

EUROPEAN INFORMATION BULLETIN

**A Quarterly Publication for European
Trade Unionists**

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Workers and new technology Disclosure and use of company information

New technology poses a common problem for the job security of workers throughout Western Europe. In recent years national and international trade union organisations have conducted numerous studies on the introduction, effect and potential of technological developments in industry and the broader society. Now another study has been produced by international researchers from five different countries and coordinated at Ruskin College in England which adopts a refreshingly different and interesting approach.

'Workers and New Technology: Disclosure and Use of Company Information' is in fact two related reports. A Summary Report; which examines information rights, trade union strategies and the use of information, provides a profile of twenty case studies that formed the basis of the study. A final report outlines the national and international perspectives of the cases and concludes by examining the 'best practices'.

The reports are drawn from research conducted in Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Britain. In each country a case study was undertaken in the following sectors: chemicals, commerce, food processing and engineering. Consideration was given to the size, structure and skill requirements of the selected companies to enable comparison. The fieldwork was sponsored and conducted by institutions and individuals in their respective countries with the international coordination and translations financed by the European Commission.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CONTENTS

EUROPEAN INFORMATION
BULLETIN : ISSUE 2 1985

PAGE

WORKERS AND NEW TECHNOLOGY (Cont'd)....	2
WORKING HOURS REPORT....	3
EURODATA-STATISTICS....	4
FOCUS ON - EUROPEAN FISHING INDUSTRY.....	5
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT....	6
A GUIDE TO EUROPEAN ABBREVIATIONS.....	8
QUESTIONS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT....	9
ETUC CONGRESS.....	9
NEWS FROM EUROPE.....	10
HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTES.....	11
NEWS FROM EUROPE.....	12

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OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**



Workers and New Technology

Continued from page 1

The project sets out to examine the best that can be achieved under the present industrial relations arrangements and this is done by the identification and analysis of 'best practices'. The introduction to the Summary Report states "the emphasis on 'best practice' may be explained by the aims of the research, which was not to try to provide a general picture of how workers and trade unions in the five countries cope with technological change. The focus of the cases was to look at worker representatives acquisition and use of company information on planned investment and new equipment under better than average circumstances". In this respect the study is different and of more practical benefit than most previous work on the same subject.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION AND JOB LOSSES DUE TO NEW TECHNOLOGY.			
	Time taken to pass info to workers reps.	Net loss (gain) of f/t jobs	
		Intended	Actual
GERMANY			
ENGINEERING	3 YEARS	0	0
CHEMICALS	SOME YEARS	25	20
INSURANCE	2 YEARS	>293	293
BREWING	SOME MONTHS	50	50 Estimate
ITALY			
ENGINEERING	IMMEDIATE	>51	51
CHEMICALS	SOME MONTHS	>86	86
BANKING	SOME MONTHS	>0	0
BREWING	SOME YEARS	0	0
BRITAIN			
ENGINEERING	SOME MONTHS	0	0
CHEMICALS	SOME YEARS	0	(20-90) Expanding
INSURANCE	2 YEARS	165	125
BREWING	1 YEAR	(18)	(14)

The report concludes that certain traditional models of worker representation in Western Europe are unable to effectively use information on technological change. Two such models in particular are critically examined. Arms length annual collective bargaining has inherent power but tends to use only historic company information which is inadequate, infrequent and of limited use. Conversely, worker participation on decision making bodies is often without any power or independence, however future information is frequently available to worker representatives without the organisational structure to effectively use it.

