



COPEC (87) 256

Conc.: Positive Action Programme

Orig.: Secretariat

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
IN THE COMMISSION OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Consultants: Monique Chalude, Robin Chater, Jacqueline Laufer
"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our grateful thanks go to all those whose assistance, cooperation and support made this study possible.

In particular, we should like to take this further opportunity to thank Mr Loir, the Commission official responsible for the study, Mrs Masset and the members of the Liaison Committee and COPEC.

"Officials shall be selected without reference to race, creed or sex."

Article 27 of the Staff Regulations

CONTENTS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1. The brief
2. The purpose of the study
3. Why a study in the Commission
4. Scope, methods and limits of the study
5. Presuppositions of the study
6. Interviews
7. Conducting the study

PART TWO: DIAGNOSIS

CHAPTER I : STATISTICS

1. The current situation
2. Historical analyses

CHAPTER II : RECRUITMENT

CHAPTER III: PROMOTIONS AND CAREERS

1. General features of Commission career system and current problems
2. How staff see and feel about the career system
3. The specific situation of women within the career system
4. The paths of change: from combative change to programme change as part of the general development of staff policy and positive action designed to secure equal opportunities for men and women

CHAPTER IV: TRAINING

1. The image of training
 2. Courses attended by interviewees
 3. Women's participation in training
 4. The specific requirements of women
 5. Equal opportunities training
- RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER V : WORKING CONDITIONS

1. Pay
RECOMMENDATIONS
2. Part-time working
RECOMMENDATIONS
3. Child-minding facilities
RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER VI : WOMEN THEMSELVES

CHAPTER VII : STEREOTYPES

PART THREE : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEXES

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMISSION
conducted by Monique Chalude, Robin Chater and Jacqueline Laufer

1. On the initiative of the Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (COPEC), the Commission of the European Communities - and DG IX in particular - invited three outside consultants to carry out a study of equal opportunities among Commission staff.

The contract was for a preliminary analysis lasting ten months.

2. The ultimate aim of this study is to identify the problems of women in the Commission (diagnosis) and to make proposals for the introduction of a positive action programme within the institution.

3. This report sets out the preliminary findings and recommendations arising from the first part of the study. It concentrates on the key areas of statistics, recruitment, promotions and careers, training, working conditions, the behaviour and attitudes of women themselves and stereotypes.

4. The various stages and procedures for carrying out the study, the people to be interviewed, the Directorates-General to be studied and the presentation of the draft report were discussed in a Liaison Committee made up of Commission representatives and the three consultants.

5. In order to identify the barriers to equal opportunities for men and women, the researchers analysed documents and statistics and conducted some 150 interviews among Commission staff.

The first stage involved non-directive interviews in different DGs and with senior officials in personnel management. A semi-directive questionnaire was then sent to three DGs.

6. Given the complexity of the organization under investigation, we found both a real awareness of the equal opportunities question and great resistance to change.

7. The statistics reveal a marked "sexual apartheid" in the various categories and Directorates-General. The changes which have occurred over the years have scarcely changed the status quo in this respect.

8. Moreover, the prospects offered by equal opportunities take on an entirely different meaning according to whether the women belong to C grades or to A/LA grades.

9. The quantitative and qualitative data reveal the existence of indirect discrimination against women within the Commission.

SUMMARY

10. Some of the most important factors affecting the situation of women are:
- (a) the way in which recruitment procedures are currently applied; this can create a potential bias in the non-verbal eliminatory test in the competition as well as in other aspects of the selection mechanism;
 - (b) the existence of a career system based on seniority (mainly for Categories B and C but also in Category A) and on the ability to master a network of person-to-person relationships. Under this promotion system there is little or no assessment of merit or performance and this represents a specific handicap for women because its place is taken by processes which confine women to subordinate posts on the basis of their "innate" qualities;
 - (c) the lack of importance attached to training as an instrument for personal and professional development at all levels and especially for helping women to advance their careers;
 - (d) the prevalence of sex-role stereotyping which tends to group women together in traditional jobs.

11. In addition to the direct concerns of the Commission, an environment in which a variety of cultural influences are combined conditions women to adopt a relatively passive and non-operational attitude towards their career, particularly in a male-dominated institution.

12. Although in its outside activities the Commission is a driving force in promoting equal opportunities and the introduction of positive action by the Member States in the form of corrective, compensatory and promotional measures, it seems to lack an internal consensus on equal opportunities and positive action.

Unless the Commission takes fundamental action to encourage equal opportunities and improve the situation of women, current trends are unlikely to lead to more than a very slight improvement in the situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

13. A large number of recommendations are made in this report. They include framework measures for the introduction of a positive action programme (commitment and political will, appointment of an equal opportunities officer directly responsible to the Members of the Commission and Directors-General, stock-taking and regular monitoring) and proposals for practical steps at the procedural and personnel management level to introduce greater "neutrality".

14. The positive action programmes will encourage better personnel management and will be of benefit to both men and women since they set great store by making the best use of all the human resources at the Commission's disposal.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Equal opportunities in the Commission

For several years the Commission has been universally recognized as a driving force for equal treatment of men and women in the Member States.

By its work in having various directives adopted, by supporting a great many positive actions and stirring those involved into action, the Commission has made a major contribution to increasing awareness and promoting change in the countries of Europe.

The Commission therefore owed it to itself to examine its own conscience, not only to appear consistent to public opinion, national civil services and companies in the Member States, but also to be loyal to its philosophy, objectives and commitments.

It is several years since the problem of equal opportunities first emerged in the Commission. Courageous and significant work has been carried out in this field by the Equal Treatment Committee, COPEC, the administration, staff organizations, Members of the European Parliament and officials - women and men - who have helped to analyse the situation, to make recommendations, to implement these recommendations and to monitor their effectiveness.

Without this work our assignment would never have seen the light of day.

This report does not claim to deal with every aspect of equal opportunities within the Commission. Our ambition is more limited: to cast an outsider's eye over a situation which is familiar to our readers and to supply them with an instrument for their work.

In Part One, we introduce the study and describe the methods used.

Part Two is concerned with diagnosis and in it we analyse statistics, personnel management procedures, stereotypes and attitudes.

The conclusions and recommendations are to be found in Part Three.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

We are mindful of the Commission's political will to make equal opportunities a reality. Its commitment to this course of action was emphasized by Mr Christophersen in his recent document on modernizing the Commission.

Only by providing itself with positive means of action, proof of its genuine interest in and commitment to this policy can the Commission achieve equality at work for its staff.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Let us look first of all at the general context of our assignment, the objectives and the area covered by the study.

1. The brief

Three consultants - Monique Chalude, Robin Chater and Jacqueline Laufer - were chosen by the Commission of the European Communities to conduct a study on "Positive action programme among the staff: diagnosis and objectives".

The contract between the Commission and "Michel Chalude and Associates SPRL", constituted the first part of the three consultants' assignment and lasted for ten months.

The study was carried out under the supervision of the Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (COPEC).

2. The purpose of the study

The study has two main objectives:

- to identify the problems of women in the Commission (diagnosis); and
- to draw up proposals for the introduction of a positive action programme within the Commission.

3. Why a study in the Commission

In asking for this study, the Commission is responding to two concerns.

The first, mentioned above, is to ensure consistency between its external and internal policy. Its responsibilities make the Commission a model for the Member States and for the sake of its credibility it owes it to itself to apply to its own operations the directives which it advocates for the outside world, the non-implementation of which can lead to penalties.

The second is to improve its internal management. The Commission employs some 10 000 officials. Recruitment is by competition and is intended to select highly-qualified staff. In the interests of efficiency and good management, and to prevent the frustration caused by lack of job-satisfaction, the institution should take full account of the

extraordinary range of talents and abilities at its disposal.

4. Scope, method and limits of the study

The work programme and timetable laid down by our client set out the general aim of the study:

- " . The definition of the areas, sectors and populations for which statistics should be drawn up.
- . In-depth interpretation and evaluation of the statistics already available from the administration.
- . Drawing up a preliminary diagnosis based on experience gained in studies of similar positive action programmes in companies and civil services.
- . The preparation of preliminary proposals for the Equal Opportunities Committee:
 - on objectives, target groups and working methods;
 - defining the measures needed to launch consciousness-raising actions.
- . It is planned to achieve this objective in two stages. This study is confined to the first stage."

This report therefore sets out the preliminary results of the analysis of statistics, documents and interviews and initial conclusions concerning diagnosis and proposals.

5. Presuppositions of the study

Our professional experience is based on research, advisory and training activities in the field of women's work and equal opportunities.

We therefore approach the problem of equal opportunities in the Commission from the point of view of theoretical knowledge and experience in other organizations. We feel it would be useful to recall briefly the presuppositions of this study.

In every organization inequality between men and women at work can be analysed in terms of the following factors:

5.1 Women tend to be concentrated at the lower end of the jobs hierarchy and

become progressively rarer in higher grades.

5.2 An often traditional view of women's career prospects tends to restrict them to subordinate jobs.

The few women who have reached the top experience a great many difficulties, notably because they are in a minority and lack the strategic ability and the network of relationships which enable men to advance their careers.

5.3 Differences in treatment are apparent in the way supposedly neutral personnel management procedures are applied.

5.4 The measures recommended for the management of female staff may obey two types of logic:

- Measures enabling women to enter and remain on the labour market.

These cover a whole range of measures such as collective facilities for looking after children, formulas for organizing working time, social security and the various measures for protecting working women.

However, where these measures are restricted to or are used only by women they tend to reinforce prejudice against women at work.

- Measures which enable women to advance in the organization on the same footing as men, allowing them to hold any job, to make their way up the hierarchy and to occupy positions of responsibility.

It is in this context that personnel management procedures such as recruitment, training, mobility, promotions and careers are particularly important.

We concentrate in this report on personnel management policies and procedures but the importance of collective measures cannot be overlooked. It is very important to emphasize that in the context of equal opportunities these measures can appear contradictory - firstly, they have the advantage of enabling women to enter and remain on the labour market, that is, to reconcile work and family, but, secondly, they risk perpetuating the traditional image of jobs for women, solely concerned with measures to preserve their role in the family at the expense of their career prospects.

Nevertheless, a pre-condition for any action programme to promote female employment is the introduction of an adequate and satisfactory

socio-collective infrastructure for the care of children and negotiations for the sharing of family responsibilities by men and women.

5.5 The changes which need to be introduced in the field of equal opportunities should be based on:

- accurate knowledge of the situation: statistical indicators regularly followed up and a proper understanding of the operation of personnel management processes;
- political will at the highest level and involvement of staff at all levels: these are vital prerequisites to any change in the way organizations manage their human resources, which has long been regarded as the inevitable reflection of natural differences between women and men.

6. Interviews

We held two types of interview: the first involved expert witnesses who were able - either as a result of their job or from their experience - to provide information on the personnel management procedures; the second type consisted of semi-directive interviews with questions on attitudes, opinions and experiences covering the following areas:

- A. General experience in the Commission
- B. Recruitment system
- C. Present post
- D. Professional experience and career aspirations
- E. Management experience
- F. Training
- G. Promotion system
- H. Mobility
- I. Part-time
- J. Biographical details.

The questionnaire is at Annex 1.

7. Conducting the study

This study covers the period from 1 December 1985 to 15 October 1986. Its various stages reflect the working methods used: study of documents and statistics, in-depth interviews with individuals in different categories and grades, discussions with those responsible for the study and members of COPEC.

Stages of the study:

1. Setting up of the Liaison Committee
2. First stage: exploratory stage.

INTRODUCTION

Sources of information

Our analysis was based on the following sources:

- (a) The study of documents relating to personnel policy and the gathering of statistical data

We received documents and tables of statistics from members of the Liaison Committee. Some statistics were prepared at our request. Others could not be drawn up because the computerized personnel management system did not have this type of statistical programme. Other data were not provided because the Commission could see no point in gathering them.

We feel that these gaps must be filled as a matter of priority in future actions.

- (b) A large number of non-directive and semi-directive individual interviews with expert witnesses from different categories, grades and types of post, especially those responsible for personnel policy (DG IX).
- (c) Interviews with women whom we had been told had been successful within the system.
- (d) Interviews with leaders of staff organizations.

3. Meetings of the Liaison Committee

A number of formal and informal meetings of the Liaison Committee were held. They discussed technical aspects and the best way of introducing the research team into the Commission, and considered the issues the study was to address.

During these meetings the consultants submitted their observations and comments and invited those present to discuss them.

4. Submission of interim report

5. Preliminary presentation of findings to COPEC

6. Second stage: interviews in DG I, DG IV and DG V.

These three DGs were chosen by the Liaison Committee on the basis of three criteria: their reputation, their importance in Community policy and the number of women they employ.

7. Drafting of the report

PART TWO: DIAGNOSIS

CHAPTER I: STATISTICS

The following analysis has been carried out on data supplied to the researchers by Directorate-General IX. The historical data have been collated from numerous documents and relate to populations which may not be wholly consistently defined over the period under consideration. Where known variations have occurred the data have either been omitted or a qualifying footnote given in the tables.

Given the fact that the statistics relate to whole populations they are not subject to the problems of statistical significance which are necessary in the case of random population samples. Nevertheless, the analysis of aggregate data does necessarily limit the degree to which individual population movements can be measured and explained. An account of empirical events must rely to some extent upon hypotheses generated by a theoretical understanding of knowledge domain. In the following analysis these hypotheses are made explicit in advance of any detailed consideration of the statistics. The object is not to test in a definitive way the verity of these hypotheses but to determine whether the weight of the evidence tends to support or not to support the theoretical perspectives which have been chosen.

The focus of the following analysis is on Categories A, LA, B and C. The position of officials in Category A has been given closest attention due to the fact that this category contains the Commission's most senior posts and therefore presents the greatest area of challenge for those seeking equality of opportunity with respect to career chances in the structure as a whole.

CHAPTER I

I. The current situation

A- Uneven proportion of male and female staff between categories

In May 1986 the total numbers and proportions of male and female staff in each category within the Commission was as follows:

TABLE I

		Category					
		A	LA	B	C	D	TOTALS
Male:	Number:	2657	697	1370	726	520	5970
Female:	Number:	280	618	908	3010	139	4955
Male:	%:	90.5	53.0	60.1	19.4	78.9	54.6
Female:	%:	9.5	47.0	39.9	80.6	21.1	45.4

It can be seen that for the population as a whole male staff clearly outnumber female staff and that a great deal of variation occurs between individual categories. Category A has the lowest representation of female staff whilst Category C has the lowest representation of male staff. Both categories are the largest in the Commission, together representing more than two thirds of the entire staff population.

The overall distribution indicates a strong prima facie case for the existence of inequality between male and female staff. It does not, in itself, however prove that unequal treatment has taken place. Under or over representation may be the consequence of a wide number of factors which, whilst probably largely grounded in male/female differences, are induced by cultural mores and norms rather than by institutional effects at the employment level.

B- Female staff are more numerous in the lowest grades

Before moving on to consider the distribution of staff within categories let us state a simple hypothesis arising from the evidence of the between category analysis.

Hypothesis I : "In each of the categories male staff will tend to have a higher proportion of positions in the top grades than female staff".

CHAPTER I

The figures below indicate the pattern of within category variance in male/female grade representation:

TABLE II : The proportion of men and women in each category and grade

Category		Grade							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Cat. A :	male:	98	100	98	95	88	86	80	85
	female:	2	0	2	5	12	14	20	15
Cat. LA:	male:	-	-	81	65	54	52	45	38
	female:	-	-	19	35	46	48	55	62
Cat. B :	male:	71	58	59	56	52	-	-	-
	female:	29	42	41	44	48	-	-	-
Cat. C :	male:	19	17	23	18	21	-	-	-
	female:	81	83	77	82	79	-	-	-
Cat. D :	male:	94	83	67	-	-	-	-	-
	female:	6	17	33	-	-	-	-	-

It can be seen that in all cases but Category C our hypothesis holds true. Female staff are consistently clustered in the lowest grades within each category and decline in their proportional representation as we rise through the grade hierarchy. It is interesting to note that there is only one female in A1 and that she is in a personal grade. Moreover, although it might have been expected that in those categories where females are more equally represented (ie : LA and B) a similar pattern would not be present, it is clear that male staff do rather better than female staff in securing the top positions.

The almost even pattern of distribution in Category C suggests that only in a domain where female staff are in the clear majority does any semblance of equal representation at all points within the grade hierarchy exist. Category C does, of course, include a high proportion of the secretarial positions in the Commission and very few of these positions are held by men. In fact the grade distribution in Category C disguises the fact that male and female staff in that category tend not to do the same kind of jobs. The mix of male and female staff within different types of jobs is an important qualifying factor in the comparison of grade distributions which may go some way to explain differential career aspirations and career blockage.

C- In Categories A, LA et C, young women are more numerous.

Hypothesis 2 : "the proportion of female staff in each category will tend to be higher in the younger age cohorts than the older age cohorts".

Support for this hypothesis can be found in the rising female employment participation rates throughout the European Community and also the growth in female qualification levels. It could be expected that in an organisation such as the Commission, which recruits in accordance with formal educational criteria, a change in the composition of the educated workforce would be reflected in the composition of those recruited over time.

TABLE III : Proportion of female to male staff in each category by age

Age cohort	% female staff in each category					% mean
	A	LA	B	C	D	
	N = 280	618	908	3010	139	
18 à 25 ans	20	81	25	97	25	82
26 à 35 ans	17	54	24	84	12	53
36 à 45 ans	11	44	43	81	23	48
46 à 55 ans	6	47	46	75	27	39
56 à 65 ans	5	31	46	64	24	29
mean	10	47	40	81	20	

In the above table we capture to a large extent a historical trace of employment practices in the Commission over the last 30 years. Although employment distributions will be subject to variations over time due to staff turnover the Commission's employment policies have been such that little change in the nature of overall category composition can be expected to have occurred in the most senior age cohorts. It may be true that the existence of greater attrition with age amongst female staff has accounted for some part of the emerging pattern, but it should equally be noted that this attrition will be more likely to occur in the youngest age cohorts and lower staff categories. Some regard should also be given to the higher rate of loss due to death amongst male staff - especially in the older age cohorts.

The trend in Categories A, LA and C confirm the pattern predicted by hypothesis 2. In Category A the youngest women have 4X the concentration present in the 56-65 age cohort and the transition is both significant and consistent. The trend is also clearly marked in Categories LA and C but here the difference indicates a rise from a much higher base in the older age cohorts. It is also interesting to note that the transition in Category LA flattens out in the middle age bracket - 36-55 years before giving way to a substantial rise between the 26-35 and 18-25 cohorts. The differences in the youngest age cohorts are more likely to reflect differential recruitment patterns of a more perennial nature. If male and female staff tend to join the Commission at different ages then the fact that the youngest age cohort contains a much higher proportion of female staff does not necessarily indicate any future rise in the composition of women in the category as a whole.

D- In Category B, women are generally older

Probably the most important fact revealed by Table III is the decline of female representation during the transition from older to younger cohorts in Category B. This tendency is made all the more critical by the sharing of the reduced concentration level between the two youngest age cohorts. If the reason for the variation were due to differences in the age at which male and female staff were recruited then it is likely that the concentration of women would be far higher in the 26-35 cohort. This is not the case. Clearly the Commission has allowed a marked change in recruitment to take place during recent years which has increased the proportion of male staff in Category B. It would be interesting to discover if this is due to a change in the nature of tasks expected of incumbents in B posts or to the effects of counter pressures in the employment system as opportunities are being lost by male staff in Category A. This 'hidden trade-off' factor can be tested in part by simple calculation. If we assume that the proportions of female to male staff in Categories A and B were held constant at the levels equivalent to the concentrations in the oldest age cohorts (i.e. : there is no implied change in the concentration of women in Categories A and B over time), then how many fewer women would there be in Category A and fewer men in Category B than is the case at present ? The answer is remarkably similar in absolute terms -122 fewer women in Category A and 143 fewer men in Category B. Thus the apparent increase in employment chances for women officials can be seen to largely be the result of relatively small switch in opportunities for entry to Category A from Category B.

E- Relative promotion chances of male and female staff

Now let us turn to consider the relative chances of male and female staff to move up the grade hierarchies in each category. If career blockage were evident for female staff then their average (mean) age would differ progressively from male staff in an uneven pattern from the lowest to the highest grades. This pattern would be due to the effect of women freezing out at lower levels than men. If the problem were primarily not one of blockage, but of differential rates of advance the pattern would be more consistent, indicating that it took women on average longer to gain senior posts than men. In both cases we can pose hypothesis 3 as :

"The tendency for female staff progressively to be on average older than male staff as they move up the grade ladder".

CHAPTER I

Table IV (below) gives a breakdown of male/female mean age differentials by grade for all the categories concerned.

TABLE IV : Mean age of men and women in each category and grade

GRADE	CATEGORY									
	A		LA		B		C		D	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
One	57.4	58.0	-	-	54.3	55.8	52.4	50.1	48.0	52.4
Two	54.3		-	-	47.7	51.1	45.6	42.9	39.3	44.5
Three	53.9	52.1	54.3	56.7	39.2	46.2	42.6	37.5	36.7	43.5
Four	53.1	51.8	53.2	51.5	34.6	42.3	35.1	32.3	-	-
Five	45.5	46.3	43.5	43.4	31.9	38.8	36.1	29.9	-	-
Six	38.6	38.8	37.2	37.6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seven	34.3	33.9	33.4	32.8	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eight	28.2	26.4	29.3	27.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	46.9	41.8	42.2	39.4	43.3	46.6	42.7	39.0	41.3	44.5

At first sight the differences between male and female staff look quite small and it is tempting to conclude that hypothesis 3 has no general foundation. However, the first thing to concentrate upon is the total number of years between the means in the lowest and highest grades. For practical purposes we need also to include a comparison between A8 and A3 (as there is only one woman in Grade A1) and LA8 and LA3 (as there is no LA1/2). If we focus on this factor alone then we discover that a differential does emerge.

