacles encountered. European SMEs constitute an extremely heterogeneous reality, which can lead them to operate in isolation and to lack a global, long-term vision. Well aware of this problem, both ISTUD and Agefos-PME included in their project the creation of networks to enable SMEs to make contact with each other, to exchange know-how and share experiences and to access information about sources of expertise and financing. The need to overcome isolation was deeply felt by both participants and project representatives.

But in preparing the ground for the advent of the 'new organization', based on flexibility, continuous learning, innovation and new working relationships built on high skills, high trust and participation, the main challenge for the ESF, and for ADAPT and Objective 4 in particular, goes way beyond the simple financing of projects. 'Achieving our objectives requires a sweeping change

in attitudes,' said Mr Grieco. 'The general consensus on the need to introduce and apply new concepts of work organization does not always reach beyond the academic or the big corporate world. This tends to leave SMEs largely outside the process, and generally unaware of its importance. It is a "catch-22" kind of situation, as it would be unrealistic to think that major organizational changes can be introduced from the outside: the demand must come from the SMEs themselves.' This is where the ESF, through its Objective 4 and ADAPT projects, can make perhaps its most significant long-term contribution: in raising awareness and creating a demand for training and innovation in European SMEs through the dissemination of its project results and their mainstreaming into future national and European practice.

Grazia Romani

Main types of activities in the ADAPT projects



The ESF: 40 years of investing in people.

28 May 1997 marked the 40th birthday of the ESF, the oldest of the four Community Structural Funds, established under the 1957 Treaty of Rome. As the only Structural Fund specifically concentrating on people, in its four decades of activity the ESF has served three main functions: within less-developed regions it has been a major driving force for the improvement of education and training systems; throughout the Union it has played an important role in helping Member States to match their labour supply to the ever-changing needs of the economy, and, last but not least, it has been a tangible manifestation of the Union's concern for the issues of social inclusion and equality of opportunity for all. These main objectives remain as relevant as ever, but will need to be set into a new context characterized by a simpler overall structure and a new partnership with and within the Member States.

Leicester (UK)

A big public hospital embarks on re-engineering

One hundred and forty 're-engineering' projects are under way in one of the biggest teaching and research hospitals in the United Kingdom, the Leicester Royal Infirmary NHS Trust. After two years of stress and anguish spent trying to apply an industrial concept of 'fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes', many of the staff now feel that they are coming out at the other end of the tunnel, with enhanced skills, more job satisfaction, and happier patients. But the hospital has had to twist the re-engineering concept around to adapt it to healthcare and embark on a much more gradual and decentralized strategy, helping the staff get organized into self-directed teams to make the change sustainable.

The smiling faces of the hospital's top managers welcome patients as they enter Leicester Royal Infirmary (LRI) through the main entrance. Their photographs are displayed on a panel next to a Coke machine, around a text which says: 'We at the Royal Infirmary NHS Trust will work together to become the best hospital in the country with an outstanding local and national reputation for our treatments, research and teaching. We will give to each patient the same care and consideration we would to our own family.'



This is quite a challenge, considering that Leicester Royal Infirmary provides healthcare for 360 000 outpatients, 57 000 inpatients and 110 000 emergency patients a year, with 4 200 staff, 1 100 beds and a GBP 130 million budget!

In the 1960s and 1970s, Leicester Royal Infirmary was a moderate-sized district general hospital. By the early 1990s, it had grown into one of the largest and most complex teaching and research hospitals in the country, with still a long way to go in the transition from being a hospital of the past to becoming a hospital of the future.

The journey began in September 1992 when the National Health Service regional manager, Brian Edwards, went to the United States on an industrial excellence tour. He came back wanting to create the same level of service as a healthcare provider and launched 'no fault' projects called Sigma, five of which took place in LRI. Two went all right, including the creation of a neurology single visit clinic which became famous around the country, and three failed.

Fundamental redesign

'The key message which came out of the Sigma experience is that it is not possible to create and sustain services excellence without fundamental redesign of healthcare processes,' says Helen Bevan who works at the hospital's Centre for Best Practice, an expert facility to help and provide coaching for the organization of change.

Having previously worked in local government management and in senior management at the NHS in the area of community health, Helen came to LRI in 1993. She has led the work change programme from its inception. 'We already had evidence-based clinical practice, that is practice based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence of what is effective, as part of a national drive within the NHS towards clinical effectiveness. Now we are promoting evidence-based management to ensure that the change we are undertaking is based on the evidence of what is likely to work and what isn't.'

An alternative to death by 1000 cuts

'Every year, we are required to make efficiency gains by the National Health Service. That takes the form of either taking some money away from us or asking us to do more work or sometimes a combination of both. That happens year, after year, after year... I call it "death by 1000 cuts"! And it does not result in the ambition of making better use of money because it means that we reform our services here and there, not necessarily in a basic and fundamental way.

What we are trying to do through re-engineering is to make much better use of our money by taking a really fundamental review of the way we provide healthcare and, in so doing, we release money for use in other parts of healthcare. What we are not doing, and I emphasize this very strongly, we are not cutting the funds available for healthcare, we are tending to make much better use of the money that is available to us.'

Philip Hammersley, Leicester Royal Infirmary NHS Trust Chairman, in 'Re-engineering the healthcare process: achieving results', LRI NHS Trust video

From the centre to the periphery

'In the very early days, we drew people out of the work areas to bring them to a central point, a central team. That central team worked on developing new ideas, methodologies for working. It then took those new ideas back to the workplace and discussed them with the group concerned and asked them to implement them. That did not create a situation where there was genuine ownership by that work group. The way we do it now is to say: "We have some expertise at the centre (the hospital's Centre for Best Practice); we will give that expertise to you, work with you in your area while you develop a new way of working and we will then help you to implement it".'