It is recommended that worker representatives do more independent work to develop ideas and plan their input into the structures of change and that new relationships with management and between worker representatives may have to be developed. Thirdly, it is recommended that new and additional resources will be required including more time off, trade union education, the appointment of external employee consultants and regional political support. These, and other developments, will be necessary if worker representatives are to effectively use information about the future to form their own detailed considerations of technological and social change. The final words must come from the Summary Report:- "best practices involve a shift from vetting management decisions to shaping those decisions"

"WORKERS AND NEW TECHNOLOGY: DISCLOSURE AND USE OF COMPANY INFORMATION.
 (1) SUMMARY REPORT - £2.75 (2) FINAL REPORT - £4.00"

WORKING

Faced with the economic crisis and the persistent high levels of unemployment one of the key demands which unites the majority of European trade unions is the demand to reduce working hours. The 1984 Strasbourg Conference of the ETUC saw the reduction in working time as being indispensable to a successful strategy for jobs, a view which was echoed in the General Resolution submitted to the 1985 Milan Congress. The importance of reducing working hours has been accepted by the EEC Council of Ministers itself, with a Recommendation being adopted by Ministers of all Member Countries - other than the United Kingdom - on the reduction and reorganisation of working hours.

In this issue of the Bulletin we concentrate on the successes of European trade unions in negotiating reductions in working hours.

BELGIUM

Food industry

Belgian trade unions in the food and allied industry have recently concluded an agreement on working hours and early retirement. The two key points of the agreement are as follows:-

1. Current collective agreements on working hours - with a working week of 37 or 38 hours are to be extended until the end of 1986. Within the agreement firms are required to reduce working hours or increase the number of their employees by 5%. 2. The encouragement of early retirement at 58. Workers who choose early retirement are paid 80% of their net wages and have to be replaced by the recruitment of younger workers.

NETHERLANDS

Working hours

Dutch workers have benefited from two recent agreements giving significant reductions in working time.

POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS: Hours have been cut to 38 per week from 1st April, but the agreement has been back-dated to 1st January giving employees 12 extra days holiday. A further cut to 36 hours is being considered.

PRINTING: The length of the working week is to be cut to 36 hours from 1st October 1985. About 2,000 jobs may be created as a result of the reduction in hours. A deferment of two years from the cut in hours can be granted to small companies but such firms will be expected to make a payment to employees and provide money for employing young workers.

EEC

Road Transport

A compromise agreement has been reached in the Economic and Social Committee between employers and unions in the road transport sector regarding the rules on driving hours. If approved by the Transport Ministers of the EEC governments the compromise agreement would involve a maximum driving period of 9 hours (now 8); maximum weekly driving period of 45 hours (now 48); daily minimum rest period of 12 hours (now 11); and a weekly minimum rest period of 48 hours (now 40)

HOURS

EURODATA

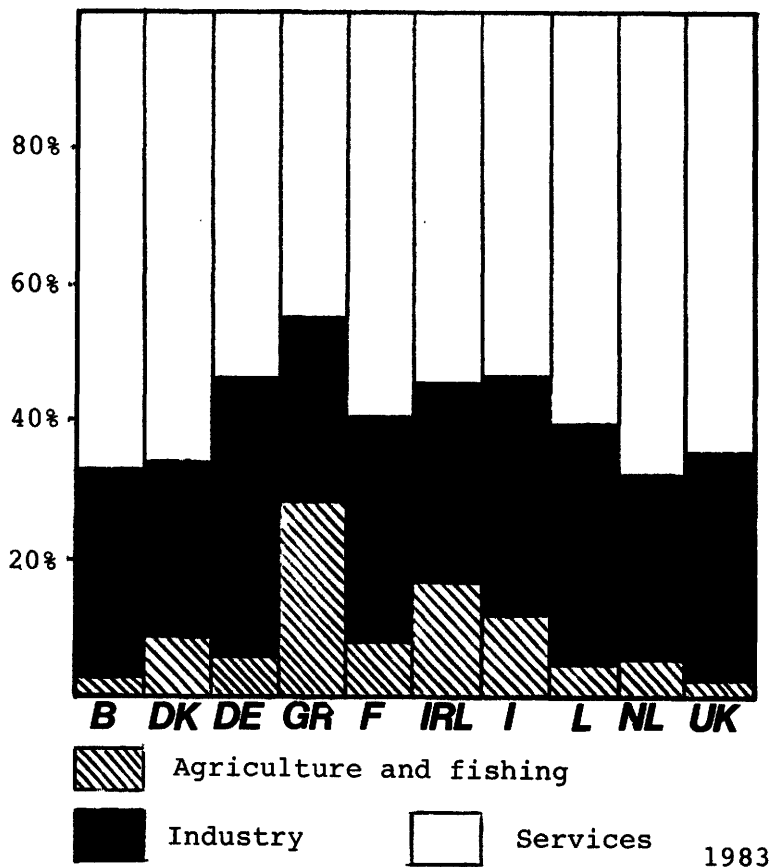
The Statistics in this edition of the Bulletin are taken from the statistical appendix of the latest issue of Social Europe (March 1985 - No 1/85).