Category	A	A8-3	LA8-3	B	C	D
Male	29.2	25.7	25.0	22.4	16.3	11.3
Female	31.6	25.7	29.7	17.0	20.2	8.9

The initial observation that there is a differential for Category A staff is refuted when the more valid A8-3 comparison is made. This does not hold for Categories LA and C, however, where a clear obverse differential for female staff is evident. The phenomena in Categories B and D where male staff would appear, from the above comparison, to experience some disadvantage might best be explained by early career blockage. There would appear, for instance, to exist a substantial amount of freezing out in the lowest D grade for female staff whose mean age in D3 is 6.8 years higher than for male staff in the same grade. In Category B the situation is rather more complex with the existence of two career horizons for female staff at B5 and B2. It should be further noted that the evident increase in the proportion of male staff previously observed in lower age cohorts will have a further influence upon the mean age of male and female staff in the lower B grades - due simply to the fact that the female population

remains less subject to the injection of fresh blood at junior levels enjoyed by the male population.

F- Mean length of service in each grade

For a clearer picture of grade movements let us turn to an examination of male/female differentials measured in terms of years of service in each grade. Once again we can predict that the existence of career blockage - or variations in rates of passage between grades - will be registered by contrasts between mean service periods.

TABLE V : Mean years of service by men and women in each grade

GRADE	CATEGORY									
	A		LA		B		C		D	
	H	F	H	F	H	F	H	F	H	F
One	8.0	4.0	-	-	9.5	6.7	6.3	5.9	5.6	2.4
Two	7.0	0.0	-	-	5.6	4.8	4.5	5.7	1.9	1.5
Three	9.8	3.0	4.5	4.7	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.0	1.1
Four	8.4	6.8	8.6	6.8	3.0	2.3	2.5	2.5	-	-
Five	4.8	3.7	4.5	4.5	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.3	-	-
Six	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seven	2.1	2.1	1.9	2.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eight	0.6	0.8	1.1	0.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	6.1	3.6	4.5	3.6	5.2	3.5	3.6	3.9	3.2	1.3

In the case of Category A staff as a whole there is a clear pattern of increasing years service in each grade up to grade A4. There is no obvious difference in male/female rates in A0-6. In A5 the low relative female mean service value is possibly due to the lifting of a past blockage at A6. The rise in values at A4 is substantial, but only mirrors an even more substantial rise in the mean years service for male staff. If women experience career blockage at A4 then so do men -with even severer consequences.

The main problem for women in Category A is that there are too few of them and the advent of greater equality of opportunity in recent years has not yet had repercussions for appointments to the highest grades (A1-3). It is too early to say whether a breakthrough would take place between A4 and A3 for female staff if current trends are maintained. Given the special nature of appointments at this level it is quite possible that the average age and years of service of female staff in A5 and A4 will show adverse movements over time.

The evidence of Table V goes a long way to challenge our initial conclusions relating to Categories B and D arising from the age analysis. In neither of these categories is there any evidence that women are experiencing wide scale career blockage. Women tend to spend less time at each grade level than men, possibly because they are experiencing enhanced mobility or are more subject to

career attrition. In order to test the latter possibility an examination has been carried out of 'departures from service' (excluding those on secondment). The analysis suggests that although attrition is higher for women than men in Category A (5% vs 3% per annum) in all other categories the rates are very similar. One phenomenon worthy of note is that in both Categories A and LA a higher proportion of women than men left from the lower grades. This, however, may be the consequence of existing grade distributions and may be independent of age. In the case of Category D our findings may be the consequence of a de facto phasing out of Grade D4 which has had the effect of regrading a higher proportion of female staff. Certainly there is no evidence from our analysis of staff turnover to suggest that the low mean for years of service among women in D3 is due to recruitments or departures in the last year. The existence of career blockage or differential promotional rates is not generally supported by this review. The overall figures may be hiding a tendency for those experiencing blockage to leave the service of the Commission. What is most likely, however, is that during the last few years many of the traditional grade barriers for women have been breaking down. These may be in the process of being replaced by new barriers at new levels but for the time being women are experiencing some net upward mobility which is reducing their average years of service in each grade.

G- Proportion of male and female staff in DG

Two other factors which may have an important influence upon the composition of the Commission's staff and relative career chances for men and women are the operations of individual Directorates-General (DGs) and variations in national origin. Obviously, if different DGs maintain dissimilar employment policies and practices then aggregate figures for the Commission as a whole may well hide sub-cultural features that may work for or against the position of women. Likewise, the fact that individual Member States of the European Community differ in their attitudes to equal employment opportunities (EEO) may translate itself into variations in the representation levels of men and women in the Commission itself and the degree of support given to EEO measures by those from different nations.

First let us examine in some detail the composition of staff populations within individual DGs. Such comparisons for LA and D categories are of little value because LA staff are almost entirely employed in two DGs - DG IX (Translators) and The Joint Interpreting and Conference Service (Interpreters) - whilst around 90% of Category D staff are also formally employees of DG IX. Given the existence of neutral 'Staff Regulations' and procedures managed through DG IX it should be possible to assume that little variation would occur between DGs. We can therefore state our next hypothesis :

Hypothesis 4: "the proportions of male and female staff will be very similar within all DGs and reflect the general pattern for each staff category".

CHAPTER I

The following table sets out the position for those in the remaining categories :

TABLE VI : proportion of women in each Directorate-General (Categories A, B, C only).

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL	CATEGORY		
	A	B	C
CA	9	73	97
01 External rel.	13	51	94
02 Eco/Fin. affairs	8	27	91
03 Int. market/Ind. aff.	10	45	94
04 Competition	12	46	96
05 Empl. /Aff. Soc. /Ed.	18	57	91
06 Agriculture	10	38	81
07 Transport	10	56	87
08 Development	9	37	92
09 Person. /Adm.	13	40	71
10 Information	13	55	82
11 Envir. /Consum. / Nuc. saf'y	12	52	97
12 Science R&D	4	17	93
13 Inform. Mark. /Innov.	9	45	86
14 Fisheries	13	28	93
15 Instit. Fin. /Tax	10	62	88
16 Region. policy	8	26	88
17 Energy	2	14	89
18 Credit&Invest.	3	43	95
19 Budget	3	34	90
20 Financ. control	10	39	82
31 Secretariat General	17	64	78
32 Legal Service	9	95	90
33 Spokesman's Service	7	56	81
34 Statistical Office	8	26	85
35 Euratom Supply Agency	0	67	86
37 Security Office	0	25	26
38 Joint Interp. & Conf. Ser	0	63	51
39 TFITT	6	50	95
40 Ser. Coord Struct. Instr	0	50	100
41 Customs Union	10	40	94
43 Office for Off. publ. of the E.C.	7	35	54
Mean	9.5	39.9	80.6
Median	9	45	90

It can be seen that a considerable range exists in the proportion of women employed in each unit of the Commission. The variations for each category are :

Category A	0 - 18 %	Lowest 35/37/40	Highest 05
Category B	14 - 95 %	Lowest 17	Highest 32
Category C	26 - 100 %	Lowest 37	Highest 40

The shape of the distribution between DGs is fairly symmetrical for Category A staff but is negatively skewed for Category B and C staff. The difference between mean and median values suggests that the effects of several large DGs with relatively low values for the concentration of female staff are affecting the overall analysis. In the case of Category C this can readily be spotlighted as DG IX with over one third of the category's population and mean female concentration of only 71%. In order to improve our understanding about the significance of the detailed figures in Table VI let us consider the type of DGs indicated by our analysis as stretching from 'Progressive' to 'retarded'. A 'progressive' DG is one that has a relatively high concentration of women in both Categories A and B and a relatively low concentration of women in Category C. A 'retarded' DG is in the reverse position and operates with women almost exclusively in low status positions. The typology set out below illustrates the four resultant points on the EEO spectrum :

	. RELATIV. LOW PROP C FEMALES IN D.G.	RELAT. HIGH PROP C FEMALES IN D.G. (90%)
RELATIVELY. HIGH PROP A&B FEMALES IN DG (12%+ A, 45% + B)	PROGRESSIVE EG : D.G. 10	TRANSITIONAL EG : D.G. 01, 04, 05, 11
RELATIVELY. LOW PROP A&B FEMALES IN DG	UNDEVELOP. EG : D.G. 16/17/34/37/	RETARDED EG : D.G. 2/12/19

There will, of course, be a number of reasons why the proportion of women varies within different DGs. Some key factors include the extent to which technical skills are required (as in DGs VIII and XII), the number of clerical as against secretarial jobs in Category C and the existence of hazards (as in DG 11). It is doubtful, however, whether these factors - even taken as a whole - can explain more than a small proportion of the variance in inter-DG EEO practice. It must be concluded that Hypothesis 4 is not supported by our analysis. Central direction may exist in the Commission on personnel policies and procedures but it appears to

CHAPTER I

have little influence on the tendency to attract or exclude female staff within individual DGs.

H- Proportion of male and female staff by their country of origin

Finally, let us examine perhaps the most sensitive of all variables in the context of the Commission's EEO concerns - country of origin. The Commission is already committed to the principle of fair representation in the allocation of posts.

Article 27 of the Commission's Staff Regulations states that

"Recruitment shall be directed to securing for the institution the services of officials of the highest standard of ability, efficiency and integrity, recruited on the broadest possible geographical basis from among nationals of Member States of the Communities".
Officials shall be selected without reference to race, creed or sex.
No posts shall be reserved for nationals of any specific Member State."

In the light of these provisions let us propose a further hypothesis :

Hypothesis 5 : "The distribution of male and female staff will be relative to the size of the actual populations of Member States and will exhibit little variation between categories".
A consideration of national differences in gender composition begins with an analysis of the overall distribution for men and women treated separately.

TABLE VII : Representation of male and female employees by country of origin

COUNTRY	ALL STAFF		A CATEGORY STAFF ONLY		TERTIARY EDUCATED PROPORT'N FEMALE	OBJECT. BREAK-DOWN OF POP IN CEE
	M	F	M	F		
W. Germany	11.8	13.8	18.3	11.2	41	19.4
France	13.5	12.1	17.7	29.5	46	17.0
Italy	19.1	12.2	16.3	13.2	43	17.7
Netherland	5.9	4.3	6.0	3.3	41	4.5
Belgium	23.4	33.8	13.9	18.0	44	3.1
Luxemb.	3.9	4.8	2.4	1.4	35	0.1
Grt-Brit.	10.8	6.4	14.0	7.6	36	17.6
Denmark	3.7	3.4	3.1	0.7	49	1.6
Ireland	2.2	2.3	3.1	5.0	41	1.1
Greece	4.0	4.1	4.5	7.9	39	3.0
Spain	0.9	1.6	0.5	2.1	44	11.9
Portugal	0.7	1.3	0.3	0.0	48	3.1
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0
Mean					42	

* Data for 1980 : Source - UN.

Table VII indicates that a substantial degree of over and under-representation exists by country of origin. The 'objective breakdown' given in the right hand column relates to the actual distribution of individual Member State populations relative to the population of the European Economic Community as a whole. The column headed 'tertiary educated proportion female' on the other hand provides a key to the level of women in each Member State who would be eligible for entry into the Commission's Category A.

If we consider the position of 'All Staff' it can be seen that only one of the major states - Italy - experiences anything close to equitable representation within the Commission. Not surprisingly, by far the highest level of over-representation is enjoyed by Belgium and Luxembourg with Denmark, Ireland and Greece some way behind. In the case of both Belgium and Luxembourg the shares of all female posts is much higher than for male posts, reflecting the domination by both countries of locally resourced secretarial personnel. Amongst the 'Big Four' countries only Germany has a higher share of female as against male posts, whilst Great Britain manifests the greatest level of under-representation - with British women being the most under-represented national group in the Commission.

If we focus on the Category A posts alone the position improves quite considerably. All of the 'Big Four' states are more equitably represented and the most significant feature arising

CHAPTER I

from the analysis by gender is the dominance of the French and Belgians who hold around half of the 280 Category A posts containing female incumbents in the Commission. The differing proportions of women in tertiary education does not appear to be a critical factor in determining the proportion of women entering the Commission from different Member States. The two states with the highest representation of tertiary educated women are both under-represented within female Category A staff, whilst Luxembourg with its very low tertiary representation is nevertheless over-represented in Category A. It is interesting to note that the average proportion of women to men in universities within the European Economic Community is rising progressively each year and should not place a future material constraint upon equal recruitment opportunities.

In order to discover if the national bias in the allocation of posts between men and women is reflected in the organizational hierarchy at grade level let us now examine the breakdown of staff by grade within Category A.

TABLE VIII : Proportion of female to all staff in Category A by grade and country of origin

COUNTRY	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A5-8
Pourcentages									
West Germany	0	0	2	3	10	9	0	0	7
France	0	0	3	11	19	17	13	0	17
Italy	0	0	2	5	10	17	43	20	17
Netherlands	0	0	4	3	0	15	28	0	14
Belgium	20	0	0	4	20	15	2	17	12
Luxembourg	0	0	0	4	8	13	80	0	21
Grt-Britain	0	0	0	4	5	6	2	50	5
Denmark	0	0	0	0	0	14	78	0	17
Ireland	0	0	0	0	14	18	6	0	12
Greece	0	0	7	29	19	16	17	0	17
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	100	40
Portugal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Here we once again find very significant variations between different national groups. The highest proportions of women in the more senior A3-5 positions are to be found in posts held by those from France, Belgium and Greece. In the more heavily populated grades A5-8 national differences are less marked, except in the case of two major Member States - West Germany and Great Britain. Clearly the inability of the Commission to recruit sufficient female staff from either of these nations is having a substantial effect on the sexual composition of Category A as a whole.

All the evidence relating to national differences thus denies the validity of hypothesis 5. The reality of the Commission is that it can only broadly realize the spirit of Article 27 and an unexpected compounding of gender and national bias exists to limit its realization still further.

CONCLUSIONS

The main findings of the foregoing analysis are that :

- Female staff are under-represented in Categories A, LA, B and D
- The most pronounced under-representation is in Category A
- Female staff are substantially over-represented in Category C
- Female staff are consistently clustered in the lowest grades of all categories, except C
- Younger female staff are more likely to enjoy a higher level of equal employment opportunities - especially in Categories A, LA and C
- In Category B there is a marked increase in the proportion of male staff in the youngest cohorts
- The increase in female representation in Category A seems to be almost exactly offset by decline in opportunities within Category B
- The average age of women in Categories A, LA and C is younger than for men in those categories. In Categories B and D the reverse is the case
- There is a noticeable level of career blockage at A/LA 4 for both men and women
- The average years of service in each grade for women in Categories B and D is unaccountably low
- A wide variation exists in the proportion of women within Categories A, LA and B across DGs
- Small countries enjoy the most over-representation of staff in all categories
- Three of the 'Big Four' countries appear to be relatively heavily represented in the Commission as a whole by male staff
- There is no clear relationship between the proportion of women with tertiary education in each Member State and the proportion of women within Category A of the Commission
- Top posts in Category A are most likely to be held by women from France, Belgium and Greece
- There is widescale under-representation of German and British women in the mainstream grades within Category A.

II. Historical analysis

So far we have examined the situation of male and female staff at one point in 1986. In order to achieve a better understanding of trends in equal opportunities within The Commission it will be necessary to take a more historical perspective.

The data available to the researchers has been somewhat fragmentary and has to a large extent been gleaned from secondary source documents supplied to us by DG IX. However, the data has been sufficiently sound to permit consolidation and allow comparisons to be made over time.

Let us begin with an analysis of trends in male/female representation by job category.

TABLE IX: The percentage of female staff in the Commission by category

GRADE	DATE					
	Dec. 72	Dec. 77	80	82	Oct. 84	May 86
A	6.1	7.1	7.5	8.5	9.0	9.5
LA	37.4	45.4	44.2	44.7	46.1	47.0
B	40.4	44.6	39.7	39.7	38.1	39.9
C	81.6	79.1	79.9	81.1	80.3	80.6
D	1.0	2.4	4.9	7.6	11.2	21.1
ALL	44.1	44.0	44.5	45.5	44.3	45.1
N. Fem.	(2509)	(3490)	(3718)	(4000)	(4533)	(4955)

The number of female staff employed by the Commission has risen consistently over the period covered by Table IX. The increase has, however, only tended to follow the general rise in employment levels in the Commission as a whole. The overall proportion of female employees has remained remarkably constant over the last one and a half decades even though the distribution of female to male employees has changed quite radically within many individual categories.

The proportion of female/male staff has increased quite significantly in Categories A and LA, whilst in Category D the level of female representation has increased twenty-fold since 1972. The fall in female representation within Category B highlighted in the previous age analysis is to some extent confirmed by trends in Table IX. It can be seen, however, that the fall in representation took place primarily over the period 1977-80 and largely re-established the position in 1972.

The most important observation arising from the above analysis is that female representation has continued to be highly differentiated between categories in spite of a rise in overall staff levels.

We noted in our analysis of 1986 data that a consistent clustering was clearly evident of female staff in the lowest grades of each category. Let us therefore turn to an examination of historical trends in grade representation.

Table X : Breakdown of female representation by category and grade (1979-86)

CATEGORY	GRADE	PERCENTAGE AT				
		JAN 79	DEC 80*	DEC 82*	OCT 84	MAY 86
A	1	0	0	5	4	2
	2	2	2	0	0	0
	3	0	0	1	1	2
	4	2	5	5	5	5
	5	6	8	11	12	12
	6	15	16	16	13	14
	7	12	14	15	20	20
LA/L	3	13	12	13	23	19
	4	20	27	33	35	35
	5	47	45	45	47	46
	6	48	53	48	43	48
	7	55	49	53	59	55
	8**	56	100	100	62	62
B	1	19	25	29	28	29
	2	32	43	40	41	42
	3	30	43	44	42	41
	4	38	46	41	39	44
	5	46	45	54	43	48
C	1	54	80	81	82	81
	2	65	84	83	84	83
	3	76	80	79	75	77
	4	69	77	81	77	79
	5	67	73	81	77	79
D	1	2	0	1	5	6
	2	10	5	10	12	17
	3	10	11	12	15	33

A8 not included

* For Brussels and Luxembourg only.

** Very small grade numbers.

The figures in Table X reveal a surprisingly stable picture. The concentration of female staff in lower grades has remained very stable in the top three categories. In Category A a small, but significant, improvement took place in the proportion of women within A5 during 1982-84 but otherwise the perceived rise in Category A female representations can be seen to be largely due to a clustering of women within A8. In LA/L 4 the breakthrough took place during 1979-80 and was followed by a rather short lived jump

CHAPTER I

in representation between 1982 and 1984. In both Categories B and C the major changes took place during 1979-80 and have since remained relatively stable. In Category D the overall rise in female representation can be seen to have also been reflected in a disproportionate increase within the lowest grade.

One problem with many comparisons of female representation over time is that the absolute numbers of staff within different grades is often quite small and therefore what appears to be a significant shift in representation may in fact be due to relatively few hire/promotional decisions. This is particularly the case in Category A :

Table XI : The absolute numbers of male and female staff in grades A1-A4 for 1972 and 1982-86

YEAR	GRADE									
	A1		A2		A3		A4		TOTALS	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1972	32	0	111	3	296	3	356	11	795	17
1982	42	2	126	0	321	2	116	6	602	10
1984	43	2	143	0	352	5	759	41	1297	48
1986	43	1	132	0	347	6	774	43	1296	50

During the period 1972-4 total numbers in the top four A grades fell and the number of Grade A4 staff in particular declined very markedly. (In fact in 1975 there were only 61 staff in A4 positions.) Since 1982 the position has substantially changed. Although the numbers in Grades A1-3 have remained virtually stable the numbers in Grade A4 have multiplied more than six times.

Female staff have gained some advantage from the growth of A4 positions but not so much as male staff. The number of Grade A1 women has gone down from two to one and during 1984-6 the proportion of Grade A1-4 women has remained virtually constant.

These figures would suggest that the Commission has created a major career barrier between A4 and A3 and that this represents a problem for all staff. In the case of women the barriers remain higher at all levels and the above trends indicate only that in the competition for promotion within the top grades women remain at a great disadvantage relative to men and are unlikely to break the A3/2 barrier without some form of affirmative intervention.

A central issue in the consideration of equal opportunities within the Commission must be the degree of inter-category movement that has taken place over time. The structure of discrete categories which exist in the Commission does place a substantial constraint upon the career chances of individual staff members below Category A. In the present context the most serious repercussions arising from this rigidity will be evident in Category C which contains the highest concentration of female staff. During recent years a facility for movement between

categories has been introduced and it might therefore be expected that this would have created an important channel through which female staff can break through from Category C to Categories B and A. The number of individuals achieving promotion by this means has, however, been quite small :

Table XII : The number of promotions and characteristics of those promoted from Category C to B 1981-4 (Male and female staff)

GRADE	YEAR			
	1981	1982	1983	1984
B2 Promotions	0	9	11	7
Promotables	49	43	36	30
For those promoted :				
avg age	-	47	52	59
avg years in grade	-	6	6	4
B3 Promotions	4	8	14	7
Promotable	64	54	49	36
For those promoted :				
avg age	55	51	48	47
avg years in grade	4	5	5	6
B4 Promotions	12	9	10	5
Promotable	40	38	30	19
For those promoted :				
avg age	47	52	52	56
avg years in grade	4	3	3	3

Source : 1986 Report on job evaluation - JT Working Group. P48.

It can be seen that the proportion of successful Category C staff has remained low and that this has been quite independent of the destination grade. Although the average years of service in grade prior to promotion has reduced for those entering B2 the average age of successful candidates has climbed sharply to 59. In all cases the average age of successful candidates remains high and it is thus likely that only a small fraction will gain (or have gained) a chance to move ahead into Category A before the age of retirement.

Let us turn now to consider trends in recruitment over time. Entry to the Commission is through a formal open competition consisting of a series of written examinations and an oral test. Successful candidates are classified as laureates and are thus eligible for entry to suitable posts within the Commission. The first 'hurdle' in this process is to be accepted as a valid candidate for the written examination; there then follow a further four principal stages leading up to appointment. In Table XIII below we compare the relative chances of female applicants over two time periods.

CHAPTER I

Table XIII : The proportion of female to male applicants reaching different stages in the recruitment process 1978-81 and 1984 (Categories A, LA/L and B only)

STAGE	CAT A		CAT LA/L		CAT B	
	1978-81 %	1984 %	1978-81 %	1984 %	1978-81 %	1984 %
1:Registered Candidates N =	17 1622	22 1751	52 1858	60 2049	30 2915	41 2353
2:Admitted to Written Examination	16	17	50	56	26	36
3:Admitted to Oral Examination	9	13	48	45	17	34
4:Laureates	10	13	46	40	16	35
5:Recruited/ Appointed N =	11 22	14 33	45 65	47 34	19 54	39 86

Sources : Note to CECHF from G Valsesia 9.11.84 and General DG IX statistics 9.12.81.