David Grafton, Human Resources Director



Complaining patients given a free hand

Patients played a key role in the re-engineering process. A patient's council was created in 1994. 'We identified some of the complainants,' Helen Bevan (Centre for Best Practice) explains, 'and asked them to join the re-engineering team. In all, 28 out of 40 turned up and 18 are still with us. We asked them to design the project they want. The Balmoral test centre was their idea.' It is an outpatient diagnostic testing centre where 80% of the test (basic X-rays, electrocardiograms, etc.) are carried out by multiskilled testers. The guaranteed time from the clinician requesting the test to receiving the results is just one hour and the testers operate as a self-directed team.



One of the tools at LRI's disposal was the re-engineering concept promoted by the American guru Michael Hammer, 'a fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical contemporary measures of performance such as cost, quality, services and speed'.

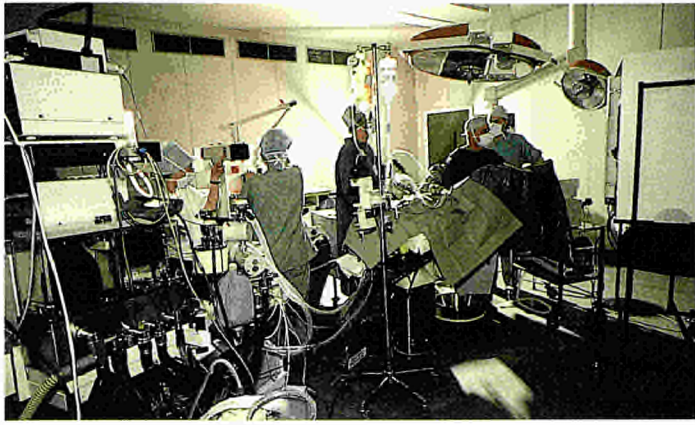
'We started to track patients through the healthcare process and were horrified at what we saw,' remembers Ron Cullen, also from the Centre for Best Practice, 'because hospitals are typically organized by functions or departments rather than by healthcare processes.' From 30 to 70% of the work was non-value-adding to the patient and up to 50% of the patient's process steps involved a hand off (when the patient's file is transmitted from one person/service to another, 'this is where things go wrong usually')... No one was responsible for the patient and had an end-to-end experience. Job roles were fragmented and isolated.

Because of the experience acquired with Sigma, LRI was selected by the NHS executive as a pilot hospital for re-engineering. The hospital also enjoyed support from the broader healthcare community: general practitioners, NHS purchasers, and from the ordinary citizens, former patients of the hospital. Around the same time, LRI became an NHS Trust as part of a national reform aimed

at making hospitals more independent and financially responsible, with their own terms and conditions of pay.

Fifty members of the hospital's staff were seconded full-time to redesign the patient process according to the re-engineering proposition: 'If our hospital did not exist, how would we create it?' Classic re-engineering methodology requires identifying 3 to 10 'core processes' which define the organization. In healthcare, a process is about grouping patients together – short stay patients, long stay patients, elective (planned treatment) and emergency (unplanned) patients. All these processes cut across the specialities, which are about the way doctors organize themselves.

'Initially, we expected a process-based organization,' Helen explains. 'But now we have a hybrid process-speciality-based organization, the 'speciality process', where a process manager is accountable for the entire 'end-to-end' journey of a group of patients defined by speciality. This is only a step on the journey.'



Healthcare is unique

'It took us a long time to understand that the healthcare process is different from the industrial model. Piloting is one of the best things we learnt from the industrial approach, trying out new designs in a controlled way, with a small group of people. But healthcare is unique because of the political complexity which arises from the number of communities involved with unaligned objectives – government, purchasers, general practitioners, internal staff, etc.'

So instead of the 'big bang' approach characteristic of re-engineering, where core processes are quickly defined by a re-engineering team and validated through pilot experiences, the hospital opted in 1995 to slow down, hand back responsibility from the central re-engineering team to the heads of the hospital's eight clinics and focus on patient-specific processes (ENT, gynaecology, medication, etc.) rather than core generic processes (stay, visit, emergency entry patients).

'It was a trade-off between coherence and customization by the hospital staff,' according to Ron. 'There was greater ownership and buy-in by clinical directors and individual clinicians, and wholesale involvement of the staff. But there were also pitfalls. There was fragmentation. It was difficult to maintain a strategic process overview. Existing boundaries were reinforced. Sometimes specialities and processes did not coincide so you had to fit the jigsaw together.'

As our understanding grew, the focus changed again in 1996 when we decided to focus on a long-term strategy (rather than focusing on patient-specific processes) which would be leadership driven (rather than clinical directorate/clinician driven) and generic (patients grouped along the lines of planned admissions, emergency process, capacity management, resource and demand scheduling) rather than specific (ENT patients, gynaecology patients, medication, etc.).' In each clinic, the director became a 'process director', heads of ser-

Redesigning rather than re-engineering

'We wanted the hospital to lead the change. The management consultant would only help and train us. The industrial approach offers a methodology and a set of techniques but the language needs to be carefully attuned to context. Now we would talk of 'redesigning' rather than 're-engineering'.'

Peter Homa, Leicester Royal Infirmary Chief Executive

vices became 'process managers' and process-based teams were set up, each with a team leader, and asked to set their own targets and monitor their own improvements.

'In due course our ambition has remained on the same level but we got the initial time scale wrong. We underestimated the time we had to invest in team development and team working. It was based on industrial experience but here we have to change what goes on in people's heads. So we turned away from the big bang process and focused our energy on a continuous approach. Initially, we talked about 'resistance to change' but this was due to the fact that we did not involve people. It was too top-down. Now it is more bottom-up. It takes 10 times longer but it is much more sustainable.'

'It has to be messy and ambiguous,' Helen stresses. 'There are a huge number of unexpected consequences. Now people come from all over the world looking for solutions. But we tell them they need to focus on the 'why', why do they want to change their work organization. The 'what' and 'how' will follow.'

Francis Whyte



From one day to the next, the largest insurance company in the Netherlands completely reorganized its working organization. The process was directed by the staff themselves, and this was the key to its success. Instead of the company focusing on the insurance product, everything is now geared to the customer.