The following abbreviations are used throughout
 B=Belgium, DK=Denmark, DE= Germany, GR=Greece,
 F=France, IRL=Ireland, L=Luxembourg,
 NL=Netherlands, UK=United Kingdom.

PUPILS AND STUDENTS AS A % OF THE POPULATION.



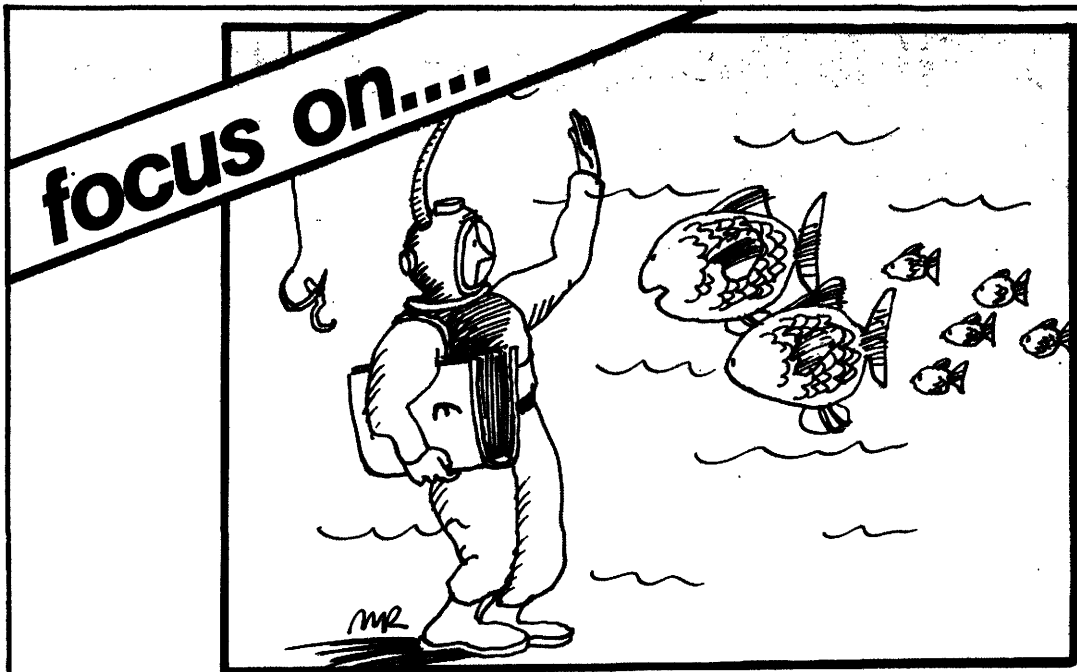
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR AS A %



REAL WAGES

	-	+
B		+0.6
DK		+0.3
DE		-0.3
GR		+4.4
F		+0.9
IRL		-5.3
I		-0.3
L		+0.5
NL		+0.1
UK		+0.6
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE IN WAGES IN REAL TERMS: 1981/2		