The analysis reveals very clearly a constant tendency for women to drop out of the selection process during stages 1-3. Although for all categories the proportion of women applicants increased over time the process of initial screening and the written examinations consistently worked to reduce the proportion of women 'survivors' in the selection process. Contrary to expectations there is no evidence to suggest that women were at a disadvantage during interview and it is clear that those who did survive the competition experienced a better than even chance of final recruitment. The net effect was to create a high level of stability in the mix of male/female recruits over time for categories A and LA/L. Only in Category B was there a lessening of the discriminatory recruitment effect with the result that the proportion of female to male recruits almost doubled - rising some 60 per cent in absolute terms.

PROJECTION OF FUTURE TRENDS

If we look ten years ahead it would be interesting from a policy perspective to estimate the likely consequence of different recruitment 'actions' upon the overall mix of male to female staff in the Commission. To do this it will be necessary to make a number of assumptions about the size of the Commission's staff population, the rate of staff turnover and the degree of inter-category movement. We have assumed a static population with turnover at current rates and stable male/female mortality rates. One further assumption is that half the staff population between 60 and 65 years undergo early retirement during that period. A projection has been made only for Category A; this indicates that over the next ten years a total of 1154 new recruits will need to be found to replace existing staff. If different proportions of women should be recruited then the outcome for the total mix of men and women in Category A would vary quite considerably.

Table XIV : Projected consequences for the mix of male and female staff arising from differing recruitment policies 1986-1996 (Category A only).

PROPORTION OF FEMALE TO MALE RECRUITS	PROPORTION OF FEMALE TO MALE STAFF IN CATEGORY A
80%	38.3%
70%	34.5%
60%	30.4%
50%	26.5%
40%	22.6%
30%	18.7%
20%	14.7%
at current level	13.9%

Clearly, if the Commission continues to recruit female personnel at its current level then the status quo will not be greatly disturbed. Even if an equal proportion of male and female recruits was achieved then the dilution effect would work to limit the proportion to little more than a quarter of the entire Category A staff population. These results would not differ if entry to Category A were from lower grades rather than from outside the Commission, but they would probably be influenced if transfer from LA to A, or B to A took place.

It should be noted in the context of the Commission's staff population as a whole that the structural changes that are likely to occur over the next ten years due to office automation and the introduction of 'management' methods will no doubt reduce the need for many lower skilled and administrative positions. This could result in a radical reduction in the proportion of female staff as secretarial and clerical posts disappear.

CONCLUSIONS

- The absolute number of women in the Commission has risen quite considerably over time.
- The overall proportion of female to male staff has barely changed since 1972.
- The proportion of female staff in Categories A, LA/L and D has nevertheless risen significantly over time.
- The representation of women has remained highly differentiated between categories.
- Within the top three categories the proportion of lower grade female staff has remained virtually stable.
- There is a tendency for changes in female representation to arise in concentrated periods.
- During 1972-82 the total numbers of staff in Grades A1-A4 fell very markedly, only to be followed during 1982-4 by a sharp rise in the staff population of these grades.
- The A4/3 career barrier has become increasingly problematic for both men and women, but barriers are more evident at all levels for Category A women.
- The movement between Categories C and B has been on a very small scale and concentrated amongst older staff.
- The written open competition would appear to discriminate against female applicants.
- The oral examination would not appear to affect female applicants' relative chances of success.
- Once a woman applicant has become a laureate she has a better than even chance of securing an appointment.
- Only in Category B has the recruitment system significantly improved the chances for female applicants.
- During the next decade the maintenance of current female recruitment levels would do little to disturb the status quo.
- Even a recruitment policy over the next ten years which secured half of all posts for women would still leave almost three quarters of all posts in Category A in the hands of men.
- Future structural changes in the Commission could well adversely affect overall female employment levels.

CHAPTER II: RECRUITMENT

The Commission is a unique institution subject to many established, formal constraints which affect its role both as an employer and, more generally, its potential responsiveness to new developments in society and the economy. The most important features which together set the Commission apart from other public bodies are the fact that :

- its powers under 'The Treaty of Rome' make it in many ways more than a conventional civil service, but nevertheless leave it well short of being a de facto government;
- it is not directly subject to effective democratic control - except through the representative positions of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers;
- culturally and linguistically it must sit astride, yet aloof from its constituent Member States;
- it must seek to achieve its unitary objectives in the face of political changes within Member States and a perennial tendency towards national self-interest;
- the wide scope and visibility of its actions make it constantly open to criticism for not 'practising what it preaches'.

For these reasons alone it has been difficult for the Commission to achieve the most appropriate recruitment policy that will satisfy the administrative, diplomatic, legislative, technical and ethical demands made upon it in the performance of its primary role at the centre of a major economic community. The Weberian model of bureaucracy - which the founders of the European concept no doubt borrowed from the French civil service - has not entirely fitted the circumstances in which the Commission has had to operate during the course of its evolution. Hence modifications have been required over time, either to provide continued consistency in response to changing internal and external conditions or greater flexibility and individual accountability as uniform administrative solutions and collective institutional mores became less effective in meeting functional demands.

At the heart of the recruitment process are the Commission's 'Staff Regulations'. These set down the broad parameters that must be followed in the appointment of officials at all levels and the terms of employment that will apply to new recruits. They are subject to approval by the Council of Ministers and have a special status in international law reflecting the sensitive and unique position of the Commission. According to Title 111 (and modifying decision 1X/2621 E 83) of the Regulations, appointments can normally be made only if a candidate meets certain express conditions relating to nationality, the fulfilment of military service, the passing of an entry competition and/or assessment of qualifications, age, previous 'professional' experience, physical fitness and knowledge of Community languages. 'The appointing authority' is further obliged to examine the possibility of meeting a vacancy from internal promotion before an external

CHAPTER II

vacancy is registered. Exceptions are, however, permitted and these relate to the procedure for entry competitions, which may be waived for A1/2 and special technical posts, and direct entry to starting grades which may be waived for differing proportions of existing and newly created posts.

Officials are differentiated between two basic categories : established officials appointed to permanent posts and 'other servants' consisting of temporary, auxiliary and local posts. Generally, the principal steps that are laid down in the recruitment procedure for permanent officials are :

1. Notification of vacancy
2. Consideration of internal appointment -if none, then
3. Inclusion in an appropriate competition programme
4. Development of notice of competition after consultation with the Joint Committee
5. Publication of competition in the Official Journal of the European Communities and elsewhere in the 'media'
6. Formation of Selection Board
7. Distribution, completion and receipt of application forms
8. Selection of candidates list by DG IX in accordance with Article 28 (a), (b), (c) of the Staff Regulations
9. Drawing up of candidates list by the Selection Board
10. Admission to entry 'rites de passage' - normally written and oral tests
11. Approval of laureates by the Selection Board (with a target level twice as large as available posts)
12. Agreement by DG IX and recruiting DG of appropriate candidates for vacant posts
13. Selection from available candidates by recruiting DG
14. Agreement about entry grade and salary step between DG IX and recruiting DG, within the terms set down by Articles 31 (1), (2) and 32
15. Formal offer issued, subject to satisfactory references, medical examination, etc.

The 'conditions of admission' considered in steps 8 and 9 are particularly important. They cover certain formal criteria which provide a filtering mechanism for all applications. For instance, a Category A applicant must satisfy the requirement for a university degree in an appropriate subject and must not exceed age ceilings (35 for A7 and 32 for A8) and other time stipulations, whilst A7 candidates must also have at least two years of relevant experience after graduation. Once recruited to a specific grade further formulae exist to determine access to salary steps. These provide allowances for additional professional experience and training at a level at least equivalent to the qualification giving access to the entry category.

Although there has been a high degree of harmonization in conditions of admission during recent years both within and between categories, many members of staff will continue to experience differences in their situations due to past disparities. Most critical of all in the present context is the situation of the predominantly female Category C. The evolution of

CHAPTER II

recruitment policy for secretaries in particular has passed through several distinct periods. Between 1969 and 1975 direct entry was permissible to C3/2 as well as C5/4. The qualifying age range for C3/2 posts varied between 19 and 42, but was restricted to 21-35 for those entering the C5/4 typing grades. After 1975 the situation changed, entry was restricted to 18-35 and word processing skills were stipulated as a general requirement. The other most important change was the elimination of entry to Category C by those who had completed their last year of study at a university. After 1979 formal bilingual secretarial training was specified and the period of relevant professional experience extended.

Finally, in 1982 the requirement for secretarial certificate or diploma was more clearly established and experience of typing on different types of machines additionally laid down. Thus the evolution of recruitment criteria has revealed a gradual tightening up of entry standards and greater restriction upon the point of entry into Category C. Far from achieving greater flexibility in the face of competing pressures these changes have reflected a move towards increased rigidity and uniformity in personnel policies and practices.

There are, however, many areas where the Commission has achieved considerable flexibility in the interests of either efficiency or fairness. For instance, several exceptions have been introduced to the established age limits on entry. It is now possible to gain an additional time allowance for child bearing (maximum three years), compulsory military service and the existence of a physical handicap. The use of grade A8 in recent years has allowed the Commission to recruit the most capable new graduates straight from University, whilst the introduction of grading of university courses has meant that further candidates qualify for direct entry to A7.

Nowhere does an organization reveal its true standing, self image and value system more readily than in its mode of selection for new recruits. The prestige, security, facility for influence upon political affairs, and economic advantage accruing to officials of the Commission makes it possible to consider it as a privileged domain which preserves its identity by placing a certain premium upon entry to its ranks. Over the last three decades a distinctive bureaucratic culture has developed (largely facilitated by its small scale and limited executive responsibilities) which has given rise to a group identity and common set of assumptions which provide both stability and a measure of institutional security. Hence, it is reasonable to suggest that in order to ensure continuity in the administrative 'elite' substantial reliance has had to remain upon the process whereby the circulation of elite members is achieved without endangering the essential fabric of the institutional structure or the values which produce group cohesion. The open competition, as the chief instrument in the maintenance of the status quo, is therefore a critical area for study in the context of equality of opportunity.

CHAPTER II

In the important, seminal report to the European Commission by Mr Dirk Spierenburg in 1979, consideration was given to several problems with the competition system. Some attention was focused in the report upon such questions as the level of publicity given to competitions in different countries, the decentralization of written testing, the appointment of external examiners from different states and the possibility of developing common competitions with other institutions. The Spierenburg Committee was not, however, primarily concerned with reform in the field of equal opportunities and it was not until 1982 that the fairness of the competition system for the relative positions of men and women was seriously questioned in public. In their report to the Commission the Working Party on Equal Treatment for Male and Female Members of Staff commented on the low representation of female candidates at all stages of the A competitions. They found the provisions for advertising competitions inadequate and also expressed concern about the sexual composition of Selection Boards and possible bias in the utilization of reserve lists. In October 1982 a further report was issued by the Equal Treatment Committee which listed progress on a number of issues - including those associated with the competitions. This considered the question of participation by women on Selection Boards and found that minority representation by women did exist, except for certain ad hoc and reserve Boards. Improvements were again called for in the wording and placing of competition announcements and general mass media coverage of recruitment by the Commission, whilst an additional suggestion was made concerning 'positive action' for female laureates. In response to a resolution of the 11 February 1981 by the European Parliament concerning the situation of men and women in the administrations of the community, a questionnaire was circulated and the responses analysed in a report to Parliament by Mrs Marlene Lenz on 7 September 1983 (1). This revealed that a very different pattern existed at various stages of recruitment between the European Parliament, the Commission, Court of Justice and Economic and Social Committee. In respect to Category A the highest proportion of female applicants was received by Parliament (26%) and the lowest by the Court of Justice (0%); however, the highest proportion of appointments was made by the Commission (11%). In all cases the proportion of women to men dropped between application and final appointment and in the case of the Social and Economic Committee no female achieved an appointment out of a total of 262 applicants. The response to questions concerning other categories was very fragmented, but it would appear that a similar, but less pronounced, pattern also existed for Categories LA and B. These findings thus confirm the results of our analysis of time series statistics for the Commission alone in Chapter II of this report and further emphasize the problem of possible bias in the competition system.

Although it was possible for Mr Burke to report some progress in the field of recruitment in his paper to the Commission on

(1) It is interesting to note that the Council refused to respond to this enquiry, although it did acknowledge receipt of the questionnaire.

8 December 1983, one of the most important measures to rectify underachievement by women in the competition system was still considered to be the increase of female representation upon Selection Boards. In addition, it was thought appropriate to examine the possibility of removing certain personal details from the applications submitted to Selection Boards and also to alert Assistants to Directors-General about the need to avoid rejecting female candidates without citing reasons for doing so. It can therefore be seen that the whole thrust of concern was directed at the machinery which accompanied the formal examination process, rather than the examination process itself.

During the course of the present study the researchers interviewed several personnel in DG IX having special responsibility for recruitment. Detailed discussions took place concerning the conduct of the examination system and a number of papers were consulted. As a consequence it is possible to make a number of important observations about the current entry procedures :

- With very few exceptions those entering the Commission do so through a formal written examination followed by an interview with a Selection Board.
- All procedures are well documented and full records maintained about the progress of each candidate.
- Adverts announcing entry competitions are placed in the national press and, where appropriate, specialist journals in all Member States as well as the Official Journal.
- Equality statements appear in all competition adverts.
- A new agency has recently been appointed to improve the image of the Commission in its recruitment advertising.
- Information concerning the mix of male and female readership of each newspaper or journal used for recruitment advertising has not been supplied to DG IX.
- The application form is composed in French and translated into other languages. It contains a number of French conventions such as a request for details of "decorations and titles" and declarations on "word of honour".
- The principal objective criteria used in the selection of candidates are age, nationality, qualifications, professional experience and second language.
- The Selection Board approves all candidates for entry to the competition, but after prior removal of all invalid applications by DG IX. The Board sees only a summary of the original application.
- The Selection Board once took a fuller role in candidate selection and could take into account the relative qualities of different candidates as evidenced by their application forms. This power was removed because of the danger that bias could exist in respect to certain 'known' candidates. As a result far more candidates are now admitted to the competition than was once the case.
- The principle that personnel can select only those more junior than themselves has placed a considerable burden on the small pool of very senior female staff in the Commission

CHAPTER II

- The problem of candidate numbers has been compounded by a large increase in applications during recent years. There are now regularly three to five thousand applications for every major open competition.
- Pressures remain to give preferential treatment to certain candidates - especially the wives of those being offered appointments from the reserve list. No special provisions are made to comply with these pressures.
- Special competitions are held for specialists such as doctors and nuclear inspectors.
- There are separate competitions for A7 and A8 candidates.
- Competitions are not regular and are only held on an 'as need' basis.
- The Commission publishes some examples of past examination papers.
- Written examinations for competitions are held in 22 centres in 10 Member States (soon to be 12 States).
- The Commission does not reimburse travelling expenses to the examination centres and, in practice, some 40 per cent of applicants do not show up at the appointed time.
- The written examination consists of three separate tests over a period of one and a half days.
- The first test is an eliminator and consists of a non-verbal 'logical reasoning' paper to be completed in 45 minutes plus 5 minutes to read the paper.
- The second and third papers test general and professional knowledge.
- The elimination paper is originally developed in French and Dutch, then translated into other languages.
- The elimination test is computer marked by means of an automatic OCR device feeding an SAS package. DG IX examines the raw scores in their anonymous form and corrects for low discrimination in certain questions by reweighting scores.
- About 50 per cent of candidates sitting the competition pass the elimination test.
- On average it takes about eighteen months for a successful candidate to enter the Commission from the time when an application is made.
- Reserve lists remain open for 2/3 years. If a 'laureate' does not achieve an appointment within that time they are removed.

The main conclusion which can be reached from this evidence is that, far from being a neutral mechanism for the identification of talent, the examination system presents a formidable challenge to those seeking entry to the Commission. The achievement of an appointment by this means is as much a test of stamina and patience as one of intellectual ability. It may be further concluded that the competition selects primarily on the basis of IQ (intelligence quotient) criteria rather than on other types of aptitudes such as management ability or general technical knowledge.

Quite clearly, the effects of long time delays and an 'aggressive' selection process can readily have a differential consequence for men and women. Those with a limited time 'window' for deciding on an appropriate career, or their general career chances, are less likely to be in a position to compete in the face of such hold ups in the entry procedure. It can thus be hypothesized that young women in conventional familial environments facing the prospects of leaving their native country; balancing their career aspirations against the prospects of marriage and attendant responsibilities; or seeking opportunities to progress their career within marriage, are (on the whole) less likely to follow a single minded or more adventurous course than men, whose careers are generally regarded in western society to be of primary long-term importance. This situation is independent of the Commission's own actions to secure suitable individuals to fill existing vacancies, but it nevertheless probably interacts with the current competition system to limit the number of available female candidates.

We noted in Chapter I that the primary barriers to women in the competition system appeared to be at the two initial stages of acceptance for entry to the written selection tests and the written tests themselves. Our discussions with personnel from DG IX, Directorate A/4 have revealed what appears to be a wholly impartial process of initial candidate selection. Any bias which exists must therefore lie in the interaction effect described above, or in the distribution of relevant characteristics used for selection. The 'objective' criteria most open to question are nationality, qualifications and professional experience.

The Commission certainly does not have an even or fair distribution of staff from different Member States. As we observed in Chapter I a distinct bias does appear to exist in favour of French-speaking and smaller nations such as Belgium and Luxembourg. Given the existence of cultural constraints affecting women's attitudes towards domestic 'obligations' it is not perhaps surprising that such an imbalance exists in favour of local personnel. This inevitably means that a higher proportion of female applicants will arise from certain Member States and any attempt to limit numbers of applicants on national criteria will reduce the overall concentration of women going forward to the written examination.

Qualifications and professional experience probably work in a more straightforward way to limit the proportion of women at initial selection. In the case of Category A candidates it can be observed that over time the proportions of men and women receiving first-level university degrees has become progressively more equal. However, the proportion of women with higher degrees remains quite small in the majority of Member States and for this reason any selection based on qualifications, or the counting of post-graduate studies as professional experience will, on the whole, work in favour of male applicants. Similarly the existence of compulsory military service in many Member States could work in favour of men because it may give a further opportunity to gain

CHAPTER II

relevant professional experience denied to women with equivalent qualifications.

Next we turn to consider the possibility of sexual bias in the written examination itself. It should be noted that the battery of tests begins with a non-verbal 'eliminator'. Those who do not succeed at that stage do not have the rest of their test results evaluated. The researchers explored this critical stage at some length in their discussions with appropriate Commission officials and learnt that the perceived attraction of such tests arose from their apparent 'culture free' nature. A number of American verbal tests had been examined and it had been considered that they were not readily translatable into European languages.

Unfortunately no attention was given in the choice of elimination test to the existence of substantial research evidence concerning differences in male and female spatial abilities. A brief review of this evidence can be found in 'Sex-related Differences in Spatial Ability : A Developmental Psychological View' by L.J. Harris ('Becoming Female' : Ed Kopp and Kirkpatrick, Plenum Press New York, 1979). According to Harris "There have been many asserted sex differences in cognition, and most are without strong support. Spatial ability appears to be one of the exceptions. In tests of this ability, males consistently do better than females". One test cited by Harris concerning an embedded figure was certainly present in a logical reasoning paper examined by the researchers. In fact the great majority of questions required the use of pattern recognition or numerical series abilities. Academic research suggests that up to twice as many men than women succeed on such tests and that this sex related difference is to a large extent independent of age or cultural factors. If this were therefore reapplied in the context of the open competitions, it could mean that for a given test with 84 male and 16 female candidates and an average 50% pass rate the 50 persons succeeding in the test would consist of some 45 men and 5 women. If we examine the actual results of the open competitions for Category A applicants during the years 1978-81 and 1984 (Table XIII, Chapter I) it can be seen that such a result is very much in line with the measured effect of the full battery of written tests upon the proportion of women to men. This suggests that a level of bias may well exist in the logical reasoning paper which should be evaluated by further experimental analysis.

Those interviewed during the course of the present study were all permanent Commission officials, many of whom had entered the organization over a decade ago and some even at its inception when no common, formal procedures existed for recruitment. It is therefore only to be expected that knowledge of the current competition system will be highly variable and subjective, stemming to some extent from observations about the type and quality of recruits which the competition system has selected.

Certainly, qualitative empirical evidence would suggest that long service officials found it very much easier to enter the Commission than those gaining entry in the 70s and 80s. In one case a chance meeting between an official's superior and a European

CHAPTER II

Commissioner in a train led to a recommendation and a job in the Commission. In another case a graduate in international law facing the prospect of marriage and, in the culture of the 50s the consequent end to her career, wrote to several international organizations, was requested to fill in an application form for the Commission, subsequently invited to see her future Head of Division and Director and took up employment without further formality. Both of these experiences are in sharp contrast to many recent entrants who have had to wait for long periods at every stage in the recruitment process, sometimes even taking temporary positions in other organizations whilst they pursue their application to the Commission.

One further characteristic of many early recruits to the ranks of the Commission was the great variety in their point of entry. A number of the graduates interviewed came in at Category B and transferred to Category A after a considerable effort during subsequent years. These were nevertheless exceptions and more frequently the tendency was for older and more experienced recruits to achieve high entry grades. In Category C this involved the immediate achievement of Grade 3, and in more senior categories it was fairly common to be offered a post at B3 or A5/4. The criteria for allocating new entrants to appropriate grades were not, however, always fair or objective. In one case the decision to recruit at A5 rather than A4 was given to be because the husband of the recruit was a highly paid professional and therefore the salary level of the Commission post was less essential.

Knowledge of the Commission was gained by many recruits during the course of their international or professional education, but curiously the majority of those questioned learnt about access to the Commission through friends or relatives rather than through specific recruitment adverts. In some cases friends or relatives who were working for the Commission had encouraged them to apply, whilst in many instances the first taste of life in the Commission came from a period spent as an auxiliary or trainee. Category C entrants from outside Belgium were particularly apt to hear about job opportunities in the Commission during a period of temporary employment in Brussels.