Nationale-Nederlanden in The Hague Reorganization based on Stratego

10 June 1994 was no normal working day: early in the morning champagne corks were already popping in the bright cafeteria on the seventh floor of the filigree steel building of the Nationale-Nederlanden (NN) insurance company. CEO Bert Richaers welcomed his staff to the new building. Yet, the light roomy offices in the centre of The Hague were not the only things that had changed: the 2 100 NN staff of the property-damage section drank to each other's health with mixed feelings as a new team, a new boss, a new computer system and a completely new form of work organization awaited them that day. 'What I admired the most in the whole operation was the courage of the CEOs in taking a flourishing firm into a new building and completely changing its work organization in one day,' says Jacques Peter Hermannus van Zoelen (39), regional director at NN, looking back.

Van Zoelen had been with Stratego from the beginning in 1990. The game of the same name, in which one army tries to beat the others by strategic moves, clearly provided the inspiration for the 'reorganization' project at NN, and it was also intended that the concept of 'strategy' should show through. This doctor in organizational psychology was one of the 25 members of staff invited by the then CEO Durk Brands to an initial brainstorming session. 'We formed a varied group from all levels of the hierarchy with widely differing skills. Lawyers and economists were definitely in the minority.' Brands' group was motivated to aim for change and to push it through. The task of recognizing and encouraging staff at all levels of the hierarchy who could act as the driving force for change ('change agents') was to be a key part of the organizational reform 'from the inside out.' Although the work was monitored by a consultancy, only one business consultant worked full-time on Stratego. 'One of the keys to success was involving staff in the reform. We were able to shape the new organization on the basis of our own experience, and no concept was imposed on us from outside or above,' according to Jacques van Zoelen.

The old organization

Nationale-Nederlanden is the largest Dutch insurance company and market leader in the Netherlands. Founded in 1845, it offers life insurance, health insurance, reinsurance and property-damage insurance (fire insurance, third-party liability, car insurance, etc.). The four lines of insurance are still mutually independent in the NN and, with a total of 4 500 staff, belong to the international ING group. NN hardly ever works together with end customers; rather, its target group is a network of 10 000 independent insurance brokers. These customers were the focus of the reform, which has so far been implemented only in the area of property insurance. Some 2 100 staff at NN work in this area, producing an annual turnover of HFL 2 000 million.

'If a broker wanted to take out fire insurance, he had to contact the relevant department; a few hours later he telephoned around the company again to find a specialist for third-party liability insurance, and only a few minutes later he had to contact the transport department about transport insurance,' recounts Kees Harland, who is now one of the three directors of the 'companies' department in damage insurance. Now 45 years old, he has been with NN for 25 years and has worked his way up through all the levels of the company, thereby gaining experience that has been useful to the Stratego team. 'What is more, the field staff formed a separate

The old organization

Management team		
Insurance sectors	Support staff	Field services
Liability and property Fire Loss of income and travel Motor Special affairs Transport and technical insurances Medical insurance	EDP Management information Internal and external communications Marketing Personal and organization Medical advisers Legal advisers	Commercial field services Technical field services



Getting the stone rolling:
CEO Durk Brands



Welcoming staff to the new building:
CEO Bert Richaers



The insurance team of the northern region forms a group around
team leader Joep van Leeuwen

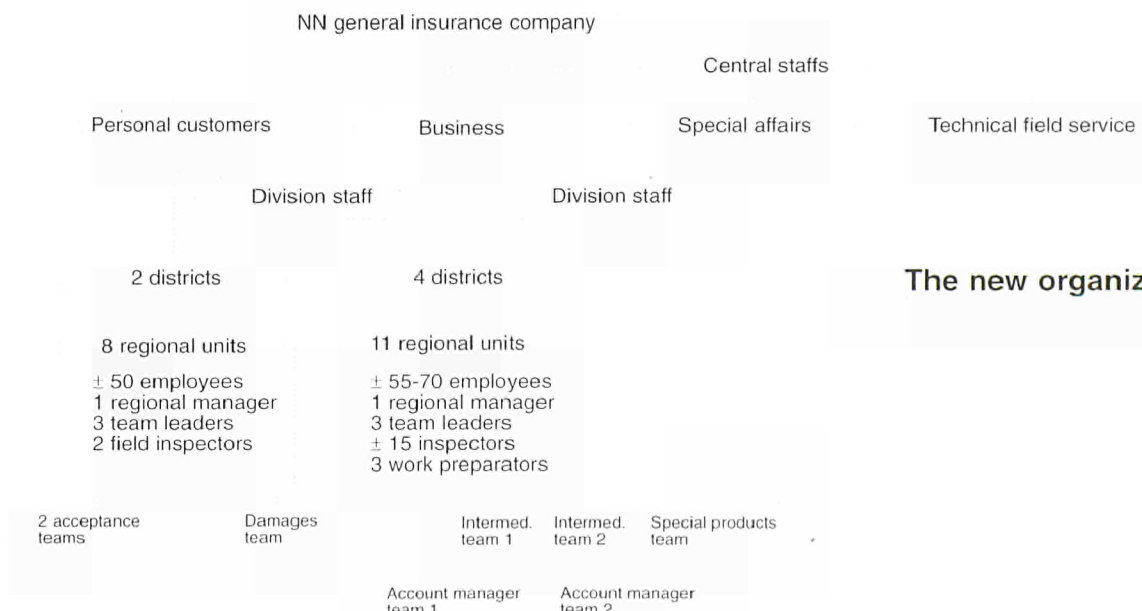
department, and their knowledge of the needs and requirements of our customers rarely reached those responsible for working on product policy. We all saw that this situation had to change.'

But external factors played a role as well: in 1993 the European internal market opened up to insurance companies, and this increased competition and competitive pressure. European managers could no longer ignore successful American concepts with their emphasis on customer focus and service ('total quality management'). Insurance brokers, as customers, put pressure on NN to become more flexible. Younger members of staff with new ideas were no longer satisfied with the traditional management methods. The aim for Stratego was therefore clear: NN should be changed from a product-oriented insurance company to a market-oriented – and hence customer-oriented – insurance provider.