STATISTICS

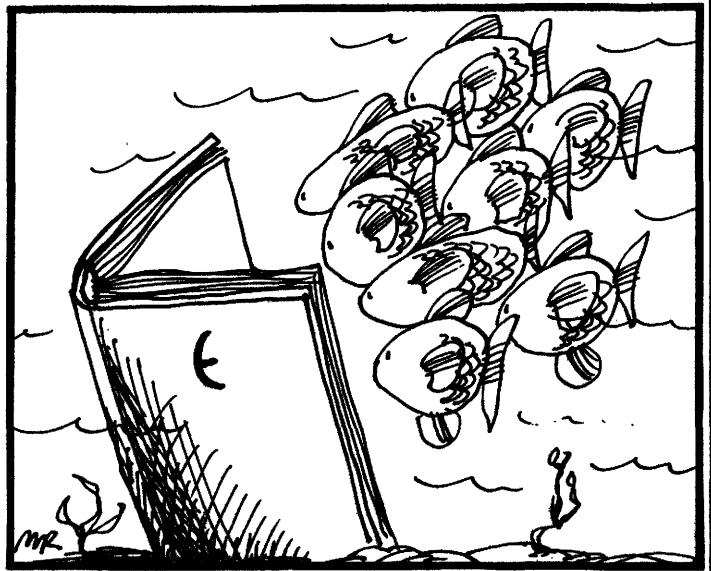


THE EUROPEAN FISHING INDUSTRY

There are over 200,000 people employed in the fishing industry within the European Community - 160,000 fishermen and over 40,000 employed in the associated fish processing industry. The total value of catches in 1981 amounted to over 2,800 million ECU. Although fishing is still an important industry within Europe it has undergone a decline during the last decade, especially in the field of deep sea fishing. Many people have blamed the Community's Fishing Policy for this decline, but a more profound cause is to be found in the over-fishing which took place in the sixties and early seventies, leading to the alarming decline in stocks which has become apparent over the last ten years.

In the North Atlantic as a whole, herring catches dropped from 3,334,000 tonnes in 1964 to 1,616,000 tonnes in 1974. Danish, German and Dutch catches were halved and only Britain's take increased, from 99,000 to 160,000 tonnes. The same fate befell cod. In 1964, French boats were catching 178,000 tonnes in the North Atlantic, Germans 176,000 and British 361,000. Ten years later, German and French catches were halved and Britain's down by 38,000 tonnes.

The European fishing industry is examined in a new pamphlet in the Periodical Series (Periodical 1-1985), published by the Commission of the European Community. It reviews the economic significance of the fishing industry and the reasons for the Common Fisheries Policy. The major changes to the CFP which took place in 1983 are explained and the effects of the enlargement of the Community on fishery policy are assessed. The pamphlet is entitled "The European Community's Fishery Policy", and it is available from the Commission or the national Information Offices.



Regional Development in the European Community

European Community regional policy is based on periodic surveys of the social and economic situation and development of the regions of the Community, and the second periodic report on the 'Regions of Europe' was published by the EEC (COM (84) 40) late last year. The report was summarised in a pamphlet in the European File series (No.15/84) and the contents of this pamphlet provides a mine of information on comparative economic and social conditions throughout the Community.

The report highlights the current state of imbalance between the regions - an imbalance which is stubbornly refusing to lessen. Indeed, in terms of production, the ten regions with the best performance and the ten with the poorest performance are respectively 50% above and 50% below the Community average. It can be seen from the regional production map (Fig 1) that the regions with the lowest levels of per capita GDP tend to be located in the geographical extremes of the Community (Greece, Ireland, Southern Italy) whilst the regions with comparatively high production figures are located in the geographical heartland of western Europe.

One particularly useful set of statistics is the data on regional disparities contained in the Integrated Index of the acuteness of regional problems (Fig 2). The index is based on a synthesis of data on gross domestic product and average unemployment, the average of which for the Community as a whole equals 100. Thus the higher the index figure for a region the less are its social and economic problems and vice versa.