Although considerable differences have been found to exist in the individual circumstances of female staff at the point of recruitment, several distinct patterns have emerged which can be brought together to typify the situation of women entering the Commission. In the first instance a high proportion of women interviewed by the researchers were single, divorced or married to someone who also worked for the Commission. Given that the average age of those interviewed was around 40 years it is interesting to consider whether these 'qualifying' circumstances alone place a limitation upon the number of women candidates coming forward for the entry competitions. Certainly the majority of men interviewed were married with families in Brussels. Other characteristics which establish the profile of a typical female official have been found to be unstable or uncertain domestic circumstances; an upbringing in an intellectual or high achievement orientated

CHAPTER II

family; for non-Belgians - a special interest in foreign languages and a desire to practise them; for younger non-Belgian officials, a willingness to take a career risk by moving to Brussels; for a Category A person - previous experience of working abroad, especially in the USA; and finally a commitment to the 'European ideal', often for Category A officials originating from studies in international law or economics.

The competition system was discussed with a high proportion of those interviewed. For many officials the process was a mystery; it constituted a 'black box' out of which emerged future colleagues. Its validity could not be readily questioned - only its results. Several of the more recent laureates and senior officials were, however, able to comment in some detail. They tended towards the view that the current system failed to meet the requirements of the Commission and thus required reform. Several interviewees felt that the scale of examinations was too large and daunting, the tests were biased towards selection on academic criteria, too vulnerable to candidates' 'good and bad days' and not efficient in differentiating candidates of varying quality, even on academic grounds. Several people mentioned examples of high calibre people who had failed the tests or been excluded from sitting them because they did not have the requisite previous professional experience in a field the Commission was prepared to recognise. One official proffered the view that the competition system was not geared to select the best candidates, because to do so would lead to a high proportion of intelligent people being frustrated within a bureaucracy and constrained career structure which were equally unable to utilize fully their individual skills or satisfy their aspirations.

The slowness and/or inefficiency of the recruitment process was mentioned by a number of those interviewed - especially those who were not working as temporary or auxiliary employees for the Commission at the time of application, there was a last minute change in the examination date, the notification about the medical examination was very late and the other letter took two months to arrive. In another case repeated telephone calls to DG IX resulted in a telegram to visit the Commission the next day. Views were very mixed about the soundness of the oral examinations. Two of those interviewed considered the process to be just a sterile, and relatively undemanding, question and answer session, whilst another candidate found it 'very tough'. In two cases it was considered to have been operated improperly, with one instance where discriminatory attitudes were evident among panel members and a second case where the Selection Board consulted those in 'the hierarchy' before coming to a conclusion. This perceived bias should, however, be weighed against another experience by a former civil servant from one of the Member States who commented that although she had been asked in her former selection interview whether she had intentions of marriage, no such leading question was asked in the oral test, nor in subsequent interviews in the Commission.

CHAPTER II

A principal reason for the establishment of the competition system was to remove all possibility of patronage and preferential treatment from the recruitment process. In the view of one official interviewed for this study the system has simply shifted the time when favouritism can be exercised to the point of selection from the reserve list. For some the period of anti-climax when they had learnt of their success in the competition, but had to wait to gain an appointment led to considerable frustration. In one instance this was due to the individual's determination to obtain a policy job in the right DG, in another case the wait took place when the candidate was engaged in another job which could have led to an alternative career. Scope for preferential treatment in the conduct of appointments from the reserve list may also be increased through the practice, admitted by one official, of topping up the official candidates on offer from the recruitment directorate for particular posts by 'locals' i.e. Belgians from the reserve list or temporary candidates. This practice is apparently open more to those in DG IX than other DGs.

Few officials who had not worked as a trainee or temporary staff member in the Commission had clear expectations about the organization before they took up their first appointment. The most common feeling on entry was one of isolation and uncertainty. Few were given clear remits or immediate induction briefings, all were left to 'sink or swim'. A number of non-Belgians (with the exception of the French) found it difficult to adapt to life in Brussels and several officials commented on an apparent lack of social life after work with Commission colleagues.

One important consideration for married men and women taking up a post in the Commission from abroad is the existence of special facilities for children. The guide for candidates ('A career in the Commission of the European Communities') does make some reference to creche and schooling facilities. This includes a warning that creche places are 'sometimes limited' and also that the flat-rate education allowances do not 'always cover the cost of unsubsidized education'. In practice, the limitations on facilities would appear to be considerable. Interviewees reported to the researchers that creche hours are equivalent to normal office hours. This presents particular difficulties for those officials, such as interpreters, who do not work conventional hours or must change their rotas at short notice. The creche does not have an integral sick bay and this places a heavy burden on officials when their children are unwell. Several Category C women commented on the rigidity of hours to which they must adhere whilst many A officials had greater freedom to vary their hours. Flexitime was seen to have improved the situation, but many experienced difficulties - especially on Wednesday afternoons.

The reasons given by officials for the over-representation by men in the Commission tended to concentrate on the traditional role of women and the constraints imposed by domestic responsibilities. Some mentioned the problem of the age ceiling on recruitment and its affect on women wishing to take up a career in the Commission after raising a family. Few seemed aware of the

CHAPTER II

special facility for raising this ceiling for those in such circumstances. One senior official pointed out that one of the reasons why the LA category had such a high proportion of female staff was because they tended to be recruited at a younger age than Category A staff and hence could attract a larger number of more mobile, single women. The other principal reason for this more equitable balance was perceived to be because women are encouraged to follow linguistic studies at school and university. It was also pointed out that a high proportion of the new (albeit temporary) posts in the Commission are in technical areas, such as the Esprit programme, which tend to attract a high proportion of male applicants. One further observation concerning a particular technical DG - DG VIII - accounted for the high proportion of male staff because of a particular historical era which coincided with the establishment of the Commission - the breakdown of the French and Belgian empires and the influx of primarily male ex-colonialists into Commission posts.

Finally, turning from the problem of external recruitment to the question of internal 'job posting'. As we pointed out at the beginning of this chapter internal recruitment is a necessary stage in the filling of all vacancies. All officials receive regular written notifications of these vacancies and where they fall in an individual's own category and he or she qualifies in terms of service in their present grade there is, at least formally, the possibility to submit one's name for consideration. As grades are largely independent of actual 'job size' and jobs are not generally subject to detailed job descriptions it may sometimes be difficult to determine the requirements of a particular post and if it represents a true improvement in terms of interest and responsibility. Those who do apply, it is claimed, frequently find that the post has already been filled and that the circulation of the vacancy notification was just a necessary step to comply with Staff Regulations. In an attempt to circumvent this problem a number of those interviewed have taken the initiative and registered their wish for another appointment with the Assistant in their Directorate-General. This has not, however, been generally productive and, in fact, in one reported case where such an approach was made the forthcoming offer was turned down due to changed personal circumstances. Movement between Directorates-General does occur fairly frequently, but some DGs are not as popular as others. For instance, amongst those female staff interviewed several have claimed DG V to be particularly popular, whilst DG IV has been claimed by one senior official to be generally unpopular because of its high operational demands.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

- The Commission's role as an employer is both complex and highly sensitive. It must maintain stability and cohesion through an appropriate recruitment policy in the face of many, often conflicting, pressures.

- Change has occurred in the Commission's recruitment policies and practices over time and many of these have gone some way to make it a more efficient and fairer institution.

- Each of the European institutions varies in respect to its female recruitment record. The European Commission appears to recruit a higher proportion of women into its senior categories than the other institutions.

- Although ostensibly free of bias, the Commission's Staff Regulations are not, in fact, operationally neutral in the sphere of equality of opportunity for men and women.

- Problems with the recruitment process are far deeper than concerns about the representation of women on Selection Boards and the wording of competition notices.

- The competition tests appear to manifest a significant bias towards the selection of male candidates.

- The principal causes of bias in the competition system probably lie in the operation of the non-verbal elimination test and the scale and slowness of the selection machinery.

- Although changes in the national composition of Commission recruits may be necessary on a number of grounds, it could lead to further underrepresentation of women if a reduction in 'local' recruits is not compensated for by improved performance in the attraction of non-local female applicants.

- The characteristics of women who work for the Commission would appear to differentiate them from male colleagues on more than just sexual terms. Their special 'profile' may place its own limitation on the numbers of potential recruits that can be achieved, unless a material change can be engineered to make the Commission an attractive place to pursue a career as a married woman with a reasonably conventional background.

- Three further conditions which may be placing current constraints on the recruitment of women are

(a) the growing importance of post-graduate qualifications as a selection criterion for Category A

(b) the age at which Category A staff are generally recruited

(c) the continuing narrow definition of relevant professional experience and the possibility that preferential counting exists in respect to compulsory military service for men.

CHAPTER II

- The operation of the 'reserve list' would appear to be open to question as an objective means to allocate approved personnel to appropriate job.

- Job posting would not appear to represent a true and credible vehicle for internal recruitment.

CHAPTER III: PROMOTIONS AND CAREERS

The pattern of careers at the Commission is set by the Staff Regulations supplemented by a number of provisions determined on a joint basis.

In considering the problem of barriers to genuine equality of opportunity and before making any proposals we must first identify the general problems associated with careers at the Commission in order to differentiate between them and the handicaps specifically penalysing women.

We will therefore deal first with the following four factors.

1. General features of Commission career system and current problems
2. How staff see and feel about the career system
3. The particular situation of women in the career system
4. The paths of change: from combative change to programmed change as part of the general development of staff policy and positive action designed to secure equal opportunities for men and women

1. General features of Commission career system and current problems

Several features need to be highlighted in order to understand the dynamics of the Commission system and the factors affecting its development.

- Caste and career system:

The dividing of staff into relatively watertight categories - A, B, C and D - constitutes a caste system. With access to each category determined by level of education and internal or open competition, few staff in the lower categories have access to a higher one. Careers thus develop mainly within one category.

The promotion system is based primarily on seniority.

A career as understood at the Commission does not therefore correspond to a steady advance through a series of jobs each more demanding than the last.

Nor is there any grading of jobs based on job evaluation. (1a)

Careers thus amount basically to enhancement of status as an official rises through the grades of a given category, with seniority in grade and in the service being the sine quo nons in any consideration for promotion irrespective of category.

Besides the fact that the system based on caste and on promotion by seniority is the hallmark of large administrative organizations, especially the civil services in Europe, it does appear to be the one that offers the best guarantee of homogeneity and objectivity in the management of what is, both nationally and culturally, a highly diversified staff.

The corollary to this system of promotion by seniority is that career advancement is slow: a 'normal' career in each category roughly matches the duration of a working life. Budgetary constraints, in particular, slow down the pace of promotion to the top grades in each category, giving rise to bottlenecks and lengthy queues.

- Constraints on the career system

A system based on caste and on promotion by seniority could produce stability. But a whole series of constraints combine to disrupt the apparent bureaucratic balance:

- . constraints inherent in the actual history of the Community: successive accessions - the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark, then more recently Greece, Spain and Portugal - have upset the balance of the recruitment and career system;
- . political constraints necessitating a balance between nationalities: thus A1, A2 and A3 posts, though not formally dissociated from it, 'escape' the normal career system, making for ambiguity in a system based theoretically on the principle of promotion by seniority;
- . constraints arising from the 'demographic' development of the Commission: successive waves of recruitment have distorted the age pyramid and this is clogging the normal rate of promotions especially in Category A, where there are more officials in grades A4 and A5 than in A8 and A7; even if this situation changes as a result of forthcoming batches of retirements,

(1a) At the same time remuneration is commensurate with status (grade) and not with the importance of the post actually held.

it has left its mark on the recent development of the career system;

- . budgetary constraints which, as a result of the small number of posts authorized by the budgetary authority, have reduced the upper capability of the promotion criteria - those with the required seniority will not necessarily be promoted;
- . constraints inherent in the very nature of Commission activities: some Directorates-General are growing, others are shrinking, thus offering more or fewer opportunities for promotion.

A career system based on caste and on promotion by seniority should run like clockwork; but the fact is that these constraints have succeeded in making career development erratic and uncertain (as was noted in a recent Commission report). In the circumstances, it is little wonder that staff are expressing some dissatisfaction with the system.

- Management and the career system

An entire career system subject to the prerogative of seniority and thwarted by a whole series of constraints beyond its control could eventually rob management of one of the essential elements of its authority, namely its control over the appraisal, selection and promotion of staff.

This is especially true at the Commission where merit appraisal and staff reports are not such as to provide management with the means to wield such authority.

The absence of clearly defined objectives to serve as a guide for staff in their work¹ and hence as a basis for their appraisal, the "going through the motions" of writing staff reports - with one or two rare exceptions everyone would seem to be rated highly - all this goes to rob the concept of performance appraisal of much of its substance as a tool for staff management.

It is therefore other procedures and other practices that enable management to exercise its authority with regard to careers and, in particular, to promotion.

¹See Mr Christophersen's memorandum of 27 June 1985 - on the modernization of management and staff policy.

Thus, for example, the priority points allocated to each Directorate-General enable them to propose a ranked selection from the lists of officials eligible for promotion based not only on the criteria of seniority in grade and post but also on staff reports by immediate superiors.

Then we have the accelerated-promotion practice, which allows a certain quota of young officials to bypass the obstacle of age and seniority and move up into responsible managerial posts, still at a fairly early age.

Finally, the relative secrecy in which promotions are made, with staff not being supposed to know how their colleagues are rated in respect of the various criteria and hence effectively being left equally in the dark as to their own position, helps ensure the autonomy of management in its decision-making.

So as a result of these various procedures (priority points, accelerated promotion) and the constraints described above (budgetary, national) the principle of promotion based on seniority may be considered to be very much confined to Categories B, C and D; in other words in the case of Category A management figures prominently in the pre-decision discussions that would not take place were the principle of seniority rigidly applied.

If we look at the Commission's career system in terms of its capacity to preserve a reasonable balance between bureaucratic rules, multiple constraints and managerial powers and to select the personnel best suited to the strategic posts, it doesn't work too badly.

If, on the other hand, we consider another basic function of a career system, i.e. its capacity to define and implement motivating promotion principles rooted in clear-cut operational objectives applicable to all and demonstrating the link between advancement and performance, then there have to be reservations.

The uniformly favourable ratings given by superiors to their subordinates, the difficulty of appraising performances in Categories B, C and D, the length of the promotion lists which retards actual promotion, all tend seriously to dilute the application of merit appraisal in the promotion system.

So at individual level the career system is found most often to be not just not efficient but inefficient, not based on merit but making too much of

seniority (this is especially true in the case of Categories B, C and D), not as equitable but as unfair not to say arbitrary as soon as one steps out of the narrow bounds of seniority and, finally, not as transparent by virtue of rules that are the same for everyone but opaque by virtue of rules whose material purpose is or has always been a mystery to the individuals to whom they apply.

2. How staff see and feel about the career system

It would without doubt be presumptuous for us to claim that we have painted a complete picture of life as it is lived under the system. Depending upon the situation or the category in which they find themselves, staff see their careers differently. But some conclusions can certainly be drawn from the opinions obtained.

- A system lacking motivation

The main problem lies in the inability of staff to establish a clear relationship between performance, promotion and career.

True, each category can be distinguished by certain dominant concerns.

The As constitute a more homogeneous category directly confronted with career problems in so far as they can feel they are in the running for the highest posts.

Thus those who "get on" will have a rosier and less jaundiced view of the system than those who feel themselves - rightly or wrongly - on the sidelines.

But, as we shall see, their optimism is not due to the fact that they see the career system as efficient or motivating but rather to a conviction that, despite the system, they will still succeed.

By contrast, Categories B and C cover a wide diversity of situations and qualifications. It is therefore essential for the youngest and/or most qualified and/or most highly motivated in the respective categories to have the opportunity to show what they can do.

Generally speaking Category C officials, particularly secretaries, are overqualified for the type of work they are given to do. "We have to sit amazing examinations just to finish up in front of a typewriter."

This is reflected in a loss of motivation among secretaries, who also have the feeling, confirmed by a recent Commission report, that differences in qualifications and merit are ignored both on recruitment and throughout their careers.

Moreover, the procedures for moving from one category to another offer no real solution to the career bottlenecks in Categories B and C.

In fact, only a limited number of staff enter internal competitions; to do so they need the assent of their immediate superiors.

- Age and seniority count too much to the detriment of true merit

The general feeling is that age outweighs all the other promotion criteria. A brilliant youngster has no chance against an 'old hand'. Those who joined the Commission at an early age also feel that they have lost all the benefit of age. Similarly, qualifications obtained outside the Commission may appear lightweight by comparison with years of accumulated seniority. So a young A5 feels that if he hadn't done his doctorate he would have been four to five years ahead and got himself an A3 managerial post since "promotion depends not on merit but on years".

- Individual merit is not rewarded

It would seem that the Commission does not reward those who work or penalize those who don't. Whatever you do (as an A, B or C) you are almost sure to be promoted after a certain number of years.

- There is no real assessment of individual potential

There is a system of appraisal (staff reports) but immediate superiors have too many people to see and, as they don't want to make enemies or cause problems, they mark everyone as 'excellent'.² Consequently, staff have no idea - except through rumour and hearsay - what their chances are of obtaining a particular post or, if anything, believe that the outcome will turn on seniority ... or be a matter of luck and not necessarily depend on performance.

²The Legal Service would appear to be an exception in so far as staff reports count more when it comes to promotion.

Few superiors want to be openly critical of their subordinates. Admittedly, in Category A, through the priority points - essentially discretionary - a DG may secure a promotion based not on age or seniority but, though DGs may get something this way, for the staff it does not amount to a real system of performance appraisal. What emerges from the discretionary points system, as the unions are always claiming, is that it is more an arbitrary and/or abusive exercise of authority than a means of rewarding the best performers.

So, while the staff reporting exercise carried out every two years for all A staff might serve as the basis for a dialogue between staff and their superiors³ and give them the feeling that they are being properly "managed"³ - a feeling they don't have at central level - the report itself is seen as a sham with no material effect on the individual's professional future.

As it is harder to appraise performance and merit in the case of Bs, Cs and Ds, their staff reports mean even less and it is seniority more than anything else that underlies nominations for promotion, the problem then becoming the length of the queue.

- There is no hope for the ambitious or the young at the Commission. Careers are too slow.-----

Here opinions often differ between the staff and certain members of the management. The latter contend that, with the priority points scheme, the outstanding performers are sure to move up through the ranks. In the view of the former, the fact remains that the Commission does not allow all those who deserve it to have fast enough promotion.

The ambitious, the high-flyers, the power-seekers inevitably become frustrated and want to leave. What better prospects does an outstanding 30-year old A7 have than to be an A5 at 40? Will this motivate anybody? So for many the Commission resembles a compromise between the world of thought (university?) and the world of action (industry/commerce? the national civil service?) but fails to satisfy either the over "idealistic" academic or the "go-getter" who is too concerned with short-term efficacy and lacks clear and operational objectives.

Here we have the problem of the very ambiguous meaning of the term 'career' at the Commission. Is making a career moving through a number of steps and grades without any control - even relative - over the process or is it really

³See Mr Christophersen's memorandum referred to above.

making "one's" career even when one does not really know what the opportunities are? As things stand, the slowness of promotion is clearly becoming something of an obsession. Of course, everyone agrees - especially in Category A - that they can't all finish up as A1s but they all decry the lack of safety valve when careers are blocked - notably at A4. Some feel there is a tendency to minimize job dissatisfaction, which they see as genuine, deeply-felt and detrimental to interpersonal relationships, because people are either career 'maniacs' or ivory-tower individualists who have given up all hope of a career.

Another side to this problem of careers too slow for the 'whizz-kids' is the belief that the best performers are carrying the firm: the highly gifted and highly motivated carry too heavy a physical and moral burden by comparison with the one in four who don't deserve their place at the Commission.

- Management is overbearing ... yet management feels it has no power

Some staff complain that they don't have an overall view of things; there are exceptions, for example, those in Assistant posts.

Others, especially the younger ones, also complain that there is not enough team work and that there is no coordination by their superiors.

Others feel they have not enough control over their assignments and regret the lack of opportunity to prove their worth or to take risks and responsibility. Management does not delegate enough and everything is done to minimize personal responsibility. The principle of countersigning documents up to A4 level (the Head of Division, Director or Director-General has to 'underwrite' the lot) clearly reduces motivation drastically. Some staff feel "ground down" by their Head of Division.

Here again, the "solution" seems to be to "keep out of the way and be glad of it". So, as one young official puts it, is it really worth toiling and moiling to be an A3 if "you can't run your own show and you have a Director who holds you back, especially if he's not up to his own job ... so my priorities lie elsewhere ... I'm not playing that game ...".

Naturally those in charge frequently take the opposite view. They say that it is not always possible to have the person handling the file attending this or that meeting when the agenda for a meeting with the DG may cover ten or twelve different items.

Management for its part also has the feeling that it has no real power. An A3 or A2 may be able to block one promotion but still feels he has very little control over actual promotions in general because of other constraints which intervene.

- Mobility: a double-edged tool

Mobility is not really helped much by the administration. Although it could offer a solution for certain career blockages, it is not properly integrated into staff management. It is often perceived as the current fashion.

It is therefore regarded as essential by some and as futile by others. Some feel it should be compulsory; others would prefer it to remain voluntary and non-binding. The fact is that the further down the categories one goes, the less essential to careers mobility appears except in the case of really dissatisfied Bs and Cs, who see it as a possible remedy for their loss of motivation. Many believe it should be left to the individual to decide as some people need a change of office surroundings and routine, others do not. What seems beyond doubt is that the move must come immediately after a promotion as, in order to be promoted, one must have been in on's post for some considerable time.

Moreover, although it is true that vacant posts are published, they have already been allocated by the time the vacancy notice appears.

Mobility would thus appear to be a hit-or-miss affair in terms of both implementation and results. Even the mobility of brilliant performers may seem to work against them as in some cases, e.g. in a Member's Office, the promotion rules come second to political pressure, especially for staff in a low grade.

Finally, mobility is rated and organized differently from one DG to another.