The new organization

The cornerstone of the 'self-redesign' of NN was simple, logical but nevertheless revolutionary in its consequences: the division of the Netherlands into regions. The regional unit became the centrepiece of the new concept. Each unit comprised staff who had previously only arranged third-party liability insurance or processed fire-damage claims. Now every member of staff could and should do everything: arrange insurance policies, process damage claims and maintain close contacts with field staff. The regional unit constitutes an independent firm within the overall company. Its manager operates as an independent company manager, who bears full responsibility for his unit and its performance.

The basic idea naturally needed fine tuning, which meant separating business insurance from personal



The new organization



Kees Harland: 'We need to harmonize our working processes still further'

insurance. In personal insurance, there are eight regional units, which are themselves divided into teams of approximately 40 members of staff; each team either settles damage claims or arranges insurance policies, but does so for all groups of products. The 'business insurance' department, on the other hand, is divided into 11 regional units, in which the teams are responsible for one product, from the conclusion of an insurance policy to the processing of damage claims. 'I'd already processed transport insurance policies for businesses and slowly worked my way up from arranging insurance policies and premiums to settling damage claims,' says Hans Horwarth. 'Now I do this only for the northern region.' But still, the reform means that he will now once again have to do the unpopular work of administering premiums, which is much less highly regarded by those who work in insurance than the solving of complex damage claims.

Nevertheless, Hans prefers the work because he can also put forward and implement his own ideas. 'Before, not many people had an opinion and said what's what; now we're responsible for what we do.' But Hans also points to the drawbacks of the reorganization: 'Under the old organization, I worked with almost 50 people, exclusively on transport insurance, and could discuss

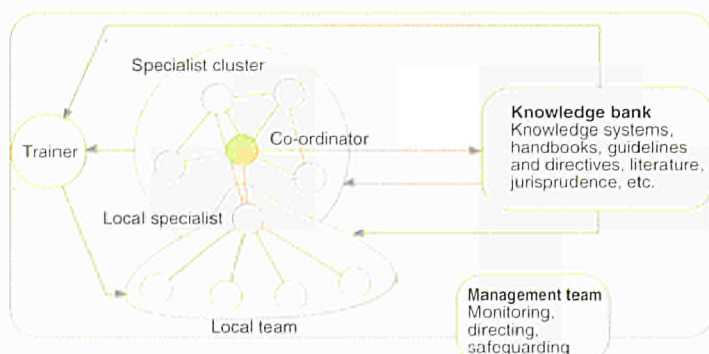
things with them all the time. I'm now with three colleagues, and sometimes none of us knows the answer, and if someone is ill, it gets even more difficult.' His range of tasks has also become narrower: 'I no longer insure cargoes of flowers or animal shipments because they hardly ever occur in the north of the country.'

Further training and the preservation of knowledge

The risk of lost know-how or knowledge that is not passed on was also recognized by the Stratego group from the beginning. When all is said and done, know-how about insurance products is the company's stock-in-trade. Its proposed solution is based on modern technology: 'Our know-how is now stored in a database, which is constantly being updated,' says Kees Harland. When he turns on his computer in the morning, there is often a note flashing to indicate that the body of data has changed and in what way. The database is fed by a management team at departmental level. Each region has several specialists who act as information sources for coordinators from the management team. This ongoing process of broadening knowledge – and therefore also of improving insurance arrangements – is monitored by an instructor who supports the management team and assists it in developing new courses and further training opportunities. In spite of this, Kees Harland finds it difficult for his staff to maintain and broaden their knowledge base: 'This is currently our biggest problem.'

Nationale-Nederlanden is still suffering from teething troubles after the reform. Although all staff went on training courses prior to the changeover to prepare them for their new work, they came back to their old jobs until D-day and 'when the time came, they had forgotten everything again,' says Eric Vlaanderen, Secretary of the Works Council, 'and the concept of learning by doing did not fully catch on.' 'At the beginning we all often felt frustrated because many people had not been prepared in time for the change,' summarizes Kees Harland. NN is now investing heavily in training courses again and sending its staff to the brokers to spend a period as trainees so that they can learn the ropes. Joep van Leeuwen, former trainer at NN and now team leader of the northern region, sees the gap in knowledge not merely as a problem: 'Not everyone needs to have the same knowledge. The key is to know where to find it.' But he is also aware that he is making considerable demands on his staff with this approach: 'It is a burden for many people to broaden their horizons.'

Managing knowledge cycles



New managers needed

In order to help staff to overcome their anxieties and inhibitions, the Stratego organizers knew from the beginning that they would need new types of manager. A new generation took over the helm at NN, many of them involved in the Stratego process. Their strategy is to teach their staff to take on responsibility. 'I have to see to it that at least 20 out of 30 staff are 'change agents', says Leendert Baris, a doctor in sociology with responsibility for the regions of Rijnmond and Midden in the personal insurance department. The message that he passes on to his staff is both simple and demanding: 'My staff must be able to say: I must take responsibility. I cannot delegate. I must act as if I were the owner of the company.' Nevertheless, you're allowed to make mistakes, and the boss will listen if his staff are at their wits' end, but then he asks 'How would you decide?' 'As a manager, you must have a lot of trust in your staff, but if you trust them to do their job properly, they will do it,' the 40-year-old believes. Jacques van Zoelen also sees himself as a trainer – 'coach' – of his staff: 'I believe that people are capable of doing a lot more than they themselves believe.'

The new style did not suit all the employees of NN. Middle managers, above all, were unable or unwilling to follow the changes. An attempt was made to find them another job in the company, and some of them took early retirement. 'Everyone had a chance to develop,' believes Leendert Baris, 'but it is important to put the right people in the right place. When all is said and done, we are not here to enjoy ourselves, but to earn money.' And that is equally demanding for everyone: 'My job takes up all my energy.'