The pamphlet examines the factors which have contributed to the regional disparities which exist within the community at the moment. These include:-

* A loss of 2.4 million jobs in the agricultural sector and 5.8

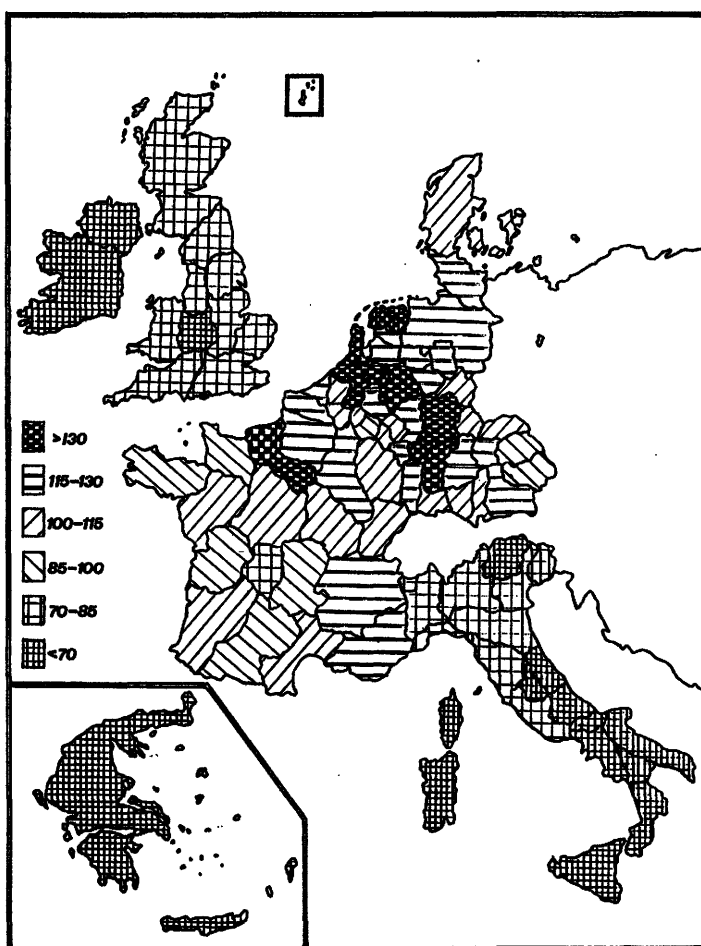


FIG 1: RELATIVE LEVEL OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER WORKING PERSON. Average of the years 1977, 1979 and 1981, at current prices and rates of exchange - Community average (EUR 10=100)

million job losses in the industrial sector between 1973 and 1982. These job losses have tended to be more marked in the regions which already had considerable problems with high unemployment and low production.

*Population movement from rural areas into urban conurbations has tended to

EIB SPECIAL

THE EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION

In 1984 the Trade Union Division of the Commission of the European Communities published a pamphlet* describing the structure and functions of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). During 1984 the European Information Bulletin published a series of articles summarising the main points of the pamphlet. This special supplement is a collection of these articles.

*"The European Trade Union Confederation" Published by the Trade Union Division of the Directorate-General for Information. X/82/84.

**A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO EUROPEAN INFORMATION
BULLETIN ISSUE 2/85, PUBLISHED BY THE TRADE
UNION INFORMATION DIVISION OF THE COMMISSION
OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

The concept of a European trade union movement is as old as the concept of either an economic or a political union of Western European states and the origins of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) can be traced back to the very beginning of the European Community itself - back to the early nineteen fifties.