- Succeeding ... in spite of the system

Against this background of multiple constraints that hamper the Commission's career system, of criticisms levelled at the various procedures involved, there emerges at the same time - and perhaps no less forcefully - a recipe for personal success, deemed achievable if only you accept, comprehend and play the system for what it is worth. Even more frequent was the thought that, since you can't succeed with the system, you've got to succeed in spite of it.

In a relatively rigid system with very bureaucratic rules the key to success lies in the ability of the individual to formulate a crystal-clear career strategy and stick to it through thick and thin.

A number of elements are essential.

1. Doing a good job. What might seem obvious is quite simply in contrast to the lack of motivation which characterizes certain officials. It means producing good case studies, being absolutely reliable, marshalling facts and arguments both orally and in writing and having the courage of your convictions.

All these elements are seen as tokens of an involvement which will eventually get you noticed despite the vagaries of the system.

2. Being highly motivated. Nobody, of course, can compel people to be motivated and many Commission staff may not look it but those who are motivated can succeed.

3. Personal commitment. According to some Directors and senior officials, what some of the younger staff appear to lack and what may account for their loss of motivation is precisely that ability to become personally involved in problems and issues, an ability which used to be more common.⁴

4. Making the proper choice. As far as possible, you must pick your sector, your DG, your post and your case work. Naturally this isn't always feasible but the main thing is not to let yourself be shunted around by the system and to keep the initiative.

5. Aiming for prominent posts and prestigious DGs. These include posts in Members' Offices, Assistant posts and posts in external delegations. To do this you must have contacts and know the right people. According to some you almost have to behave "badly" to succeed at the Commission. You must in any event know how to sell yourself and find props, national political mentors and friends. In this game of 'nuts in May', your immediate superior naturally plays a key part. He must be competent and fair, back you up, not exploit you and know how to let you make your mark by giving you enough responsibility. You in turn must not make him afraid of you but show him that he can always rely on you.

6. Being mobile. By being mobile, you broaden your experience and increase your exposure and you are better placed to choose the job that really

⁴Conversely, many young officials have the impression of being shunted around by a system on which they have little impact.

interests you. People would be less frustrated if they were more mobile. Moreover, only someone who has moved around can aspire to a career in responsible posts.

This is what it takes if you are "to put on speed" in the promotions race and by-pass some of the bureaucratic traffic jams.

So behind this recipe for success there emerges another image of the Commission as not only a hidebound bureaucracy but also an unstable and intricate system dominated by the political priorities and forces of the day, where there is in fact no set pattern but a mass of highly complex processes that have to be mastered if you are to succeed. You also have to be very philosophical, for what also counts - a lot - is luck ... being in the right place at the right time.

In this system, a mirror image of the previous one, person-to-person relationships clearly play a vital part. Although the criteria of age and seniority were introduced to minimize patronage on the recruitment and career fronts, they are also considered demotivating by people who see themselves as ambitious and talented but have reached a dead-end in their career. Conversely, person-to-person relationships help one to make one's way in an enormous bureaucracy and to feel that it is possible to gain recognition and support in what is in fact a very impersonal system.

The staff's view of the Commission's careers system is therefore diverse and ambivalent. In contrast to what one might expect, despite differences in their objective situations and respective promotion and career procedures, all categories share the same criticisms of the career system: too much emphasis on seniority at the expense of other criteria, slowness of career advancement, and so forth.

The A officials are the best armed to show their merit and defeat the criterion of seniority, but Bs and Cs feel this flow in the system just as keenly for it is in these very categories that officials of widely differing age, potential and qualifications are treated too alike, in a way which is obviously demotivating for the best among them.⁵

⁵See the Commission report on job evaluation and secretariat staff (1986).

So as much as belonging to a category, it is attitudes and reactions to the system that seem to distinguish officials: some are resigned to it; others see themselves as victims and say they don't understand it; and the remainder - the minority - struggle on in spite of it.

3. The specific situation of women within the career system

In this context how do we assess the situation of women? Do they represent a homogeneous and specific whole that can be compared with men in general? Does the promotion and career system affect women in any special way? Does it pose special problems for those who want to make a career? Is there potential discrimination specifically against women?

Although a whole series of problems do exist for both men and women - slowness of promotion, bottlenecks at various levels, etc. ... and even though, on paper, the Commission's rules apply to men and women alike, the latter clearly do have specific problems.

The very few women in Category A are having to assert themselves in posts mostly held by men, as the recruitment of women into this category is a recent development⁶ and still lags behind the recruitment of males. Their circumstances and the problems they encounter can be summed up as follows: the sparse sprinkling of women among the As by definition reduces their chances of being present in all posts and at all levels.

Women at A4, A3, A2 or A1 are still all too often the exception that proves the rule. But it would not necessarily appear the case that on the whole their career advancement is slower than that of men (see chapter on statistics). That said, a number of decisions not to promote women to posts which, say, they had already held in an acting capacity, has exposed the career organization at the Commission to charges of discrimination against women and the problem has been exacerbated by legal actions against such decisions.

⁶It was not until 1967 that the Commission started recruiting women graduates into Category A. Before that even women with degrees or diplomas were put into B or C, obviously at considerable cost to their career development.

There are still many men at the Commission, as elsewhere, who consider a priori that women are less fitted than men to hold responsible posts. The image of a woman in power is moreover typically that of 'the power behind the throne', as if that form of power tied in particularly well with a "female mentality", with no questions being asked about the organizational processes that confine women to such roles.

Even though their careers are not slower when they reach senior posts, the women in question seem both insufficiently experienced and too old to be entrusted with responsible and in particular, managerial posts. What has to be looked into here is whether in fact their experience is really on a par with that of the men or not.

In terms of career strategy, in a system of highly personalized relationships, women probably do not have the same network to draw on as men.

The behaviour of women themselves is doubtless a key factor in the specific problems they encounter in their careers. Feeling themselves to be in a minority and inferior position they no doubt tend - and perhaps this may change - to bottle up their frustration and play second fiddle to the men. Fearing failure or doubting their ability they do not apply for senior posts whereas men tend to feel, by principle and by ambition, committed to their career.

Whatever their age or grade the men in Category A appear generally unconcerned by the problems and attribute the absence of women in key posts to the small number of women among the administrative staff. As a few outstanding women do manage to get into high posts, the men conclude that the fact that more of them don't is their problem, attributable to attitude and especially to the need to make a 'choice' between working and family life, and not that of an administration overtly or covertly barring them from these posts.

To sum up, the situation of women in Category A would appear to be at a turning point. Obvious subjects of direct discrimination - even with degrees or diplomas they were recruited as Bs - they have in the past accumulated handicaps which then "justified" the decision not to promote them to posts on a par with those held by men, on the grounds of age or lack of experience. In some cases, now often quoted as examples, promotions have even been denied to women who had proved their ability by actually occupying in an acting capacity the very post they were applying for.

The very fact that women in such posts are so few and far between has made them special cases, a fragile elite expected to perform to perfection while denied the right to be truly the equals of their male counterparts. Could anyone imagine that only elite men are in the top posts at the Commission?

The increased presence of women at the recruitment stage and the fact that they now have a similar career pattern to men should at least partly remedy the situation. We shall consider later on what else can be done to help.

For women in Category B the problem is quite different. Here it is less a matter of asserting themselves in posts traditionally held by men than of eluding those traditionally all too readily assigned to women.

The first point to note is the very heterogeneous nature of Category B, in which women account for roughly 50%. It includes relatively older women who have held either quasi-secretarial posts or the more highly qualified posts of executive or administrative assistant.

There is little chance of seeing such women gravitate to different posts and their problem now is once again the slowness of promotion. For the Bs or BSs, former Cs, the big stumbling block is shaking off the label of quondam secretaries with which they are still tagged. From this angle the internal competitions from C to BS or B for very highly qualified secretaries were probably not the answer.⁸ First, they served as an alibi despite the fact that - mainly because of the small number of staff involved and their subsequent career pattern - they did not offer a real solution to the problem of identifying and making optimum use of potential. In addition such competitions demand a huge effort on the part of the successful candidates; failure can be traumatic; and financially there is no gain - there may even be a loss as a C1 secretary earns more than a B5.⁹ So the staff concerned are inevitably bitterly disappointed when they find that their success has done nothing to change the substance or interest of their work.

⁷ In Category B only 10% of the B2s who are eligible are promoted each year; it takes ten years to move from B2 to B1, which is regarded as the normal end-of-career grade for someone who started in B5.

⁸ The BS outlet is due to be abolished.

⁹ Successful candidates also lose their secretarial allowance.

All things being equal, mobility is clearly essential if there is to be a genuine change of image and of job but are the women concerned ready for it and does the administration make it any easier for them?

In Category B we also find young people recruited more recently on the basis of specific qualifications in connection with the refinement of management tools within the Commission: accounting, data processing, and so on. Women also seem to be under-represented in these new-style recruitments and this is worrying given that the posts are equally suitable for both sexes. The problem here differs from the preceding case (older Bs), in the areas concerned as it involves identifying potential among these young newcomers so as to avoid falling into the trap of the traditional female posts. Although the DG in question seems to be offering interesting posts to women in Category B, can the same be said of the other Directorates-General? For the women secretaries in Category C a common reaction is that there are no problems specific to women in Category C but simply the secretarial problem as such.

As it is women who have performed the secretarial function in all organizations since time immemorial, it is sometimes hard to distinguish between "women's problems" and "secretarial problems".

Be that as it may, the main problems in Category C are generally thought to be over qualification for the tasks to be performed and "uniform treatment for a highly diverse population",¹⁰ which cause a large number of secretaries to lose motivation as the most deserving and highly qualified feel that neither their qualifications nor their merit are properly valued either at the recruitment stage or in the course of their careers. So, as we saw earlier, it would be wrong to consider that career problems are restricted to women in Category A or even B; the slowness of career advancement, as well as the absence of any link between performance and promotion, is felt at all levels.

For the secretaries the problem is twice as bad because, as with certain B posts, performance is not easy to appraise. In addition, many superiors, wishing to avoid any headaches with their secretaries, rate them all positively, thus robbing those who feel they are doing more than the average of the opportunity to shine. The surest way for a woman to "do well" in Category C is still to be lucky enough to be secretary to a Director or a Director-General. Apart from career problems as such, we must also stress

¹⁰ See the Commission report on job evaluation and secretarial staff (1986).

the very rank-conscious nature of relations at the Commission; this is particularly evident in the boss-secretary relationship, which is cast in a very old fashioned mould and must be very oppressive for the women concerned. It is symptomatic that the secretaries themselves consider that staying single and having no children can be a major asset to a secretary's career either because of the working hours and the availability that the job demands, or because anyone working half-time finishes up by not being regarded as a "real secretary". In other organizations and particularly in industry the secretarial, by contrast with the management, function, is seen as compatible with a woman's family role; at the Commission the demands seem greater.

In so far as changes of category (C to B) are rare,¹¹ complicated and not necessarily followed by any real change in the secretary's "lot" they constitute no remedy for frustration and loss of motivation.

To sum up, women in Categories B and C encounter three kinds of barrier on the career front:

. the often very hidebound, not to say retrogressive, attitudes and behaviour on the part of a male hierarchy not readily disposed to help women move out of the "ghetto" of certain posts where such a move would undermine their own authority; confronted with management loathe to lose its prerogatives in an environment where everyone is anxious to protect their own image, women suffer from a special handicap for not far below the surface there is still the idea that they are "naturally" more satisfied with subordinate positions; the prevalent feeling is "that a woman can remain a B for life but a man will one day become an A";

. the absence of individual or collective recognition, which makes them feel isolated and abandoned, coping with uninspiring work and a hierarchy that smothers them: "We are but pawns on a chessboard";

. staff management procedures ill-adapted to their situation for, unlike Category A women, who can maintain a higher profile and draw on a network of relationships, women in Categories B and C are subject to the dictates of advancement based on seniority; more visible than the As they need to be sustained by good staff management, since they lack the assets of an individual strategy.

¹¹In the first internal competition for transfers from C to B, which was held in 1985, there were 800 candidates for 74 places.

The fact is that women in B and C are in a "catch 22" situation: if they try to stand out from the crowd, they are ostracized and people are only too happy to point out their inability to adapt. If they adapt, this will be construed as proof of their inability to make a career as they are doing what is expected of those in subordinate posts.

4. The paths of change: from combative change to programmed change as part of the general development of staff policy and positive action designed to secure equal opportunities for men and women

The conviction that women suffer specific career handicaps derives mainly from decisions taken by the appointing authority which are seen by the women concerned as discriminating against them.¹² These decisions have given rise to legal proceedings, the outcome of which will have the merit if not of repairing wrongs at least of clarifying the principles underlying the offending decisions.

However, experience and analysis¹³ show that such disputes, though having the great merit of highlighting the problem of discrimination, are not going to bring about a general change in attitudes, behaviour and practices.

What they do in fact is to focus attention on individual decisions at the risk of obscuring all the other processes involved in the "systematic discrimination" against women.

One of the paths of change is undoubtedly via the mobilization of women themselves. Thus one of the benefits of setting up of the A4-A5 women's group ("réseau des femmes A4-A5") has been to mobilize potential female high-flyers and break their isolation. On the strength of the premise that, if women don't apply for posts, they have no chance of being appointed, the group aims to confront the male hierarchy with the problem of appointing women A3s. Yet only 40 women out of 110 have supported the group. The others were afraid

¹²This happened to Mrs Delauche, whom we can mention by name as her case is public knowledge.

¹³See the works of E. Vogel-Polski and the symposium entitled Etude des programmes d'actions positives en tant que stratégies destinées à intégrer les travailleurs féminins et d'autres groupes minorisés dans le marché du travail. Report compiled for the Commission of the European Communities (November 1982).

to join or else don't feel any solidarity, a frequent reaction on the part of career women.

But for this type of action to be effective it will at some time or other have to be backed by a genuine desire for change at the top. Otherwise, there will always be just as few women promoted to A3.

Beyond these paths of change, which are essential if the problem of discrimination is to be clearly exposed, we must hope for more widespread reforms that will attack the roots of the problem.

There are three possibilities:

- . changes in the level of recruitment of women and in their attitude to their career which will help put their qualifications to better use;
- . changes in the Commission's employment and staff management practices, ensuring greater equality of treatment for women and men as part of an overall development;
- . measures for change based on the premise that women are the victims of specific discrimination and that only positive measures can compensate for the handicaps they have suffered and are still suffering and bring about genuine equality of opportunity.

(a) Changes in the training and attitudes of women combined with changes in the Commission's employment practices should improve the career situation of women

In the case of Category A, women arriving on the job market now are better qualified than they were twenty years ago. It is to be hoped that the number of applicants for competitions will continue to increase. The fact that women are now recruited into Category A, the more widespread use of competitions based on a given level of qualification as a method of recruitment, the fact that virtually all Commission officials now start at the bottom of the ladder and are governed by the same promotion procedures (whereas twenty years ago one Head of Division in four was recruited outside), the very

marked change in the age pyramid,¹⁴ these are all factors which should normalize the career process at the Commission and improve the promotion prospects of the youngest recruits of whom 16% are now women.

The charges are also partly attributable to the new image of women's work and of women themselves. Young women, with similar training, who have not had a sexist education, whose career pattern has been more like that of men, are certainly better fitted both psychologically and practically to face the world of the Commission. Many men at the Commission criticize women who have climbed high enough up the ladder to occupy managerial posts for their lack of detachment and their lack of composure. Obviously this type of post entails a certain apprenticeship which in the past women were not prepared to undertake. When the women in question have had the same career pattern as men, those who refuse to promote them will no longer be able to use these arguments. Similarly, the traditional image of women's work, with women working for 'pin money' and not aspiring to a real career especially if there are family demands on them which will cause them sooner or later to interrupt their working life, is blurring. And women themselves and the environment are generally more receptive to the idea that a woman can have a career and a family provided she is able to organize herself properly.

Yet these developments are not enough in themselves to ensure equal representation for women in Category A; more women are now being recruited into that category but only very slowly. If the aim is to increase their number significantly, given the specific situation of women vis-à-vis the problems of expatriation or the dual career, other forms of action will obviously be needed.

For women in Category B, analysis of the recruitment pattern in recent years prompts a gloomy forecast if nothing is done to remedy the situation. We find fewer and fewer women among the young B recruits, which would suggest the more technical qualifications now in demand at this level (accounting, data processing, etc.) rather tend to favour men at the expense of women (see chapter on recruitment).

¹⁴This age pyramid reflects the successive waves of recruitment at the Commission. As things stand at present, there are more officials in the A5/4 than in the A7/6 bracket, thereby blocking promotion possibilities. In a few years' time, when these officials have retired, career prospects will be generally brighter. Incentives to early retirement for older A4 officials who have no further chance of being promoted to A3 have not so far sufficed to free many posts.

In the case of women in Category C, the problem is already familiar since it has been examined in a Commission report.¹⁵ Without going into detail on the conclusions, we would just say that the basic problem is one of loss of motivation as high qualifications are demanded for posts of very varied interest. Given that the majority of Category C staff are women and true equality would mean more men doing secretarial work, there is no need to point out just how much of a mental revolution this would require. We shall revert to this when the time comes to consider avenues of positive action.

Moreover, the level of education or professional experience, the grade in which secretaries are recruited and the nature of the posts occupied are not properly matched. There is therefore a problem with the recruitment procedure as all secretaries are taken on in C5, which means that no distinction is made between highly qualified secretaries in secretarial posts and secretaries in typing posts. This affects career advancement, which will be very slow (with long waiting periods between promotions) and well-nigh identical regardless either of the demands of the post or of merit.

(b) The situation of women would benefit from changes in staff management policies and procedures.

The general feeling, also among those directly involved (Assistants, DG IX representatives) is that there is no staff management in the real sense of the term despite the excellent calibre of Commission staff. Overcomplicated and incomprehensible procedures (even though the administration may feel it spends a lot of time explaining them), the absence of staff appraisal, the lack of career guidance for young members of staff, the absence of a mobility procedure worthy of the name, all these defects and more are denounced at all levels.

The major problem now is to succeed in remotivating staff by means of a more equitable, clearer and more dynamic staff management policy which motivates in its own right as well as administering.¹⁶ The problem has already been diagnosed and the findings are now available.

¹⁵ See the Commission report on job evaluation and secretarial staff op. cit.

This paper argues that social developments would appear to be calling into question the traditional structures of resource management as a result of higher standards of training and greater aspirations on the part of staff, while technological advance is helping to cut down on routine tasks. Some modernization of staff management could therefore be achieved if the administration were better able to identify objectives at the various levels to serve as a guide and an instrument of motivation enabling the individual to identify more clearly his or her own contribution to the attainment of the Commission's aims. With this in mind, says the author, management structures must be revamped to focus on decentralization of responsibilities, increased responsibility for the individual, delegation, communication and recognition of officials as individuals. All this should make for better utilization of intellectual capacity and increased motivation right across the board.

If management is to shoulder its responsibilities in all these areas - pursuit of agreed objectives, professional development and job satisfaction for the staff under its authority - the Commission's objectives must obviously be clear and operational at all levels of the command structure. Objectives must also be set for professional development to serve as the basis for planned career profiles, training courses and mobility programmes. Methods for delegating responsibility and more effective monitoring procedures must also be devised.

Careers, particularly those of the more senior ranks, need to be more carefully administered in order to sustain motivation and preserve ability to adapt in a fast-changing environment. Mobility, as well as training, must be consolidated. This calls for very close liaison between Directorates-General and the central authority so that the career development of future top management can be planned for the Commission in its entirety.

In this context serious thought must be given to the role of the Consultative Committee on Appointments. To accompany these changes a reform of the career system involving amendments to the Staff Regulations is being studied.

By definition more active staff management will involve improving equality of opportunity between men and women; but it is also clear that anything that can make for better management of human resources will likewise be beneficial to women. Indeed such management is the best guarantee against discrimination, which tends to be rooted in traditional stereotyping whereas

What should really count are the attainment of professional objectives and individual merit.

There is a lot of support among staff for this desire for modernization. Yet there is still widespread scepticism, probably because it has been talked about for so long and because any changes to the Commission's Staff Regulations necessarily mean involving Parliament. Some would prefer a more pragmatic approach that would try to change attitudes and practices without attempting to meddle with the basic rules. This would involve more ad hoc proposals, of which those that follow are only a few examples, all of them designed to improve the efficiency of the career system, resource deployment and policy control.

1. Better control over changes in requirements and staff resources. Each DG possesses posts, not people. Even if the post is no longer needed, it may be kept. If there is to be a proper element of control and sound staff management, the situation has to be more carefully analysed. The problem here is one of rationalizing resources and manpower, especially through mobility and not necessarily recruitment.

2. Changing the system of discretionary points at the disposal of each DG so as not to favour the small DGs, which enjoy far greater flexibility than the big ones when it comes to awarding promotions.

3. Improving the accelerated promotion process. The slowness of career advancement, the bottlenecks at certain A4 and A3 levels, the top-heavy age pyramid, all militate in favour of a promotion procedure that will help offset the unwieldiness of the system and allow ambitious young officials, who, as we have seen, tend to be penalized by the current set-up, to reach senior posts before they are too old.

This would create a pool of future managers, from which future top management could be drawn. At present, not many A5s are promoted A4 before the age of 40. The aim should be to appoint A3s at 45 and not at 50 or 55.

4. Better organization of mobility. People often used to be recruited at a later age and on the strength of specific expert knowledge or proficiency and there was little incentive for mobility. Now attitudes have changed and young A7s are told that they should not stay more than five years in the same post. This helps identify the best among them. But it also creates a spirit of rivalry between DGs who don't want to lose their good material.

5. Giving more thought to performance appraisal at all levels. There is a genuine feeling that only those high up the ladder are worth keeping a close eye on and that seniority will do for the rest. Admittedly, performance is hard to appraise in some cases but the problem exists throughout for those who feel they have not been appraised fairly.

6. Ensuring greater transparency in the promotion procedures. Procedures have been written down, information is provided but the problem remains. The decisions remain opaque - intentionally. Everybody knows what points (age, seniority, etc.) he or she has, but not the situation of anyone else, which means that superiors do not have to justify their decisions.

7. Improving the staff management of women in Category B. The Bs have less clearly defined tasks to perform so an extra effort has to be made to assess them. In fact, it would be true to say that it is the Bs who have least in the way of prospects; the real career expectations lie with the As.