*Jacques van Zoelen:
'Everything worked out
in practice'*



*'Attempts to set
a good example':
Leendert Baris*

Consequences of the reform

The management of NN has become a lot younger as a result of the reorganization. Team members are about 30 years old, on average, and middle managers between 40 and 50. This trend is not entirely positive, but mirrors a social development which excludes older workers for whom change is no longer as easy to accept. 'It sounds like a paradox, but despite the reorganization as a regional team, NN staff have become lonelier because fewer people in every team are specialized in a particular activity. There is a lack of competent colleagues to discuss things with,' Hans F. Hochsteger, a member of the field staff, has observed. But for him the reorganization is nevertheless positive: 'I now have only a few discussion partners at NN, which makes everything easier.' Hans Howarth is glad that he can at least still go and eat with his old colleagues from the transport insurance department every day: 'As good as the knowledge database is, it does not teach you how to deal with particular types of people.'

The Works Council is none the less satisfied now, three years after D-day: 'No one has lost any money as a result of the reform, although the assessment of some people's activity has been lowered,' says Eric Vlaanderen, 'and there were naturally the typical initial problems because people suddenly found themselves having to do things they were unable to cope with, while others got bored.' Yet, it was said that NN had developed organically and that most staff now had tasks which were more interesting and involved more responsibility.

An initial assessment

- The NN hierarchy has been considerably streamlined by the reorganization. 'We now have only 130 management posts instead of 270,' says Jacques van Zoelen, 'so the organizational chart is much easier to read.'

- The regional unit with its two or three teams has become the heart of the company. You know what is going on in your region and what your customers' wishes are, and you do everything you can to help them.
- The customers, in this case the insurance brokers, now have only five discussion partners instead of 35. They know whom to inform of their needs and wishes.
- Desk officers are responsible for their actions: managers try to limit themselves to providing assistance.
- NN is no longer product-oriented, but has developed through market-orientation to become strongly customer-oriented.

Even if success cannot be expressed in figures, everyone at NN agrees that both staff and customers are a lot more satisfied. 'Efficiency in my unit has increased considerably; we can react faster and are quite convinced that it is a more pleasant way of working,' says Leendert Baris. Individual departments within the company which used to compete with each other for customers are now working together for one region.

What has been the key to success?

Opinions vary little at NN. 'Everyone was involved in restructuring as far as possible,' says Jacques van Zoelen in his description of the NN concept of partnership, 'managers at all levels, brokers with their ideas, but also desk officers – we all had the feeling that we had reorganized the place ourselves.' 'Talk, talk, talk' is used by Leendert Baris to describe the importance of another key factor: internal communication. Jacques and Leendert both felt that the discussions that the CEO had held with small groups before the reform were essential to its success. The fact of being forced to leave the building and spend time with the brokers finding out why they proposed NN insurance to their customers was the third key to success for regional managers: 'No one could continue to hide behind his desk.' The managers also trusted a mixture of carrot, stick and training: 'Many people felt inhibited working with the computer and the knowledge database and continued to consult the old handbooks, but no one brought them up to date anymore,' explains departmental director Kees Harland. 'We set a deadline of one month and then withdrew the books.'

All Stratego organizers admit, however, that they underestimated how complex the reorganization would be: 'It took a lot more time than we imagined,' says Harland.

Costs, too, rose for NN at the beginning. 'Contrary to expectations, the number of staff increased at the begin-



'The interests of staff were protected':
Works Council member
Eric van Vlaanderen

ning, and we had to pay a lot of overtime in order to keep on top of the work in spite of the reorganization,' says Jan Willem Dreteler, head of communications at NN, 'otherwise we would have had problems with the authorities.' Moreover, NN took almost a year to return to the old standard of quality. Despite this 'one of the most fascinating things for me was to discover that everything that I had learned during my studies worked in practice,' says organizational psychologist and Stratego organizer Jacques van Zoelen.

New reforms planned

In 1997, the damage-insurance section of NN feels well equipped for competition and knows that it has good shareholder value. The Board of NN is therefore moving on to the next stage and attempting to merge the four lines of property-damage insurance, reinsurance, health insurance and life insurance. The central units of damage insurance (communications, marketing, information technology, finance and personnel) have already been merged with the departments of the other lines, whose offices are not only in The Hague but also in Rotterdam. Even the Board itself has become smaller as a result of the merger. 'By 2000 they want to have a one-stop shop for all types of insurance for our customers,' thinks Works Council member Eric Vlaanderen, 'but we don't yet know exactly what is planned.' The old Stratego organizers, as well, feel disconcerted that, after the positive experience of the first wave, this time the reorganization is being organized by top management behind closed doors. That is why a mixture of fear and expectation can definitely be felt in NN's steel building in The Hague: as exciting as the changes may be, waiting for them is just as nerve-racking.

Beate Gminder

Eine neue Arbeitsorganisation
im Geiste der Partnerschaft
Grünbuch

Partnership for a new
organization of work
Green Paper



EN

The Commission's Green Paper on work organization

In its Green Paper 'Partnership for a new organization of work' adopted last April, the Commission calls on workers and managers, trade unions and employers to develop a new organization of work based on high skills, high trust and high quality, and invites the social partners to move out of old battlefields into a new area of constructive work. Forum interviewed DG V Director-General Allan Larsson and DG V Director Odile Quintin (responsible, inter alia, for social dialogue) to find out more about it.

Supplément 4/97

Partenariat pour une nouvelle
organisation du travail
Livre vert



FORUM: Why a Green Paper on the organization of work?

LARSSON: Because a new organization of work is one of the most promising ways of promoting economic and social progress. Europe is coming to the end of a period, characterized by an old-fashioned organization of work, a hierarchical, top-down organization, sometimes called 'Taylorism'. We are entering a period of rethinking the old concepts and the development of new more flexible forms of organization based on high skills, high trust and increased involvement of employees. It is important that the renewal of the organization of work is done in a way that takes account of the interests of both firms and workers.

QUINTIN: It should be noted that the Green Paper emphasizes the concept of partnership between social partners. The full potential of new forms of work organization can be exploited only if employers and trade unions work together to define objectives and modalities. Employers must decide on measures designed to improve companies and production in concertation with the workers and the parties involved. If they fail to do so, no progress will be made. Workers, on their part, must not resist change. They must try to appropriate new forms of work organization, assuming full responsibility for their work.