As soon as the European Coal and Steel Community came into being a committee - known as the Committee of 21 - was formed consisting of representatives of the trade union movements of the original six member states. The objective of the Committee of 21 was to represent trade union interests to the High Authority of the Coal and Steel Community. In 1957, with the creation of the European Community, the Committee of 21 was merged into the newly formed European Trade Union Secretariat - again made up of representatives from the trade union movements of the six member states. During the sixties several other groupings of European trade unionists came into being, some confined to the European Community but many embracing trade unions from all European nations.

By 1972, with the expansion of the Community to nine member states, a series of conferences led to the establishment of an entirely new European trade union organisation spanning both the member states of the Community and EFTA, and in February 1973 the first congress of the European Trade Union Confederation was held in Brussels. This new organisation was composed of representatives from the national federations of trade unions of the EEC member countries, EFTA member countries, and the national union federations of Finland, Iceland and Spain.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ETUC There are three major organisational institutions making up the ETUC - the Congress, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat.

THE CONGRESS: Congress is the source of authority within the ETUC and it is made up of four members of each of the affiliated countries plus one additional seat to confederations for every 500,000 members. Congress meets at least every third year when it reviews the work of the ETUC and formulates future policy. Congress also elects the Executive Committee and the chief officers of the ETUC - the President, the General Secretary and the Deputy General Secretary. All decisions of Congress are made on the basis of a two-thirds majority.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: All national trade union confederations are represented on the Executive Committee with an additional member for organisations with a membership exceeding 5,000,000 members. The Executive Committee meets at least six times a year and it is responsible for implementing the resolutions and programmes adopted by Congress. At least once a year the Executive examines the trade union situation in each of the member countries. As with Congress, decisions are based on a two thirds majority.

THE SECRETARIAT: The Secretariat is made up of the main functional officers of the ETUC - the General Secretary, the Deputy General Secretary both of whom are elected by Congress, and the Secretaries whose number is determined by the Executive Committee. There are currently six Secretaries. The main tasks of the Secretariat consist of preparing and organising the numerous standing committees, working groups, and the Congress; co-ordinating the ETUC activities entrusted to it by Congress; providing the liason between the Executive Committee and the Industry Committees. Members of the Secretariat represent the ETUC at the many conferences, consultations, and committees associated with the institutional life of the European Communities, the EFTA, and the Council of Europe.

STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP: The ETUC has a membership of over 40,000,000 represented by a total of thirty-four national affiliated organisations.

Although the ETUC is not restricted to the countries of the European Community over half of the total membership is based within the confines of the

TABLE 1 : MEMBERSHIP DISTRIBUTION OF ETUC NATIONAL AFFILIATES.