8. Ensure that women, especially, follow training courses.

9. If it is true that women who succeed really are sponsored, it should be possible to organize an institutional sponsor who could assist women with good career potential.

10. Using internal competitions as a genuine avenue of promotion for those who most deserve it. Open competitions currently enjoy more prestige. Management ought perhaps to change its approach and work out how to make better use of successful candidates in internal competitions.

11. Easing transfers from LA to A. Although some LAs do occupy management posts and their qualifications are very much on a par with those of As, there is at present no way of transferring. True, there is the problem of administrative experience in the case of LAs, where the imbalance favours the women.

12. Possibly changing the role of DG IX in staff management. DG IX used to know nothing of the needs of the other DGs. There was a feeling that it performed "art for art's sake". Now, it makes a major effort to acquire information; people with problems are listened to. But even more must be done if management is to be more personal.

13. Identifying problem DGs i.e. those where there are too few or too many women, in order to see how to restore the balance at the different levels

and keep an eye on the role of the Assistants, who are as pivotal when it comes to filling posts from competition reserve lists.

14. Making Directors-General more aware of the problem of equality, as their role is essential in deciding who to recruit and who to promote.

15. Very detailed studies on careers could be useful in identifying specific career problems. One could for example take all the successful candidates from a given competition and see at what level they were recruited and where they are now. Another possibility would be to scrutinize the decision-making process for the appointment of Heads of Division in order to find out why women are excluded.

16. Compiling and following up operational statistics. In the case of promotions, for example, the age brackets for women are not the same as for men; the causes of this anomaly should be analysed and follow-up action devised.

17. Looking at the problem of the markedly heavyhanded and paternalistic relations between superiors and their subordinates, especially secretaries. Decentralized staff management could mean that these women have no one to turn to should they want to follow training courses or opt for mobility against the wishes of their immediate superiors.

18. Knowing the ropes. This would involve identifying the 'good posts', the key sectors, the posts in which one can gain managerial experience and experience. If women are not promoted soon enough, they reach responsible managerial posts between the age of 40 and 50. Too late! "An ambitious man is noticed, heeded; a woman is not."

19. Developing the concept of "high flyer". The accelerated-promotion procedure would thus be underpinned by precise performance criteria. Seniority would still be the rule but staff would know that performance was rewarded.

(c) Positive action to improve equality of opportunity

Apart from the two avenues of change described above, there is scope for positive action to speed up change on the equal opportunities front and to improve on results already achieved. One of the findings that would militate

in favour of such positive action is the disparity between a fairly widespread awareness and a reality that offers little cheer despite some favourable developments, such as the growing proportion of women recruited into Category A.

In this context it might be worthwhile to set definite and clear-cut objectives in respect of equality of opportunity for those in positions of responsibility, notably in the careers sector, based on the more general changes described earlier.

It must nevertheless be said that the majority of staff interviewed are against the idea of positive action such as the imposition of quotas of women at various points on the career plan. The fiercest opponents argue that, as the source of women's problems at the Commission (under-representation at high levels, over-representation at the lower levels, concentration in certain types of "less important" posts) lies outside the Commission, it is pointless to try and solve them from within. They believe that once more women are recruited to Category A, the problem will solve itself. As for the problems of women in B or C, either they will be solved by an improvement in turnover or there is no solution as they are inherent in the content of the posts held. So, if anything, it is pessimism that tends to prevail as regards positive action, with stress laid on the risk of efforts being counterproductive by working against women or lowering the standard of those recruited and/or promoted. Moreover, so the argument goes, such measures have no chance of working unless they are based on a clear political will at the top, something which many consider highly unlikely.

There are others who are less hostile to positive action. They feel that blatant instances of discrimination show the need to sensitize and wake people up to the problem, especially those high up the ladder. One possible course of action would be to set quotas at various levels, quotas which, albeit not very rigid, do already exist for nationality.

But apart from this few suggestions for positive action were forthcoming. COPEC should have a key role here as a generator of proposals and a conveyor belt between administration, unions and staff.

¹⁷ See the answers to written questions to the Council and, in particular, the report by Marlène Lenz on the situation of women in the institutions of the European Community (7 September 1983).

A broad consensus does in fact exist between COPEC and the Intersyndicale on the most appropriate fronts for action: recruitment, training, careers, working conditions and social infrastructure. Such action would back up the awareness campaigns already under way to mobilize the various groups involved in the recruitment, training and career processes.

The thing to do now would seem to be to take stock of what has already been done, spell out or re-spell out qualified objectives for various areas and target groups and provide comprehensive internal information both on progress achieved and on action in hand.

However, such action clearly has no chance of working unless it is inspired by a determined political will at the top.

CHAPTER IV - TRAINING

Making training a key element in the Commission's modernization policy will help weld training and staff policy together; more importantly, it acknowledges the value of training in the development of the organization and its staff. One of the functions of training must therefore be to complement the equal opportunities policy, a function which was given practical application in the 1986 training programme.

But beyond this formal involvement, what role can training play as part of the Commission's positive action plan. If the objectives are to give women wider access to responsible posts or to get them out of "backwater" posts, what is needed? Do women have specific requirements? If so, what are they? What image does training currently have among the persons we interviewed (staff and management)? These are some of the aspects we look at below.

1. The image of training

1.1 Misunderstood and disliked by some...

A climate of distrust has set in between training and its 'potential customers', strengthened by their superiors.

"If someone wants to go on a course, they say he or she wants a holiday or has nothing to do."

This shows that the concept of continuous training has not been taken on board by the population interviewed.

Most of the time it is on their own initiative with their boss's approval that staff go on courses. But it would appear that approval is forthcoming without identification of individual training needs or reference to staff reports or appraisal interviews. Training in other words is perceived as "a rest cure", a way of "looking busy" or quite simply "a waste of time".

¹The 1986 training programme offers equal opportunities awareness sessions and pilot seminars for As and LAs: "Women managers" and "Men and women as colleagues".

For some, even language or data-processing courses are seen in the same light.

1.2 Sought after by others...

However, the majority agree that the Commission banks on training acquired prior to recruitment but that subsequent training is inadequate. And there is unanimity on the dire need for management training, for example:

"Most officials above A4 who have to run a team have never had any management training."

"I learned on the job. Am I doing it well? I don't know."

1.3 How do we explain this discrepancy between what people claim to want and what they actually do?

We know of course that those in charge have a major role to play in the success of training: their interest, involvement and encouragement mean a great deal to their subordinates; their irritation and disapproval too.

"We lose too much when people are away from their desk on a course."

1.4 Because of budgetary constraints the programmes offered are generally one-off and limited in scope. Only the language courses enjoy a certain continuity. This "à la carte" approach is criticized.

"The Directorates-General organize training for themselves or send people outside. It's a state within the state."

1.5 Nor does training get adequate recognition:

"In any case, the effort is not appreciated."

Although the Staff Regulations stipulate that training is to be taken into account for career purposes (particularly for staff reports and promotions), interviewees had no faith in the value of training in this connection:

"For Bs and Cs promotion is automatic and for As there are so many other things that count."

"Training doesn't help you get another post, or a change of category, and it

isn't a requirement for appointment to a post either. It doesn't count for career purposes."

It is therefore mainly the needs of the job or a desire for personal enrichment that motivate applications from would-be trainees, since they don't have the impression that the administration feels it will benefit too.

1.6 There is also some unease about the status of "trainee".

"There's something negative about going on a training course - it's like admitting your ignorance."

2. Courses attended by interviewees

2.1 Our sample is admittedly not typical. Most of those in Categories B and C and in the lower A grades told us they had been on one or more language courses. This is generally considered the main priority. Several mentioned their interest in data processing.

Then there are also the management, public speaking and administrative drafting courses.

Less common are the courses on negotiating techniques, chairing meetings, etc.

2.2 With a very few exceptions, the attitude of the higher grades is different.

"No time."

"Every time I had the chance of going on an organized course, I didn't go."

3. Women's participation in training schemes

3.1 We have been given some statistics on women's participation in training schemes for the period January 1982 to June 1983.¹

The conclusions are as follows:

- women outnumber men on language courses;
- for the other subjects the numbers are well balanced except for:
 - . management courses (32%); this could reflect the proportion of women in the Commission structure;
 - . basic training courses (38%).

¹IX(84) D/000284 of 9 November 1984.

These conclusions are probably drawn from data collected over too short a period and there is possibly a need to keep systematic records of women's participation in training courses.

3.2 It may seem logical that the most heavily patronized training courses are the language courses because it is there that the most obvious needs lie. The other courses are geared to target groups (determined by category, grade or function) and attendance inevitably reflects the segregation of posts found at the Commission. With most B or C duties being performed by women, their access to training programmes is more limited and determined more by current work than by new duties. Women therefore have little opportunity to attend other training programmes.

3.3 Material obstacles...

Most women interviewees mentioned the material aspects of training, including timetables and location or lack of time.

"They are held during office hours, at 11.30, far away from the Berlaymont. They break up the day and it's hard to get there."

"They often spill over into free time."

"They are sometimes held outside Brussels and this complicates matters."

Timetables should therefore be arranged so as to accommodate the material constraints on women.

4. The specific requirements of women

4.1 Do women have specific requirements?

Various situations can arise.

- In the office

4.1.1 Women who were recruited with no special qualifications or diplomas and were assigned to routine tasks. With data processing and the introduction of new methods they are liable to find themselves with nothing to do and with no chance of being redeployed towards more complex tasks. In this case - and this could involve substantial numbers - they should be given the opportunity to upgrade their skills.

4.1.2 Women with a lot of potential but who for a variety of reasons - temperament, organizational standards and practice, social

habits - encounter internal or external barriers that prevent them from occupying posts in which they could make full use of their skills.

Such cases are to be found in all categories; and they should be identified and given adequate training so that they can overcome these "visible and invisible" difficulties.

But they are definitely proliferate in Category C. This category includes people who have not only reached an educational standard that would have enabled them to be recruited directly into Category B but also have good secretarial qualifications often plus a knowledge of several languages. These additional qualifications are of little advantage as they lead to the complex of secretarial jobs and often mean that the skills of those concerned are "underemployed" or "ill-employed" and the people themselves feel "at a dead end".

This is against the interest of Commission and staff alike. Failure to make full use of intelligence and ability generates a high degree of frustration.

Moreover, by drawing solely on male resources when the labour cost is identical, the Commission is depriving itself of female talent.

Giving more women access to all posts across the board would improve the situation, increase efficiency and benefit the Commission as a whole.

- Extended leave (over one year)

4.1.3 Women who have interrupted their careers for a lengthy period have different requirements. Because of their remoteness from the office world, from its demands, constraints and innovations, they are apt to feel disoriented when they come back. The job has changed, the case work has changed, the bosses have changed; they are out of touch with the latest developments in their field and sometimes lose confidence. It is therefore essential for them to keep in touch with the office during their leave by attending one-day briefing sessions; "reintegration" sessions should also be organized for them on their return.

4.2 Why sessions specially for women?

Both men and women certainly have requirements which overlap and there is no doubt that mixed sessions can cover most of the issues and foster mutual understanding, greater efficiency and a common culture. Any general training,

be it on management or secretarial methods, should, therefore be mixed.

Women are often in a minority in management sessions and at the same time, by virtue of predominant cultural patterns, they have specific requirements that are not satisfied by existing courses or mixed sessions. Moreover, in sessions where there is a climate of confidence they can deal with problems not tackled elsewhere including the conflicts arising from the need to reconcile home and working life, the "dual" management of time, the possibility of developing "female management models", and the opportunity to create contacts.

4.3 Areas identified during interviews included:

1. exchanges and discussions on problems specific to women in the working world (roles, stereotypes, models, etc.);
2. developing management skills;
3. self-knowledge;
4. communication and interpersonal relationships, e.g. self-assertion and negotiating techniques;
5. setting job and career objectives.

5. Equal opportunities training

The introduction of an opportunities policy necessitates training measures and an awareness campaign in various areas targeted at those in charge; the object of the exercise is to help the different parties involved in implementing such a policy.

This will involve training for staff involved with recruitment, selection and promotions to ensure that they avoid discrimination: consciousness-raising and work on recruitment interviews; preparation of alternative questions; compiling of course manuals avoiding sexual stereotyping; sensitization of those responsible for taking recruitment and promotion decisions, etc.

So, in order to satisfy these training needs, something has to be done to promote awareness among the staff as a whole and to organize skill upgrading and retraining courses as well as sessions geared to women to help them surmount these "invisible barriers".

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Keep systematic records of women's participation in training courses.
2. Sensitizing management to the importance of continuous training for all staff.
3. Arrange individual training plans geared to personal and departmental requirements.
4. Adapt training arrangements to make courses more accessible to women; suggestions include courses in the office, during the lunch-hour and in slack periods (July).
5. Examples of programmes

To encourage equality of opportunity and boost the number of women in middle and senior management, various types of training could be organized.

5.1 Skill upgrading and development

(a) Enable the less well-educated (those without a school-leaving certificate) to take 'skill upgrading' courses. As the new technologies eliminate much of the donkey work, staff responsible for routine tasks should be allowed to grow into other types of activity and become more mobile.

(b) Identify women in Categories B and C who have potential and give them the chance to go on courses to prepare them for other duties.

The experience of other organizations could be useful here. For instance, the training department of a major Belgian company has started up a training school with its career guidance department with the idea of retraining a group of volunteers with no school-leaving certificate who are keen to change jobs in an attempt to enable them to perform new technical or administrative functions.

At the end of a year's theoretical and practical training covering subjects such as arithmetic, spelling, written and oral expression, and organization, these people will have the equivalent of a secondary certificate and be reassigned to work commensurate with their new skills and ambitions.

As part of its equal opportunities programme a leading bank in the United States has called in a university to develop and run a one-year course

for female staff without a college degree so that they can acquire the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to move into more demanding posts and achieve their personal and educational ambitions. The course programme covers arithmetic, basic management principles, written and oral communication, decision-making and interpersonal relations. And since the women on the course left school a long time ago and have family responsibilities as well their job and their studies, they are also given individual guidance for their studies, with advice on career planning and objective setting. The courses are given at the bank once a week during the lunch hour and in the evenings.

5.2 Developing potential

(a) Integrate women with management potential into the accelerated-promotion stream. Women are generally older than men by the time they are considered for a responsible post.

(b) Identify women currently "stuck" in their post, regardless of category, so that they can be transferred to posts in which they can make better use of their skills.

For any such volunteers identified as 'having potential' (through tests, by "assessment centres", etc.) training sessions could be organized to enable them to be assigned to other posts. Pilot groups could be given "à la carte training" like that on offer in Germany or France for women wanting to get back onto the labour market. This is a scheme that on the basis of their present standard of knowledge enables women to benefit from a training programme tailored to their specific requirements.

(c) Propose training designed to enable women to identify and more fully understand the female stereotypes paraded in the organization and to learn more about the specific problems and barriers they are up against. These group seminars encourage exchanges of views and give women confidence (see above).

(d) Propose programmes which help men and women to work together efficiently for the common good. A pilot seminar of this type is currently on offer at the Commission.

5.3 Consciousness-raising

For management and those in charge in all the DGs (especially those responsible for administration and staff management).

This would include information on legislation, prejudices and stereotyping, the impact of personality on staff management policies and practices, Commission commitment to and objectives for an equal opportunities policy and the resources available to the various departments and to those in charge.

Briefing sessions on the practical application of this policy could also be organized, notably for the appointing authority (e.g. persons involved in recruitment, selection boards and promotion committees).

Provision could also be made for consciousness-raising sessions for all staff on access to decision-making posts for both sexes and on what the concept of equal opportunities really involves (see above).

CHAPTER V - WORKING CONDITIONS

1. Pay

As we have not been able to obtain any statistics on pay, we have confined ourselves to assumptions based on comments by interviewees on ideas about equal pay within the Commission.

The majority appreciate the high level of Commission salaries and would agree that this has certainly been an incentive drawing staff to Brussels just as it is now a deterrent to leaving. It was in the context of the granting and allocation of allowances and not the application of basic salaries that there were references to the risks of unequal pay for men and women. It is common knowledge that in the working world, despite legislation on equal pay, salaries is still one of the areas in which there is differentiation between the sexes. So, even though the Staff Regulations provide for equal pay for men and women in the same category, grade or post, there can still be a gap between their average pay.

In the Commission this can be caused by a combination of different factors:

- the cumulative effect of their unequal distribution by category; as the majority of women are in Category C and they are few and far between at the top of the ladder, there is every reason to believe that the average level of their pay could be considerably lower than that of men;
- the calculation of allowances as a percentage of basic salary; far from being a "social measure", this favours the higher salaries, mostly earned by men;
- when both husband and wife are working at the Commission the different allowances are calculated on the higher salary and paid to the one earning it - more often than not the man.

This concept of the "family salary" based on a household and not on an individual is liable by definition to consolidate the status of "head of household" and the idea of "pin money". So actual remuneration depends

not only on the job done but also on relative position within the organization and as one of a couple.

Furthermore, in the case of the secretaries, some of them wondered why the secretarial allowance basically for typing is higher for the upper grades when it is those in the lower grades who type the most.

Bonuses would thus appear to be more closely related to rank than to work done.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Analyse statistics on average pay for men and women; greater transparency in actual pay would certainly encourage equality.
- Think about making allowances an adaptable lump sum rather than a percentage of basic salary.

2. Part-time working

Part-time in the form of half-time working was introduced at the Commission in 1973.

At the time of writing this report there are plans to extend the scope for part-time working when flexitime is introduced from 1 October 1986.

The figures in our possession precede these changes and therefore reflect the conditions governing half-time, the only system in force for the time.

The figures for May 1986 show that only 1.90% of Commission staff work half-time. Such a low percentage may come as a surprise when one considers the numbers working half-time in the national administrations or major organizations in the services sector, particularly in countries where part-time is very common.

Of this 1.90%, 97.56% are women and 2.44% men; they tend to be concentrated in Categories C (57.56%) and LA (28.29%).

Why are the figures so low?

It could be because the criteria are too strict but this does not seem to be the explanation. The reason probably lies more in the opposition from the management and the pressure applied by the heads as well as in the reluctance of the staff themselves.

Most of those interviewed on the management side were against part-time: those on half-time still occupy what are full-time posts in budgetary terms; it means reorganizing the work, a shortage of manpower and consequently a heavier workload for colleagues. This negative reaction is even more pronounced when it comes to allowing secretaries to work half-time: "they must be there all the time". However, it would appear that when the immediate superior turns down the application the administration is more flexible and gives the go-ahead.

Finally - and this is the most common reason given - there is the loss in cash terms.

There are also other reasons put forward which are more closely related to work:

"Either you're in a department and a job where there's a lot to do and you're judged on the results: in that case half-time is an illusion that works against you because you're actually working full-time for only half your salary. Or you're in a department where there's no work and then you "make other arrangements".

"Once you've been on half-time, you're never seriously considered for promotion."

The statistics show that those on half-time are usually married women; there are also a few men whose wives are working for the Communities and earning a bigger salary.

As one woman put it: "Half-time working is a luxury reserved for officials' wives. It isn't a welfare measure as women bringing up children on their own, who have most need of it, can't afford to give up half their salary."

Of the reasons given for being allowed to work half-time, by far the most common was the need to look after young children; there were also instances of a few studies, personal health, the health of a close relative and, exceptionally, a husband living a long way away.

It is important for staff that the duration of the period for which part-time is authorized remains flexible and that they are able to come back full-time whenever they want.

No doubt the new conditions (shorter working hours and flexitime) will prove more satisfactory for all concerned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The administration must make it clear in all its documents that the new arrangements apply to all staff, both men and women. If only women actually take advantage of them, this could result in them becoming second-class citizens.

The administration could also:

1. specify the posts that can be occupied part-time (with no reference to the sex of the incumbent);
2. define the scope for promotion and training for those on part-time;
3. define the scope for access to responsible posts for those on part-time;
4. make it quite clear that part-time working is open to both men and women.

3. Child-minding facilities

How to combine working and family life?

This question no longer applies solely to women, who have been traditionally expected to assume responsibility for the family. It is a problem for society as a whole and demands adequate collective solutions.

Child-minding is no doubt a more acute problem for parents working at the Commission, in that most of them cannot count on help from the rest of the family who have remained in the country of origin. Nursery opening hours compatible with office hours, enough places in the child-minding centres, raising of the age limit for access to the centres, assistance with looking after children who are sick and unable to attend the nursery, we have been informed by the staff representatives that these are some of the measures now on the agenda.

Given the choices that have to be made in the first part of this study we have focused our attention more closely on staff management procedures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The main priorities for the equal opportunities programme must therefore be to investigate the requirements of the child-minding centres in terms of equipment and the facilities they offer, to make parents aware of the need to share family responsibilities and to consider the possibility of extending parental and family leave. These are among the basic conditions that have to be satisfied if working and family life are to be combined.

CHAPTER VI: WOMEN THEMSELVES

I. Introduction

Studies on equal opportunities give¹ three main sources of obstacles to women's careers in an organization: distortions which might arise from personnel management procedures, received mental attitudes and stereotypes in society as a whole and reproduced in organizations, and the behaviour of women themselves.

What are the "pitfalls and obstacles" which women create for themselves?

After a brief account of two theoretical viewpoints, we shall attempt to answer this question on the basis of interviews.

We shall consider:

1. the career experiences of women in the Commission,
2. behaviour and attitudes which seem to lead to success,
3. disadvantages facing women.

II. Two theoretical viewpoints

(a) It is clear from various studies (notably Mr Hennig and A. Jardim, and Mr Horner) that a comparison of men and women with the same qualifications and degrees reveals many similarities but also a number of differences in attitude which might act as a brake on women's careers.

Women are more likely to lack confidence and ambition and be afraid of success. They tend to concentrate on details and tasks, whereas men are more concerned with the working conditions and environment which will promote their career.

Thus women tend to adopt specific types of behaviour arising from their socialization, which in turn is the result of the traditional distribution of roles and the expectations of society which women have internalized. It is hardly surprising, then, that they differ from a model of behaviour conceived by a society and an organization dominated by men.

¹See in particular the work of Mr Povall.