FORUM: Why now?

LARSSON: Firms are preparing themselves for 2000, for a new decade and a new century. Now is the right time to stimulate the debate and the thinking on a better organization of work, both in companies and in public services. It is basically a question of making firms more competitive on world markets and domestic markets, thus a question of employment.

FORUM: Who is the Green Paper addressed to?

LARSSON: It is addressed to all policy-makers, practitioners and researchers who take an interest in the organization of work, in social dialogue and in economic development. It is important that policy-makers both at a national and European level are well informed about the potential of new forms of work organization and that they can find out how to adjust public policies in different areas to facilitate this development.





QUINTIN: Public authorities have an important role to play in order to facilitate research into the topic and the exchange of practical experience, and to adapt the legislative and regulatory framework, which should not be an obstacle to the development of new forms of work organization, but a factor of encouragement. All this must of course be done in concertation with the social partners.

LARSSON: The bottom line is that we need organizations that involve all workers in the activities of firms and public services. I would like to quote one human resource manager who has been successful in developing a new way of working. He said that new developments are happening so fast that it is no longer possible to work in the old way with a small group at the top taking all decisions. It is simply a question of survival for firms to find ways and means of making use of the ability and competence of every person in the organization.

FORUM: How has the Green Paper been received so far?

LARSSON: So far, the reception has been very positive, from trade union representatives, from employers and among officials from the Member States. All agree on the importance of the subject, the relevance of the questions in the Green Paper and on the need to develop the organization of work in partnership. Of course, there are questions where the social partners might have different views, but I am convinced that it will be possible to make progress on the basis of a constructive dialogue.

FORUM: What is the Commission hoping to achieve with this Green Paper?

LARSSON: We hope that it will help to improve the competitiveness of European companies and the efficiency of public services through a better organization of work.

QUINTIN: We hope that it can help the social partners to get out of old battlefields and to move into a new terrain of common understanding and joint action, especially on the question of lifelong learning and employability. We hope that it will help them to achieve the necessary balance between flexibility and security, on the path inaugurated with the agreement on parental leave of December 1995. The agreement on part-time work, adopted on 6 June, represents another important step in the same direction, because of its direct relevance to the debate on flexibility/security promoted in the Green Paper.

FORUM: What will be the next steps?

LARSSON: The Commission is eager to hear the reactions from the social partners, from workers and managers, from the Member States and from the Community institutions, before taking any decisions on new steps. The Green Paper will form the basis for a wide range of activities during this year and next. It has already been discussed in the Social Dialogue Committee and in the Standing Committee for Employment.

QUINTIN: In July, the Luxembourg Presidency devoted an informal Social Affairs Council to the issue, in which the social partners participated. The UK (which will hold the Presidency of the Union in the first half of 1998) has expressed interest in organizing, together with the Commission, the closing conference of the consultation process early next year.

We also wish to develop discussions at national level: to this end, round tables will be organized in several Member States. Contacts with employers and trade unions have been established in over half the Member States. We expect that by the end of the year all interested parties will be involved.

FORUM: What can be the role of the EU/Commission, in general, and of DG V, in particular, in promoting/bringing about changes in work organization? What can it do concretely? What are the instruments at its disposal?

QUINTIN: I would like to emphasize that the organization of work is a responsibility for managers and workers in firms. What we can do on a national and European level is to facilitate the development of a new organization of work. The Green Paper is in itself an important contribution. By putting the question at the top of the European agenda, the Commission has taken a concrete initiative. By focusing both on flexibility and security, the Commission has presented a document for a balanced debate, involving workers in the development of the enterprises. It is now up to the social partners to define what type of support they need from the Commission.

LARSSON: One concrete example of EU support is the programmes financed by the European Social Fund. I am thinking about Objective 4 and ADAPT, where we already have a lot of interesting and promising projects going in this direction. Some of them were recently presented at the ADAPT conference in Athens. We can also help to support the dissemination of good practice, especially among small firms.



FORUM: How is DG V going to respond to the challenges posed by the possible negative consequences of these changes?

LARSSON: The focus is emphatically not on short-term cost-cutting measures. The restructuring of the economy is not a new phenomenon, it has been going on for many years. The Green Paper takes a comprehensive approach, including both flexibility for firms and security for workers, thus an approach that is quite different from the one used by many firms in the course of last year. The Commission is of the view that the key question is the maintenance and improvement of the employability of the whole workforce. This is the theme in this Green Paper, in the Essen employment strategy and in the Commission's communication on the modernization of the social protection systems.

New publications series: Employment and social affairs



Employment and
labour market



Public health



Social dialogue and
social rights



Social protection and
social action



Equal opportunities



European Social Fund



Health and safety at work

Employment and social affairs is the label for the new publications series of DG V. *Employment and social affairs* incorporates all publications of DG V including the preceding subscription series *Social Europe* which has ceased to exist. The new series consists of seven themes, these are 'Employment and labour market', 'Equal opportunities', 'Public health', 'Health and safety at work', 'Social protection and social action', 'Social dialogue and social rights' and 'European Social Fund'. The series is available on subscription, though some publications are available free of charge. For subscription details, please contact the sales agents of the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities or DG V.

Employment and social affairs publications published between January and July 1997 include:

- 'Progress report on the implementation of the medium-term social action programme 1995-97' (*Social Europe*, Supplement 4/96). The concept behind the work programme of the European Commission on social affairs is that social policy is a productive factor facilitating change and progress, rather than a burden on the economy or an obstacle to growth. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 14. Catalogue number: CE-NC-96-004-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-6314-5 (EN).

- 'European social policy forum – A summary'. This document records the high points of the social policy forum. It contains all the speeches of the opening plenary session, the full text of the working papers which formed the basis of parallel discussions, and the final conclusions of the rapporteurs. Rainbow edition. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-02-96-448-A2-C, ISBN: 92-827-9648-5.