CHAPTER VI

(b) R. Moss Kanter emphasizes the organizational aspect: the attitudes and behaviour of men and women in organizations may be linked to their situation. Some jobs offer more opportunity for advancement than others. This results in two types of population: those who are "moving" and those who are "stuck". Women belong to the "stuck" category: they have few opportunities and little power, and those who have made it to positions of responsibility are generally in a minority and therefore treated differently from their male colleagues.

It is therefore partly socialization and the stereotyped expectations of men and women concerning the role of the sexes, and partly the situation of women which give rise to certain attitudes and behaviour generally displayed by women.

1. Career experiences of women in the Commission

Differences in recruitment

The history of women in the Commission is masked by a basic discrimination the effects of which are still to be felt today - differences in recruitment between men and women.

In the late fifties and early sixties "we applied with no idea of the significance of categories and grades".

Whereas men were recruited to A and B posts - in the case of some B grades, with no more than a school-leaving certificate - female graduates, together with others of their sex with advanced certificates, were ushered mainly - if not inevitably - into secretarial (category C) or in a few cases category B posts.

"I had a law degree. They said, we are interested in your application. You can start work as a secretary."

"I was taken on as an auxiliary in the lowest grade. I had a higher certificate and five years' experience as an executive secretary in the private sector. They told me I had no administrative experience ... I should have come straight in as a B."

"They were looking for a specialist in European law. They said I would be a B grade."

Some interviewees felt that this lost ground had never been made up.

"I didn't realize until afterwards ..."

"I blamed the Commission a good deal in the end ...".

CHAPTER VI

An often painful struggle

It was far from easy to obtain recognition "in a society created by men for men", and the painful side of winning acceptance for women as colleagues in their own right is reflected in the following statements:

"When I see what the women who are in high grades now had to go through ..."

"They put me in a typing pool. I haunted the corridors, waving my degree and protesting that I could do something else."

"You need to be a fighter."

"The suffering of women is torture. I don't know if they are happy."

"People trust men first, and women less so. We constantly have to prove ourselves, prove we can do more."

"I have known the humiliation of being a woman."

The "woman = secretary" equation

This assumption that a woman working in the Commission must be a secretary still predominates.

It is reflected in the statistics and in the actual situation, first of all, since six women out of 10 in the Commission are in category C. Secondly, it is to be seen in mental attitudes: since most women occupy subordinate positions, the attitude of their male colleagues towards them remains highly traditional:

"He calls us 'the girls'."

"If the Commission is inefficient, it is because of the women."

"I don't want someone who is having a baby."

"They are less ambitious than men."

Moreover, category A women are quick to mention the many occasions (telephone calls, reservation of air tickets, meetings) when they are addressed as if they were secretary to the man who is assumed to occupy what is actually their position.

A question of generation?

Some bosses maintain that "the women who are being taken on now are different"; their education and their self-assurance are such that they are not likely to encounter difficulties.

CHAPTER VI

They are referring here to young women - still in the minority - who are now crossing the sexist boundaries by proving, by their success, that "there isn't a problem." These young women, who are benefiting from the achievements and struggles of their elders, represent a new breed of "fighting women" who are winning their independence, money and success, by competitiveness and self-assertion. They reject the constraints of the traditional roles just as they no longer define themselves primarily in terms of traditional relationships with men either professionally or emotionally.

"A lot of men don't like women managers: it challenges their virility and undermines them."

"I wouldn't get married because it meant going to live in Italy: Europe is being built here and I don't want to leave."

"Intellectually, I get on well with competitive women."

"They told me this job wasn't suitable for a woman. I didn't accept that and I was determined to get it and to be considered for it."

There is no doubt that problems differ according to category, age and experience, and this is discussed in detail in the chapter on promotions and careers.

Most of the women interviewed, however, did not share the optimism of their bosses:

"They continue to deny that problems exist."

"A man is regarded as more useful than a woman."

"Where a man and a woman have the same abilities they always prefer the man."

2. Behaviour and attitudes which seem to lead to success

First some figures:

of every 10 women working in the Commission, 6 are in category C;

of every 10 men working in the Commission, 1 is in category C;

of every 100 women working in the Commission, 5 are in category A;

of every 100 men working in the Commission, 44 are in category A.

We asked interviewees, including the men and women we had been told were "successful": "What do you have to do to 'succeed' in the Commission?"

CHAPTER VI

The word "success" may, of course, have very different meanings, and there are many factors which govern professional success.

In the Commission context, success means securing access to the higher grades of one's own category or category A.

Men and women draw up their "Blue Guide to Success"

(a) Be committed, be mobile, do not specialize

"You must be committed, have views on things. If your job isn't interesting, change it, even if it isn't a promotion. It is only when you have a job that interests you that you can be committed and make a career."

"Don't stay a specialist, be mobile. The higher you go the more you need an overall picture. People would be less frustrated if they were more mobile."

(b) Possess technical and communication skills

"Write good papers in good time; use your initiative, show you can take responsibility."

"Show you can work in a team. Learn how to assert yourself without being aggressive."

(c) Devote time and energy to personal relationships and network-building

"I had connections with an influential person."

"Be loyal to your friends."

"Get yourself known by people who can help you, those who have been instrumental in the appointment of the Director-General, the Assistant, the Chefs de cabinet, Directors ..."

"Know the right people."

"Be on good terms with the Chef de cabinet; he is the one who decides who gets the top jobs."

"Be of the right nationality; have the support of your fellow-countrymen."

"Get the support of your Cabinet, Member of the Commission, etc."

CHAPTER VI

"Belong to a political group or a trade union organization."

"Have lots of contacts within the Commission."

(d) Be in the right place at the right time

"It's a political choice: you need to have the views and the national identity which are in favour at the time."

"Be in the right DG and on good terms with the Director-General. If you are not in the appropriate national group, you ought to transfer to another DG."

(e) Have an interesting job

"As soon as the novelty wore off I moved on. I am not a careerist. What interests me most is to have an interesting and responsible job."

(f) Get to know the career channels

According to our interviewees, the successful career should pass through one or other of the following stages:

- a Cabinet post;
- Assistant to a Director-General;
- experience in an external Delegation;
- be in the right Directorate-General. The ones mentioned were those which, either under the Treaty or in reality, have political or financial clout: DGs I, II, IV, VI, VIII or XIV.

What patterns of behaviour should you adopt?

(a) The type of behaviour most often cited is to make yourself visible:

"You need to become known, to be noticed at meetings."

"Find the people with influence and make sure they notice you."

"Choose your sector carefully; go into a high-profile DG which can be seen to have influence. Then work hard."

"Do things properly and be seen to do so, get to know people who can support you."

CHAPTER VI

(b) Selling yourself

"It is not enough to write good papers; you must be able to sell them."

"First, work hard, then appear to work hard. It is very important to look after your reputation."

(c) Intellectual, technical and physical qualities

"Be capable of expressing oneself, be able to sum up."

"Display a high degree of professional analysis"

"A sound general education; firm grounding in general culture, the ability to draft."

"Good appearance."

"Perfect health."

"Don't be stupid, have a critical mind."

(d) A taste for travel and innovation

A genuine interest in travel and meeting different cultures.

"Be innovative, imaginative ..."

(e) Competing

"Be highly competitive."

"It's a very competitive environment, so you must respect the code, avoid excessive use of informal channels, reassure your superior and don't be amateurish."

"Understand differences, be philosophical."

"Be able to make very rapid judgments when problems occur."

"Be able to assert yourself, be in a position of strength in a situation with a superior, turn the situation to your advantage."

(f) Communication and negotiation

"Have your point of view accepted both in the Commission and outside."

"Don't be afraid to speak in public."

CHAPTER VI

There are also those who claim not to understand how to, not to want to or not to be able to "play the game"

"I don't seem to be able to understand how to make a career. Even at national level there are political influences. Here that is multiplied by twelve and therefore impossible to monitor."

"Forget all about a career: find an interesting job."

"I didn't have it in me to sweep all before me, to be self-assured, to dominate, to use this place for my own ends. I can't be unswervingly cynical."

Women are more likely to cite:

(a) Personal behaviour

"Have confidence in yourself but have realistic expectations."

"Be assertive without being aggressive."

"Don't complain, be objective. All human qualities are appreciated here."

(b) Support from superiors

"Women grow with responsibility. If you give them responsibility they are better at seeing how to do things. My superiors supported me. You have to ask them to give you intelligent work. I had to fight for it. Men often think that women are not capable of it."

"It is very difficult to make your way in a man's world. I was lucky enough to have good contacts and good bosses. Many women are less fortunate."

(c) Proving yourself, doing more

"Women think they have constantly to prove themselves and do as much as possible with the result that they do more than men."

(d) Understanding and using the organization's policy

"You have to understand the power game and women haven't learnt how to do it - or else it doesn't interest them."

"We were brought up to believe that if we could work hard we would be rewarded. That's all over."

Since it is men who make decisions, women who succeed have been obliged to learn the criteria which enables them to win the acceptance of men.

CHAPTER VI

Women who wanted to reach a position of power have been able to do so only by adapting themselves to the existing standards and by internalizing the constraints.

3. Disadvantages facing women

(a) The first assignment

"When you work in a language pool, no-one comes to get you ..."

(b) Prejudices

1. The label that sticks

"A man who transfers from C to B or from B to A is more quickly accepted in his new post. When a woman transfers from C to B she is expected to stay at her typewriter. Women still suffer from their image as someone in an inferior position."

"People say about B grades who become As 'She used to be a B'."

"When judging them, people don't say 'These are good A officials' but 'For a former B she isn't bad'."

"A woman C grade is always marked as a secretary. The equation goes 'Woman = secretary = sub-human'. The Commission is a men's club and its rules have been drawn up by men. Few men think there is a problem because women are not a threat."

"When choosing between a male B and a female B the man was chosen because the women had been a C. It's a system of apartheid."

2. The greater importance ascribed to men's work

"I had greater seniority on the list. They said that this man was more 'deserving' ... because he had a wife and child and I was unmarried."

3. Beliefs

"There is no discrimination solely on the grounds of sex. Sticking points might be a lack of foreign language skills."

CHAPTER VI

(c) Under-use of women's abilities

"In the past they used to recruit secretaries who worked in a pool only for a limited period. Now they recruit secretaries to work as typists."

"My work bears no relationship to my studies or my abilities."

(d) The Lack of models

"The bias results from the predominance of men in the top jobs. This creates a 'man = high-level job' model, even if no other bias exists."

(e) Lack of a career image

"Women often have a lower idea of how far they can get in their career than men do. They like to be at an operational level and are reluctant to take more important posts."

(f) Inaccessible posts

"There are some 30 A and B grade officials doing these demonstration projects and no women."

"The man in charge is opposed to women visiting companies; it's not a question of ability, it's a rule."

"They told me a woman couldn't work on the Japanese desk. I contested this and the Japanese accepted it. My boss was very supportive and that's what made the difference."

"When a vacancy notice is very detailed, you know that the post has already been earmarked for someone and the vacancy notice has been drawn up to tally exactly with this person's profile."

(g) The lack of power

"Women are not consulted. When the Executives merged I was sent along. I was not asked any questions. They decided for the secretary what she was going to do without ever discussing it with her. When it comes to wordprocessors, they hold meetings of A or B grades. The users, that is to say the secretaries, are never consulted."

"Women should make themselves heard and command respect, show that they are capable of doing the same work as a man. Young men accept women; it is becoming the norm."

CHAPTER VI

(h) Not belonging to a network

(i) The behaviour of women

The cultural conditioning of women has not necessarily prepared them for resolving the problems they encounter in their working environment. Thus difficulties arise as a result of:

- the need to be liked and to win approval

"You have to reassure women all the time that you like them and appreciate them. You have to play the father figure and it can be difficult."

- emotional integrity

"Women experience things too emotionally. They lack detachment. You can't ask them to be committed and detached at the same time."

"Women are too emotional. They put their heart and soul into something they have to defend, or else they are too honest and can't bring themselves to defend something they don't entirely believe in. Wanting to see things through is a disadvantage as far as their career is concerned."

- lack of self-confidence

"They should acquire more self-confidence. Women are less inclined to push themselves forward at meetings, or in the preparation of documents, etc."

"Women accept less important positions. They should not accept different treatment because they are women."

"If you're not invited to the meetings at which your documents are being discussed you should make it clear that you won't stand for it."

- the absence of a strategy

"Certainly, as regards content, one would trust a woman: she knows her subject better, knows what she is talking about. A man will treat the subject in a strategic way."

- "Superwoman" and the need for perfection

"The woman is still mainly responsible for family tasks and is in charge at work."

"I like work well done."

CHAPTER VI

"Having to run a family and organize one's working life is regarded as a handicap. The fact that we do it is all the more indicative of our organizing ability and our merit."

(j) The behaviour of superiors

- not thinking of women in terms of a career

Although none of the C grade women interviewed mentioned her superior taking an interest in her career, the statement of a C grade man - very much in the minority in a women's world - showed the willingness of those in charge to help him "get out":

"My boss suggested I take on other duties and I accepted; I was chosen on the strength of my ability and my reputation. After two years, a senior official asked me about my ambitions."

Here we find the fairly common assumption that a man "must" have a career, that he cannot be left to do so-called feminine tasks such as secretarial work.

It is interesting, too, to see that a man working as a secretary adopts the active language of a manager rather than that of an "office wife".

One might certainly think that the devaluation of the job of secretary, its low status and the marked lack of interest in developing it, are not entirely unrelated to the fact that it is performed mainly by women.

It seems to be important, then, for women themselves to be aware of the personal obstacles they need to overcome in order to solve the problems they encounter in the world of work.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Creation by women of their own information and support networks.

This practice, which is common in the USA and has been appearing in Europe in recent years, is in fact a result of the realization that women lack contexts and relationships for the exchange of professional information. They are not part of the male networks which are still often an expression of masculine culture, they do not know the rules of the game, or do not follow them, or even lack the political judgment to understand these rules.

2. The development of a formal mechanism for identifying women who have potential and helping them pursue their career.

3. The organization of courses for senior officials and all staff to increase their awareness of equal opportunities and training sessions reserved for women at which the themes developed will include self-assertion, negotiation and the problems encountered by women in an environment where they are in the minority as administrators and in the majority in the implementing sector (cf. Chapter IV).

4. The provision of a "careers advice service".

5. The evaluation of posts and the qualifications actually required to occupy them, so as to make the criteria more objective and to link them to the requirements of the post and not the sex of the individual.

6. Staff reports for administrative personnel should include objectives associated with equal opportunities.

Conclusion

In this Chapter we have looked at the behaviour and attitudes of women themselves which often create obstacles for them in their working life.

However, it should not be forgotten that any change affecting access for women to responsible positions and the encouragement of equal access to posts, depends on the people at the top of the hierarchy, described by Lewin as the "door-keepers" to women's careers. The political will of those in charge is therefore of critical importance to any progress towards equal opportunities.

CHAPTER VII - STEREOTYPES

According to Walter Lippmann in his classic work 'Public Opinion' (1922) stereotyping is the natural outcome of an individual's wish to come to terms with their external environment. The stereotype is an oversimplified pattern which helps us find meaning in the world. The classification of others into 'Germans', 'negroes', 'agitators' helps us defend our prejudices by seeming to give definiteness and consistency to our turbulent and disorderly daily experience. The way our world is simplified has been described by Bartol (1980) as the process of categorizing an individual into a particular group and attributing a set of characteristics to the individual on the basis of the group membership.

Stereotyping is, in fact, a global concept covering a wide set of behaviours which, when coupled with prejudice, leads to a common outcome - material disadvantage for an individual through perceived identification with a group which has been adversely labelled. In the context of male - female group differentiation these behaviours can be seen to fall into three main categories :

1. Sex-Role Stereotyping describes the basic differences between the sexes arising from their physical characteristics and cultural socialization. The existence of genetic distinctions at conception is later reinforced by different bodily and personality characteristics. From the very beginning of an individual's life these differences are made more significant and pervasive by interaction with others. Katz (1979) has noted from extensive research that "infants apparently acquire rudimentary concepts about gender long before they know much else about the world". This realization develops through childhood from an increasing ability to categorize the sex of 'self' and 'others' to the concept of 'gender constancy' and then on through a phase where there is a tendency to over-generalize sex differences to a period of intense intra-sex bonding at puberty, before finally acquiring adult sexual behavior norms. As children grow up, they increasingly internalize the role models which are part of the value systems which influence their general thought processes. Parents, siblings, peers, teachers and the media all contribute to the development of their self-identification. Outside the institutional affiliations of family, school, club etc., they experience the universal distinctions and attributes associated with being male or female.

2. Irrational Stereotyping arises because an individual's view of reality is distorted by either a lack of information, illogical or retarded thought processes, or an 'abnormal' psychological state. Two frequent instances of such irrationality occur when an individual :

a) maintains a set of traditional role models which have been invalidated by contemporary social models, behaviours and trends;

CHAPTER VII

b) clings to a strong sexual identity and exclusive set of ties because of social insecurity and a latent fear of the 'outsider'.

3. Rational Stereotyping is the consequence of either intentional discriminatory actions on the part of those holding and promoting a given stereotype, the effect of 'statistical discrimination', or a combination of both factors. According to Thurow (1975) sexual discrimination in employment is often the consequence of what he calls 'zero-one' reasoning. Rational cost minimizing employers choose to hire workers with the most preferred set of background characteristics. The result is discontinuous 'zero-one' hiring rules. If a prospective employee's background characteristics are above a given level, he is eligible to be hired; if they are below that level they are not - regardless of their attempts to equalize their chances by compensatory behaviour or the acquirement of an alternative price for their labour. Stereotyping works in these situations to limit the scope of the individual to distinguish themselves from perceived group characteristics. Hence, if women are seen to be more vulnerable to job change than men, the 'rational' employer will feel less able to risk the loss of investments in recruitment and on-the-job training by hiring a woman rather than a man. The difference in job turnover rates may be minimal, but the consequence is very substantial. "Individual members of the group will not be upgraded in the labour queue even though they have eliminated their own undesired characteristics and are, on an individual basis, just as good potential workers as members of the preferred groups. The second type of rational stereotyping stems from the tendency for a group to maintain its 'raison d'être' by protecting its members' collective self interests. Thus, the act of labelling women with inferior characteristics leads to a substantial limitation upon the scale of competition for desired jobs. A small number of men can generate a considerable amount of personal advantage by achieving a modest currency for certain female stereotypes in order to take advantage of the statistical discrimination which follows. It does not therefore require the majority of men to manifest conscious discrimination for such a phenomenon to exist.

The extent to which stereotypes operate to limit women's job career prospects was clearly illustrated in an in-depth study carried out by Cooper and Davidson (1982). They discovered that around four out of every five women managers interviewed claimed to have been pressured to fulfil some form of female stereotype at work. The kinds of stereotypes found in the study included :

- o 'The mother earth role' which involves carrying out personal counselling at work and adopting passive, nurturant and noncritical personality characteristics.
- o 'The pet role' which arises because women are in a minority and can therefore be seen as a 'decoration at meetings' and the subject for patronizing comments.

CHAPTER VII

o 'The seductress role' which places a woman into the position of being a 'sex object' and therefore unable to be taken seriously as a competent professional.

o 'The deviant role' which is attached to women who reject their 'label' in order to be recognized for their true competence. 'Militant feminist' and 'manhater' are both examples of such a role.

The critical balancing point in an organization under which women are regarded as just 'tokens' has been suggested by Kanter (1977) to be 15 per cent. The meaning of 'token' in this context is the treatment of women as symbols of their group rather than as individuals. Cooper and Davidson (ibid) have found that such a position brings with it certain special disadvantages, including increased performance pressure, 'visibility', being a test case for future women, isolation and lack of female role models, exclusion from male groups and the adverse typification of their behaviour.

Stereotypical Behaviour and the Commission

The Commission is an institution which might be considered to possess a number of features which could be expected to limit the generation and dominance of sexual stereotypes. It is, above all, a genuinely international body drawing upon staff from different cultures and linguistic territories. Recruitment is based, at least ostensibly, upon objective professional and academic criteria and promotion largely on seniority. The function of officials is frequently to weigh carefully the relative merits of different options and achieve subtle compromises on matters involving often complex cross-national interests. In such an environment, it could be claimed, oversimplified thought patterns can have no place and therefore the true position of the individual will be both recognized and respected.

It is, however, equally possible to construct quite a different picture of the Commission. Within this alternative scenario we focus upon the isolated position of officials, lacking full integration with Belgian or Luxembourg society, remote from their national roots and perhaps consequently somewhat out of touch with progress in social attitudes. A further factor to take into account might be the tendency to label women with a badge of economic 'worth'. For example, although overall female turnover rates within each category differ very little from those of male staff, the overall rate of turnover in the Commission is low by the standards of many other institutions and more than half of those leaving the Commission each year are Category C women. In such a circumstance it is possible to envisage the development of close association between the concepts of staff instability, economic worth and sexual identity. Finally, we may hypothesize that the operation of a complex administrative bureaucracy may inevitably lead to the generation of a frame of mind which Mannheim (1936) has referred to as "restricted in range of vision to the stabilized part of life" and productive of "only closed

CHAPTER VII

static systems of thought". Such a mentality would indeed facilitate the growth of stereotypes as a means to formulate and control what Mannheim termed "the unsystematized interaction of living forces". The existence of formal, objective staff regulations and procedures would additionally tend to disguise the operation of stereotypical behaviour - even from those manifesting that behaviour.

Let us now turn to consider the findings of the in-depth interviews with Commission staff carried out during the course of this study in the light of the foregoing analysis and heuristic dichotomy.

It is difficult to assess with any accuracy whether stereotypical behaviour is very pervasive amongst Commission staff. Both female and male staff manifest examples of such behaviour, and many women's views about 'female characteristics' indicated that a substantial problem exists about the internalization of adverse stereotypes by women. In some cases the problem for the Commission does not arise from stereotypes assigned by its staff, but by outsiders. In one case, for instance a female A official revealed that she had been under considerable pressure from her husband's parents and wives of his friends because they did not approve of her following a career rather than conforming to their own model of a 'good wife'. A further set of pressures would appear to arise for the many unmarried female A officials who are unable to mix freely in the society of their predominantly married male colleagues because of the potency with which their own position is viewed by their colleagues' wives. In yet another case, the external pressure arose because during the course of conducting the Commission's external relations it was feared that Japanese officials would not be willing to deal with a female Commission representative.

Some stereotypical characteristics of women would appear to be shared by both sexes - a lack of 'toughness', greater sensitivity and more limited physical mobility. Beyond these, however, male stereotypes of women differ considerably to include - an inability to handle conflict, a greater tendency to show emotion, less ambition, possessing greater manual dexterity and an ability to handle boring and repetitive work. Women, on the other hand, were less likely to elaborate personality and skill differentials, although a number referred to a tendency amongst women towards less pragmatism and a greater commitment to moral principles.

Two instances were mentioned by female respondents of situations where women found themselves caught in a 'catch 22' cycle of disadvantage. In one instance a female secretary referred to a Director working in a prestigious Directorate-General who found it difficult to accept that a woman could hold a senior position. He eventually accepted a female A official, but only because she came with a desirable dossier. The way he resolved this conflict of principle was to refer to his new recruit as an 'exception' to the rule that women are inferior. In the second instance a relatively new junior official described the process

CHAPTER VII

she perceived as one in which junior female staff were excluded from responsibility because they were so young; as they grew older married women were seen to have 'other priorities' which made their careers less important, whilst unmarried women (who were 'on the shelf') were content with whatever jobs were open to them.

The most common female stereotype found in the study was that which linked all women to the role of secretary. A number of A officials complained that they had been frequently mistaken for the secretaries of their peers. In one instance an external consultant took a young female official for a new secretary and in another instance a quite senior official was assumed by the administration to be booking travel tickets on her boss's behalf rather than her own. This view was seen by one official to reinforce the overall sense of female subserviance and to perpetuate the problem of women's adverse career chances.

The study confirms the existence of many perceived stereotypes listed in the Cooper-Davidson typology. A number of those interviewed referred to the qualities of women as good listeners and confidants. In one interview a senior male official indicated that it was advantageous for women to seek a position in a directorate where there were few other women in order that they could exploit their visibility. The fear of being seen as 'deviant' prompted another female official to stress the importance of appearance for women in order to avoid the accusation of being 'mannish'. Above all, however, the most powerful image was that created by the 'female seductress role' in an often cited example of career advancement by one individual currently holding a senior position in the Commission.

There were few examples of classical stereotypical behaviour by male officials interviewed during the course of this study. Only in one instance was a dogmatic reference made to the proper place of women in the home. In a few other instances this value was implied, but not stated.

The most frequently mentioned way for women to avoid the assignment of a stereotype was to ensure that they were neither too feminine nor feminist. One example was cited of a highly successful woman who had risen from a lower category and was viewed by others purely in terms of her extreme competence. A more generalized opinion stressed the importance of women being regarded as virtually 'sexless' in order to succeed.

Lastly, it is interesting to observe that the proportions of female to male staff in the top category of the Commission remains below that suggested by Kanter as the threshold below which women tend to be labelled as 'tokens' and therefore taken less seriously. We may also note that the process of statistical discrimination could well be reinforced by the fact that the great majority of those taking leave of absence are women. Stereotypes are, after all, partly a product of the objective circumstances in which those who believe and use them tend to confirm and reinforce their prevailing assumptions.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

- The stereotype is a natural means by which order and continuity is given to our everyday existence.
- There are several forms of gender stereotype arising from innate and acquired differences in identity, together with additional 'irrational' and 'rational' distinctions.
- Stereotypical attitudes are a commonly experienced problem for women in professional and managerial positions.
- The Commission's staff would appear to give currency to a number of typical stereotypes, although it is difficult to quantify their strength and pervasiveness.
- The internalization of female subordinate images is a strong contributing factor in the effectiveness of stereotypical behaviour as a way to limit female career chances.
- Sufficient evidence exists to suggest that the position of female staff in the Commission is significantly affected by stereotypical behaviour amongst male staff.

PART THREE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our aim in carrying out this study was to gather preliminary data for a diagnosis of the situation of women within the Commission and to draw up recommendations prior to any positive action programme.

Having completed this research, we feel we can identify three broad principles underlying our work: the existence of inequality, current procedures and change.

1. The existence of inequality

Although women account for half the Commission's staff, they are not distributed evenly among the categories, since, of almost 5 000 women, 3 000 are in C grades and the rest in A, LA and B grades. In contrast, half the men are in A (and LA) grades.

From this point of view, the Commission can certainly not be regarded as an "equal opportunities employer".

2. Current procedures

Does the way in which personnel management procedures (recruitment, training, promotions, etc.) are at present applied tend to correct this state of affairs "naturally" or to make it worse?

On the one hand, there is a positive side to the figures. Recent years have seen a slight increase in the number of women in A grades and more women recruits. In the B grades, on the other hand, the number of posts allocated to women are falling and more are going to men; this is probably due to the fact that these posts are more technical.

Our study has revealed the effects on women of the way in which the personnel management procedures are at present applied:

- . The recruitment procedure is not a neutral and effective means of encouraging equal access to the Commission for men and women.
- . The opening up of posts does not in fact operate in favour of internal mobility.
- . As the career system is based on seniority (mainly for B and C grades but also in Category A) and on the ability to master a network of personalized relationships, there is little or no

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- . assessment of merit or performance; this represents a specific handicap for women because its place is taken by processes which confine women to subordinate posts on the basis of their "innate" qualities.
- . Training is not thought highly of by those in charge and is accordingly unable to fulfil its basic role as an instrument for personal and professional development at all levels and especially for helping women to advance their careers.
- . Sex-role stereotyping also tends to group women together in traditional jobs.

3. Change

The question of change arises because it is clear that the situation is not going to alter of its own accord.

What is involved in the definition of a strategy for change, supposing that the will for change exists? We must first identify the problem, then define our objectives and target groups, before finally adopting a participatory approach.

Let us examine the various aspects:

Identifying the problem (diagnosis)

Our report goes some way to achieving this but a great many points remain to be clarified given the complexity of the organization under investigation and the existing procedures.

We have seen that women in A grades do not generally find that their careers are slow, but because women are few in number and older the opportunities open to them are limited. In the case of women in Categories B and C, however, we found a marked concentration and a very pronounced under-utilization of women's abilities. This is probably compounded by the fact that assessment in Categories B and C is less good and women are therefore less "visible".

Thus, diagnosis is proving complicated: it is based on the present distribution of women in the different grades and shows that, contrary to the belief widely-held within the Commission, that all depends on recruitment, each of the procedures examined (recruitment, training, promotions) contributes to the present situation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Objectives

A number of objectives can be pursued:

(a) Sensitization

We must encourage greater awareness of the problem in order to make procedures work and attack prejudice.

Thanks to this sensitization process, for which the Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (COPEC) is largely responsible, a variety of positive measures have already been introduced.

(b) Action

Two types of action are planned:

- (i) action encompassing all personnel management procedures to ensure that women will be treated in the same way as their male colleagues.

This is "good personnel management" and will make better use of potential, "clean up" discrimination and - once the measures have been put into effect - benefit men and women alike.

Our recommendations include several proposals which refer to this type of objective - bring about change by revising procedures or improving fault detection.

There are grounds for optimism in the wide-ranging discussion being held within the Commission on the status of staff, secretarial work, a single career system, etc.

- (ii) measures to enable women to "catch up" in their quest for equality of opportunity.

This means all those measures aimed at women alone which, at the level of recruitment, promotion and training, could improve their representation in the different categories and in positions of responsibility.

We must emphasize here the paradox which exists between the Commission's outward commitment to this approach (cf. the Directives on equal treatment and the Council recommendation on positive action) and the lack of a consensus in the Commission itself.

Several arguments have been adduced to avoid recognizing the legitimacy of this type of action.

This is all the more surprising since it would seem that the Directives specifically state that in most cases such equality can be achieved only by temporary catching-up operations.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consequently, no consensus exists on precisely what is meant by equality of opportunity or on the measures for achieving it. This is certainly worrying, since the many experiments carried out in a variety of countries have shown that catching-up operations are the only way of achieving equality.

In view of the Community Directives and the Commission's long-standing commitment to a policy of equal treatment, one might think that this concept had been fully accepted and established within the Commission.

Our interviews, the atmosphere in which measures have been adopted and the extent and impact of these measures so far indicate that this is not the case.

At the moment, the idea that the Commission is bound to introduce equal opportunities by practical measures, as laid down in the Directives and the Council recommendation, is not much in evidence among the senior Commission officials we met.

The Commission is therefore in danger of finding itself in a paradoxical situation in demanding that the Member States do something which it does not see fit to do itself.

- Target groups

Any positive action must address managers and women in a synergic relationship. Obviously, since women in the Commission do not form a homogeneous group, the type of problem encountered and the nature of the solution will be different.

- Progress towards change

Firstly, a clear and unequivocal political will is required at the highest level, and, secondly, groups of senior male officials and groups of women must be actively involved; they are the ones who can determine the changes needed. This approach is intended to be based on participation.

It seems to us that the problem lies less in deciding what the changes should be than in the measures to be taken to bring them about.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Commission must first of all demonstrate its political will.

This should be the responsibility first and foremost of the Members of the Commission and the Directors-General. The individuals in charge of introducing the programme will report to them on a regular basis. The findings will then be published in the Staff Courier.

2. An equal opportunities officer, assisted by a unit for the "management of human resources", should coordinate the programme and be responsible for its implementation.

It would be advisable for this officer to occupy an independent position, free of pressure, and to be high enough in the hierarchy to have access to all senior officials and Commission departments. He must be provided with adequate powers, funds and resources to get the programme off the ground.

3. Working plan

First of all, a balance sheet of equal opportunities and the situation of women in the Commission must be drawn up.

This will require:

- the collection of regular statistics on male/female breakdown and the identification of "problem" areas and situations in which women are over- or under-represented;
- a review of personnel management procedures and practices to remove any feature which is discriminatory or has a discriminatory effect;
- the establishment of alternative procedures.

Next, numerical targets (not quotas) must be established to increase the number of women at various levels and in various jobs. These targets will be worked out in conjunction with the Members of the Commission and Directors-General, who will also monitor them.

This will establish numerical targets for recruitment, training and promotions.

Once a significant imbalance has been found in the representation of women with the same abilities as men in a given area or situation, temporary catching-up operations must be organized, such as discrimination in favour of female candidates where applicants are of equal ability.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to draw up a timetable for the implementation and monitoring of such actions.

4. Follow-up action and monitoring

An annual report will be published including information such as the breakdown of staff and the distribution of posts between men and women, a breakdown of recruitment, the number of senior officials who have attended courses on equal opportunities and the number of women who have taken part in training courses, a copy of the notices, the total number of women selected to follow programmes and a breakdown of promotions by sex.

Let us now consider specific measures:

I. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

1. Improvement of recruitment advertising by the positive selection of media such as women's magazines and the production of literature intended specifically for women.

2. Review of current selection criteria to establish the effects;

(a) of military service for male candidates as a source of professional experience which would qualify them for a post;

(b) of the increase in the number of candidates with postgraduate qualifications as a possible source of advantage for one sex;

(c) of age limits on recruitment opportunities for men and women (especially in the context of a return to work).

3. Consideration of ways of changing the open competition system to make it shorter, more efficient and less disheartening. The present non-verbal eliminatory test in particular should be thoroughly reviewed as a possible source of bias in the recruitment procedure.

4. Active encouragement to applications for available posts from married women and women from the Member States which are at present underrepresented.

5. Clear, quantified and public targets for the proportion of women in particular categories/grades and the time these changes will take. These goals should be realistic but also sufficiently demanding to bring about a

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

substantial change in favour of equal opportunities for men and women within a reasonable period of time (e.g. 5-10 years).

6. Review of the procedure for opening up posts and either improving its usefulness or abolishing it.
7. Presence of women on all Selection Boards and Committees.
8. Training for senior staff in non-discriminatory interview techniques.

II. PROMOTIONS AND CAREERS

1. Better control of the development of personnel requirements and resources.
2. Reform of the discretionary points system available to each DG so as not to favour the small DGs which have much greater flexibility than the large ones in promoting staff.
3. Improvements in the rapid promotion procedure.
4. Better organization of mobility.
5. A study of the problem of assessing performance at all levels.
6. A more transparent promotion system.
7. Improved personnel management for female Category B staff.
8. Ensuring that internal competitions really are a means of promoting the best staff.
9. Identification of problem DGs, that is, those where there are too few women, with a view to re-establishing balanced representation at the various levels.
10. Highly detailed studies of individual careers, e.g. studies of the paths followed by the careers of successful candidates from the same competition.
11. The establishment and follow-up of operational statistics. Example: age brackets for promotions are not the same for women and men; why not and what should be done?
12. The problem of very pronounced hierarchical relationships (heavyhanded, paternalistic), especially in the case of secretaries.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13. Requirement for every head of department to report on the number of women promoted and eligible for promotion, since some of them "forget" women when the time comes for promotions.

14. Training for heads of department in the assessment of their staff and the use of staff reports.

III. TRAINING

1. A systematic record of participation by women in training courses.
2. Measures to make senior staff aware of the importance of in-service training for all staff.
3. Establishment of individual training plans meeting the requirements of staff and the departments.
4. Reorganization of training to make it more accessible to women.
5. Training courses as part of the equal opportunities measures.

A variety of training courses can be organized to promote equality of opportunity and increase the number of women in responsible positions at middle and senior level.

5.1 Courses to improve the level of training of those who have missed out in their initial training.

5.1.1 Identification of women in B and C grades with potential to give them the opportunity to follow courses preparing them for other duties.

5.2 Development of potential

5.2.1 Inclusion of women with managerial potential in the "rapid promotion" system.

5.2.2 Identification of those women who are currently "stuck" in their job, whatever their grade, to give them the opportunity to move to other posts where they can make more use of their abilities.

Guidance courses could be organized to prepare these women, who would be volunteers and identified as having potential (by tests, assessment centres, etc.), for assignment to other posts.

5.2.3 Offer of training courses designed to enable women to identify and better understand stereotyped attitudes in the organization with regard to women and to recognize the problems and specific barriers they encounter. These seminars, attended by groups of women, encourage discussion and give them confidence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.2.4 Offer of programmes to help men and women work together effectively for the common good. A pilot seminar of this kind is currently under consideration in the Commission.

5.3 Consciousness-raising courses

- for managers and senior officials of all the DGs (especially those responsible for administration and personnel management);

courses giving advice on the practical application of equal opportunities may also be organized, especially for the "appointing authority" (e.g. people involved in recruitment, selection boards and promotion committees); similarly, courses could be arranged to prepare people for the idea of women in decision-making posts;

- for all staff;

- making people aware of what is meant by equality of opportunity (cf. above).

IV. PART-TIME

1. All documents should specify that the new arrangements are open to all officials, male and female. If in practice they were used only by women, this would lead to the marginalization of women.

2. Identification of posts which may be occupied on a part-time basis (without reference to the sex of the person occupying the post).

3. Definition of promotion and training opportunities in the context of part-time working.

4. Definition of opportunities for access to responsible posts in the context of part-time working.

5. It must be made clear that part-time working is available to men and women alike.

V. FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

New measures should be drawn up, developed and implemented to allow officials to reconcile their career with family responsibilities (more places in the crèches, arrangements for looking after sick children, parental leave, etc.).

ANNEX 1

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES QUESTIONNAIRE

A. GENERAL EXPERIENCE IN THE COMMISSION

A.1 When did you join the Commission?

A.2 Why did you join?

Why did this job appeal to you?

Did you have alternatives?

Why were they less attractive?

A.3 How did you imagine your work before you joined the Commission? Was it a realistic picture?

A.4 What is your opinion of your current position now?

A.5 Describe the different stages of your career since finishing your studies.

(a) Positions held before joining the Commission.

(b) Positions held since entering the Commission.

Grade	Post DG	From/to Date	Nature	Reason for change
-------	------------	-----------------	--------	-------------------

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

B. RECRUITMENT SYSTEM

B.1 How did you learn about the possibility of joining the Commission?

B.2 In your opinion, what helped you to obtain a post in the Commission?
(previous experience, etc.)

B.3 What do you think of the competition system and the reserve list procedure?

B.4 Do you think your position as a woman/man influenced:

A. your opportunities for joining the Commission?

B. the way in which you were admitted to the Commission?

B.5 Do you think that the present outside recruitment system ensures that the Commission obtains the most able people?

C. PRESENT POST

- C.1 Describe briefly the content of your job, your duties and responsibilities.
- C.2 What are the main characteristics of your work?
- C.3 What are the main problems and opportunities for satisfaction in your work?
- C.4 What sort of training and/or special abilities do you need to do this job?
- C.5 Are formal qualifications required? If so, which?

D. PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS

- D.1 What were the key events which influenced your career?
- D.2 What advice would you give someone wanting to succeed in the Commission?
Would your advice to a woman be different from that to a man?
- D.3 Are there other posts within the Commission which you would like to occupy but which are not open to you?
- D.4 If so, why are they not open to you?
- D.5 What are your general career aspirations? Where will you be in five, ten, fifteen years?
- D.6 What is the highest grade you hope to reach?
- D.7 In your opinion, what are the main factors which could affect your chances of achieving this objective?

E. MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

- E.1 How would you define a good manager?
- E.2 Have you any experience
 - as a manager?
 - of good/bad managers?
- E.3 If you have experience as a manager
 - how did your colleagues react to you in your capacity as a manager?
- OR if you have no direct experience as a manager
 - how do your colleagues react to women managers in general?
 - male subordinates and colleagues
 - female subordinates and colleagues

F. TRAINING

F.1 Have you taken part in any training programmes during your time at the Commission?

If YES, - what was the course? Was it for men and women?

- when, how long, where?

- was it useful?

- was it paid for by the Commission?

If NO, - why not?

F.2 Do you think you will need training in the future? If so, what?

F.3 Do you think that the Commission offers adequate training opportunities

A. in general?

B. for your requirements?

C. for the specific requirements of women?

G. PROMOTION SYSTEM

G.1 How does the promotion system operate at each level in the Commission?

G.2 What are your views on the promotion system?

G.3 Do you think it favours a particular group?
e.g. certain nationalities, men, women, etc.

G.4 Do you think the system of opening up posts is fair and effective?

H. MOBILITY

H.1 Do you consider that people in the Commission are mobile as regards promotions, moves to other offices, other countries?

H.2 Do you regard yourself as mobile?

H.3 What would you do if the Commission offered you a good job in another country?

H.4 Would you be available to go abroad on mission for the Commission?

I. PART-TIME

I.1 Have you worked part-time?

I.2 What do you think of part-time working?

I.3 Does it create special difficulties

- A. for people working part-time?
- B. for people working with part-time colleagues?

I.4 Do you think that

- A. part-time working is offered to men and women in the same way?
- B. part-time working is applied in the same way to men's and women's situations?
- C. the same number of men and women take up the part-time option?

I.5 What are the main reasons for which people opt to work part-time?

I.6 Could these problems be solved in another way?

J. TWO CAREERS

J.1 Where two people live together and have separate careers, do you think it is possible for each to have an equally successful and satisfying career?

J.2 Is it more or less difficult if both partners work for the Commission?

J.3 Should one career take precedence over the other?

If so, should the man's or the woman's career be more important?

J.4 Should the partners' respective salaries influence the decision?

J.5 Does your own experience confirm your views or has it been different?

J.6 Have you had other experiences which may have seriously affected your career?

e.g. dependants, sick children, accidents, etc.

Why were they important?

K. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY (in general)

K.1 Do you know about the work of the Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (COPEC) and what is being done in the field of equal opportunities in the Commission?

K.2 Do you think that equality of opportunities is an important (or interesting) subject in the Commission?

If so, why is it important (or interesting)?

K.3 Do you think there is a problem in the Commission as regards equal opportunities?

If so, how can it be solved?

Is it a problem of fair distribution of posts between the sexes (explain) or of promotion?

K.4 Would you like to be involved in a programme to improve equal opportunities in the Commission?

K.5 What form do you think it should take?

K.6 Are you in favour of gradual or rapid change?

L. ABOUT YOUR DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

L.1 What are the main areas of concern of your DG, its role, responsibilities, relations with the outside, etc.

L.2 What size of organization is it?

Grades A, B, C, D

L.3 What are the main types of post in the organization, e.g. technical, administrative, political, etc.?

L.4 What is its reputation within the Commission and in the Community?

M. BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

M.1 Qualifications and vocational training

M.2 Age - under 25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-50, 51-55, 56-60, over 60

M.3 Marital status

M.4 Number and age of children

M.5 Other dependants

M.6 Arrangements for looking after children

M.7 Full-time/part-time

M.8 Experience of parental leave

ANNEX II

WORKING PAPER

Summary of main events

In June 1978 a Joint Working Party was set up to look at equal opportunities policies and practices within the Commission.

In March 1980 a report was prepared by the Joint Working Party containing specific recommendations for DG IX.

In the early '80s DG V was preparing an Equal Opportunities Action Programme for the Community.

In Annex II of the final 1982-5 Action Programme it commits the Commission to pursue 'Positive Action at the level of Commission Personnel Policy'.

In November 1981 it was proposed that a standing Committee for Equality be established with specific terms of reference.

On 12 July 1982 a Council resolution was made stating that public sector and Community institutions should set an example in the field of equal treatment. An interim report was to be prepared concerning steps taken to achieve equal treatment in the Commission itself. This was to be presented by 1 January 1984 and before the end of 1985 a further report prepared containing an initial survey of the action undertaken.

On 8 December 1983 Mr Burke presented a paper to the Commission on staff policy with a stress on equal treatment.

At the end of 1982 the Joint Working Party was discontinued because certain members felt that little progress had been made.

On 14 January 1983 consultations took place with the unions about the equal treatment issue.

On 7 September 1983 a report was presented to the European Parliament on 'The Situation of Women In The Institutions Of The European Community'.

During 1983 it was agreed by DG IX and the unions to set up a permanent central body in the field of equal treatment to serve the Commission - COPEC.

On 13 December 1983 an article appeared which set out the priorities for an equal opportunities programme within the Commission.

COPEC began work in November 1984.

Early in 1985 Commissioner Christophersen began to set out his views on staff policy modernization.

In November 1985 a paper was published outlining the way that the Commission would seek to encourage greater job and personal mobility.

In December 1985 a new Community medium-term programme was adopted which included an Annex on Commission staff policy.

In January 1986 an independent research project began focussing on the issue of equal treatment within the Commission.