Theme: Employment and labour market

- 'The way forward: The European employment strategy'. Contributions to and outcome of the Dublin European Council, 13 and 14 December 1996. Extracts from the conclusions of the European Council in Dublin and documents submitted to the Council as well as a report on the implementation of multiannual programmes in the follow-up to the Essen Council, are documented in this publication. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-04-97-824-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-9620-5 (EN).

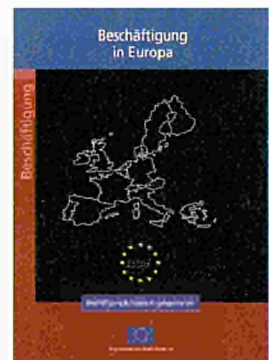
- 'Employment in Europe 1996' report, the purpose of which is to provide a firm link between policy objectives and the reality of hard data on trends, progress and problems. The report tracks the efforts of the modernization of social and economic Europe. The full report of 160 pages is available in German, English and French. On sale for ECU 9. Catalogue number: CE-98-96-825-**-C, ISBN:92-827-8764-8 (EN).

A summary chapter of 20 pages 'Employment in Europe – Meeting the employment challenge' was published in all 11 languages and is available for free at the representation of the European Commission in your Member State. Catalogue number CE-02-96-569-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-0137-X (EN).

- A series of labour market studies for each Member State was published, giving a detailed overview and analysis of each Member State. Studies have been completed for the following countries at ECU 29.50.

Belgium – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-012-FR-C, ISBN: 92-827-8757-5 (FR).
 Denmark – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-015-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8760-5 (EN).
 Germany – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-010-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8755-9 (EN).
 Greece – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-002-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8747-8 (EN).
 France – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-013-FR-C, ISBN: 92-827-8758-3 (FR).
 Ireland – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-003-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8748-6 (EN).
 Italy – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-004-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8749-4 (EN).
 Netherlands – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-005-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8750-8 (EN).
 Austria – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-001-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8746-X (EN).
 Portugal – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-007-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8752-4 (EN).
 Finland – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-009-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8754-0 (EN).
 Sweden – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-008-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8753-2 (EN).
 United Kingdom – Catalogue number: CE-64-96-006-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-8751-6 (EN).

- 'National seminars on implementing the European employment strategy: A summary'. *Social Europe*, Supplement 6/96. Following the decision of the Essen Council, a series of national seminars on employment was organized in 1995-96 by the European Commission, in association with Member State governments and, in some cases, with participation of the social partners and a range of appropriate national, regional and local representatives. For sale: ECU 14. Catalogue number: CE-NC-96-006-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-9983-2 (EN).



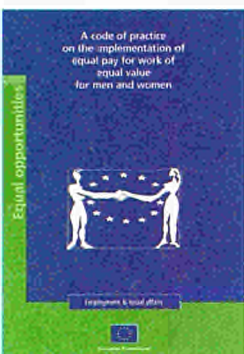


- 'Tableau de Bord 1996'. The synoptic tables gathered by the European Employment Observatory present an overview of the principal labour market measures taken by each Member State. It complements the 'Employment in Europe 1996' report and 'The way forward: The European employment strategy' publication. For sale: ECU 11. Catalogue number CE-98-96-574-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-9023-1 (EN).

Theme: Equal opportunities



- *The equal opportunities magazine*. Quarterly publication of the medium-term Community action programme on equal opportunities for men and women (1996-2000). Numbers 1 and 2 are available free of charge in German, English and French from: ANIMA, rue de Spa 61, B-1000 Brussels, tel. (32-2) 230 90 31, fax (32-2) 230 75 11.



- 'Equal opportunities for women and men in the European Union – Annual report 1996'. This report is the first to cover Community policy on equal opportunities as a whole. For sale in 11 languages: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-98-96-566-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-8237-9 (EN).
- 'A code of practice on the implementation of equal pay for work of equal value for men and women'. This publication deals with 'Addresses of the code', 'Study of pay structures' and 'Follow-up work with a view to securing equal pay'. Available free of charge in 11 languages from the representation of the Commission in each Member State and from DG V. Catalogue number: 97-96-976-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-8099-6 (EN).



- 'Work and childcare: A guide to good practice' (*Social Europe*, Supplement 5/96). The guide has been produced to focus action on childcare by giving detailed suggestions for implementing a Council recommendation on childcare. It is intended as a tool to help translate policy into effective practice. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 14. Catalogue number: CE-NC-96-005-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-6318-8 (EN).
- 'Women in decision-making: Panorama of activities'. The publication features the final report of the European network 'Women in decision-making' and illustrates the variety of activities they have undertaken in the areas of research, concrete actions and information from 1991-95. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-05-97-575-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-0387-2 (EN).

Theme: Public health

- *Prevention* is the quarterly newsletter of the public health programmes. A special edition focusing on tobacco was just published. It outlines the EU's policy on smoking and is devoted to the recently adopted Commission communication on combating tobacco consumption in the Community. Available in 11 languages from Cives Europe, bd Clovis 12A, B-1000 Brussels, fax (32-2) 232 23 92.

- 'Europe and the AIDS prevention'. Two leaflets are available which explain the current state of play in Europe and the Union's activities to combat AIDS. The small eight-page leaflet (catalogue number: CE-95-96-011-**-C) and the more detailed 50-page publication (catalogue number: CE-95-96-035-**-C) are available in German, English and French free of charge from the European Commission, DG V/F.2, Bâtiment Euroforum, L-2920 Luxembourg, tel. (352) 4301 327 37, fax (352) 4301 349 75.
- 'Public health in Europe'. A detailed overview of the public health policy of the EU, focusing on cancer, drugs and AIDS policies as well as health promotion measures. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-05-97-608-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-0390-2 (EN).

Theme: Social protection and social action

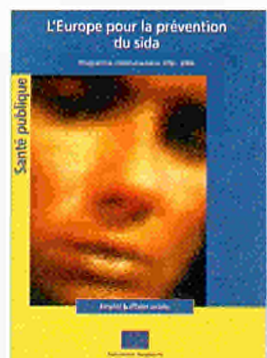
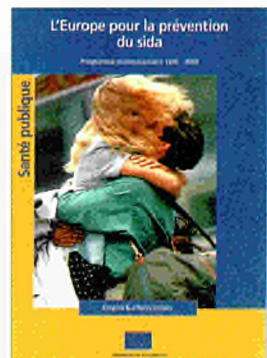
From the European Observatory on National Family Policies there are two yearly reports namely:

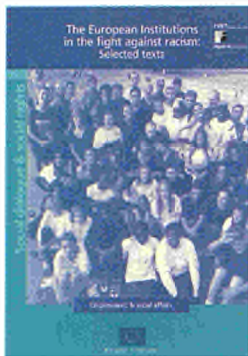
- 'Developments in national family policies in 1995'. This publication monitors trends and developments in national family policy across all Member States.
- 'A synthesis of national family policies 1995'. This analyses, on a comparative basis, the development of family policies and focuses on key themes and questions; emergent policy questions are identified and a contribution made to shaping the policy agenda.

Both publications are available in German, English and French free of charge from the European Commission, DG V/D.5, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels, fax (32-2) 296 35 62

Theme: Social dialogue and social rights

- 'Partnership for a new organization of work – Green Paper'. This issue of the FORUM was based on the Green Paper which was adopted by the Commission in April 1997. Available in 11 languages. For sale: ECU 7. Catalogue number: CM-NF-97-004-**-C, ISBN: 92-828-0511-5 (EN).
- 'The Member States of the EU and immigration in 1994 – Less tolerance and tighter control policies'. RIMET. The report looks at migration dynamics and control policies, the labour market, illegal working and employment, and integration. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-02-96-577-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-9731-7 (EN).
- Newsletter for the European Year against Racism. Already two of ultimately four newsletters have been published which give an overview of what is happening in Europe during the Year. Available in German, English and French free of charge from the European Commission, V/D.4, European Year against Racism, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels, fax (32-2) 295 18 99. A poster and postcards are also available on request.





- 'The European institutions in the fight against racism: Selected texts'. A collection of decisive policy texts in the area of racism, which finally led to the European Year against Racism 1997. Available in German, English and French. For sale: ECU 15. Catalogue number: CE-01-96-438-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-9841-0 (EN).
- 'Your social security rights when moving within the European Union'. This guide gives a broad overview about social security rights on a Community level as well as in the different Member States. Available free of charge in 11 languages from the representation of the Commission in your Member State. Catalogue number: CE- 92-95-174-**-C, ISBN 92-827-5608-4 (EN).

Theme: European Social Fund

- *ESF InfoReview*. The quarterly newsletter of the European Social Fund gives an exhaustive overview about the Fund and the Community initiatives in action. Available free of charge from the European Commission, ESF information sector, V/B.1, 200 rue de la Loi, B-1049 Brussels, fax (32-2) 295 49 18.
- 'The ESF in Member States'. The success of ESF-supported projects in the Member States has been quite significant. These leaflets outline ESF financing in Member States by objective and highlight examples of good practice.
- 'The ESF in Italy' in English and Italian, catalogue number: CE-96-003-EN-C, ISBN 92-827-7373-6 (EN).
- 'The ESF in Ireland' in English, catalogue number: CE-96-96-002-EN-C, ISBN 92-827-7372-8 (EN).
- 'The ESF in Portugal' in English and Portuguese, catalogue number: CE- 96-96-009-**-C, ISBN 92-827-7385-X (EN).
- 'The ESF in France' in English and French, catalogue number: CE-96-96-004-**-C, ISBN 92-827-7375-0 (EN).
- 'The ESF in Germany' in German and English, catalogue number: CE- 96-96-006-**-C, ISBN 92-827-7380-9 (EN).
- 'The ESF in the UK' in English, catalogue number: CE-96-96-01-EN-C, ISBN: 92-827-7371-X (EN).

Available from the European Commission, ESF information sector, V/B.1, rue de la Loi 200, B-1049 Brussels, fax (32-2) 295 49 18

Human resources Community initiatives

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- **Youthstart**
Aims to tackle the problems of the exclusion of young people from the labour market. It specifically supports the development of improved training and employment opportunities for young people. Catalogue number: CE-97-96-467-**-C, ISBN: 92-827-8199-2 (EN).
- **Integra**
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Coming up

October 1997

6-12 October	European Week against Cancer
7 October	Social Affairs Council
9-10 October	Brussels: Conference on new employment opportunities in the cleaning industry
9-10 October	Stockholm: Youthstart 97 Conference
16-17 October	Berlin: MISEP meeting (Employment Observatory)
16-17 October	Bruges: Seminar on 'Parcours d'insertion'/Objective 3
16-17 October	Denmark: Conference on social responsibility of enterprises
20-25 October	European Week on Health and Safety at Work
25 October	Nantes: The future of work and social regulation
27-28 October	Barcelona: Integra '97 Conference: 'Pathway to integration/immigration'
29 October	Luxembourg: Plenary meeting of the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work
30-31 October	Amsterdam: Conference on social security for migrant workers (Regulation (EEC) No 1408/71)

November 1997

November	Luxembourg: Seminar on disability and Horizon
9-12 November	Jerusalem: Fourth European Conference of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education
20-21 November	Denmark: Conference on job rotation
21 November	Luxembourg: Jobs Summit
25 November	Luxembourg: Workshop on success factors in workplace health promotion
26-28 November	Luxembourg: Meeting of the European network for workplace health promotion

December 1997

2 December	Social Affairs Council
4-6 December	Malmö (S): First European symposium on local community alcohol prevention
4 December	Brussels: High-level Expert Group on Disability
11 December	Brussels: Community Initiatives Committee meeting
11-13 December	Paris: European workshop on combined strategies in relation to alcohol and tobacco
18-19 December	Luxembourg: Closing conference of the European Year Against Racism

Note to the reader

Employment and social affairs – Forum is replacing the former *Social Europe Magazine* following the revision of DG V's publications programme.



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