SIZE	NUMBER OF AFFILIATES	CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF AFFILIATES	CUMULATIVE % OF ETUC MEMBERSHIP
Up to 50,000	7	7	20%
ORGANISATIONS:			
Confederation Generale du Travail de Luxembourg (CGT-L)....LUXEMBOURG			
Letzburger Chestleche Gewerkschaftsbond (LCGB)LUXEMBOURG			
Bandalag Starfsmanna Rikis og Baeja (BSRB).....ICELAND			
General Workers Union (GWU).....MALTA			
Cyprus Workers Confederation.....CYPRUS			
Confederation of Trade UnionsMALTA			
Cyprus Turkish Trade Unions Federation (TURK-SEN).....CYPRUS			
50,000 - 250,000	3	10	29.5%
ORGANISATIONS:			
Althydusamband Islands (ASI).....ICELAND			
Solidaridad de Trabajadores Vascos (STV - ELA)SPAIN			
Christlichnationaler Gewerkschaftsbund der Schweiz(CGS)....SWITZERLAND			
250,000- 2,000,000	20	30	88%
ORGANISATIONS:			
Uniao Geral de Trabalhadores (UGT).....PORTUGAL			
Union General de Trabajadores de Espana (UGT)SPAIN			
Fallesradet for Danske Tjenestemands og Funktionarorganisationer(FTF).....DENMARK			
Toimihenkilo-ja Virkamiesjajestojen Keskusliitto (TVK)FINLAND			
Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond (CNV).....NETHERLANDS			
Greek General Confederation of Labour (GGCL).....GREECE			
Schweizerischer Gewerkschaftsbund (SGB).....SWITZERLAND			
Federation Generale du Travail de Belgique (FGTB).....BELGIUM			
Confederation Generale du Travail-Force Ouvriere(CGT-FO)...FRANCE			
Confederation Francaise Democratique du Travail (CFDT)....FRANCE			
Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU).....IRELAND			
Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging (FNV).....NETHERLANDS			
Landsorganisasjonen I Norge (LO).....NORWAY			
Suomen Ammattiliittojen Keskusjarjesto (SAK).....FINLAND			
Tjanstemannens Centralorganisation (TCO).....SWEDEN			
Confederation des Syndicats Chretiens (CSC).....BELGIUM			
Landsorganisationen i Danmark (LO).....DENMARK			
Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL).....ITALY			
Osterreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund (OGB)AUSTRIA			
Landsorganisationen i Sverige (LO).....SWEDEN			
2,000,000- 6,000,000	2	32	94%
ORGANISATIONS:			
Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori (CISL).....ITALY			
Confederazione Generale Italiane del Lavoro (CGIL).....ITALY			
Over 6,000,000	2	34	100%
ORGANISATIONS:			
Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB).....F.R.GERMANY			
Trades Union Congress (TUC).....GT. BRITAIN			

Community. The accompanying table indicates the distribution and size of affiliated organisations.

MEANS OF INFLUENCE: The ETUC exists to promote the interests of trade unions in Europe and as so it has representation on a number of European bodies and both formal and informal ways of attempting to influence other bodies. For example regular meetings take place between the ETUC and Commission officials and the Confederation has contact with both individual Members of the European Parliament and political groups within the Parliament. In addition the ETUC has representation through a variety of standing committees, conferences and steering groups at Community level. Finally, the ETUC works with and attempts to influence such bodies as EFTA, the Council of Europe, the OECD and the major European Employers association - UNICE.

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE ETUC

In the preamble to the Constitution of the ETUC signed in 1973, the affiliated trade union organisations agreed that their main aims should be to:-

"jointly represent and promote the social, economic and cultural interests of the workers at the European level in general and in particular in respect of all European institutions, including the European Community and the European Free Trade Association"

In addition the ETUC saw as its objective "to work to safeguard and strengthen democracy in Europe" and to act as a counterweight to the European employers' organisations. Again at the founding conference it was declared:-

"instead of a Europe of capitalists the ETUC calls for a new orientation of Europe, based on the social needs of the working people, involving structural reforms in the economy and in society"

The aims of the ETUC have been established by a series of conferences which have reflected the aims of the ETUC in Action Programmes. The conferences have examined issues such as full-employment, the reduction in working time, greater worker participation, equal rights for women and migrant workers and the issue of peace and the arms race. The main themes of the Action Programme adopted by the ETUC in Munich in 1979 are as follows:-

1. Full employment planning.
2. Reduction of working time.
3. Defence and the promotion of living standards.
4. Democratisation of the economy.
5. Improvement in working conditions.
6. Reform of agricultural policy.
7. A comprehensive energy policy.
8. More effective regional policy.
9. An end to discrimination.
10. A fair deal for consumers.
11. Improving the quality of life.
12. A new international economic and social order.
13. Extension of trade union influence and means of action.

INDUSTRY COMMITTEES

Article 4 of the ETUC Constitution makes provision for the establishment of European level Industry Committees. These committees are designed to bring together national level trade union officers and general secretaries to discuss issues of concern to the unions and industries. There are currently eleven recognised Industry Committees amongst which are the following:-

The European Metalworkers Federation in the EEC.
European Teachers Trade Union Committee.
European Federation of Building and Woodworkers.
European Public Services Industry Committee.

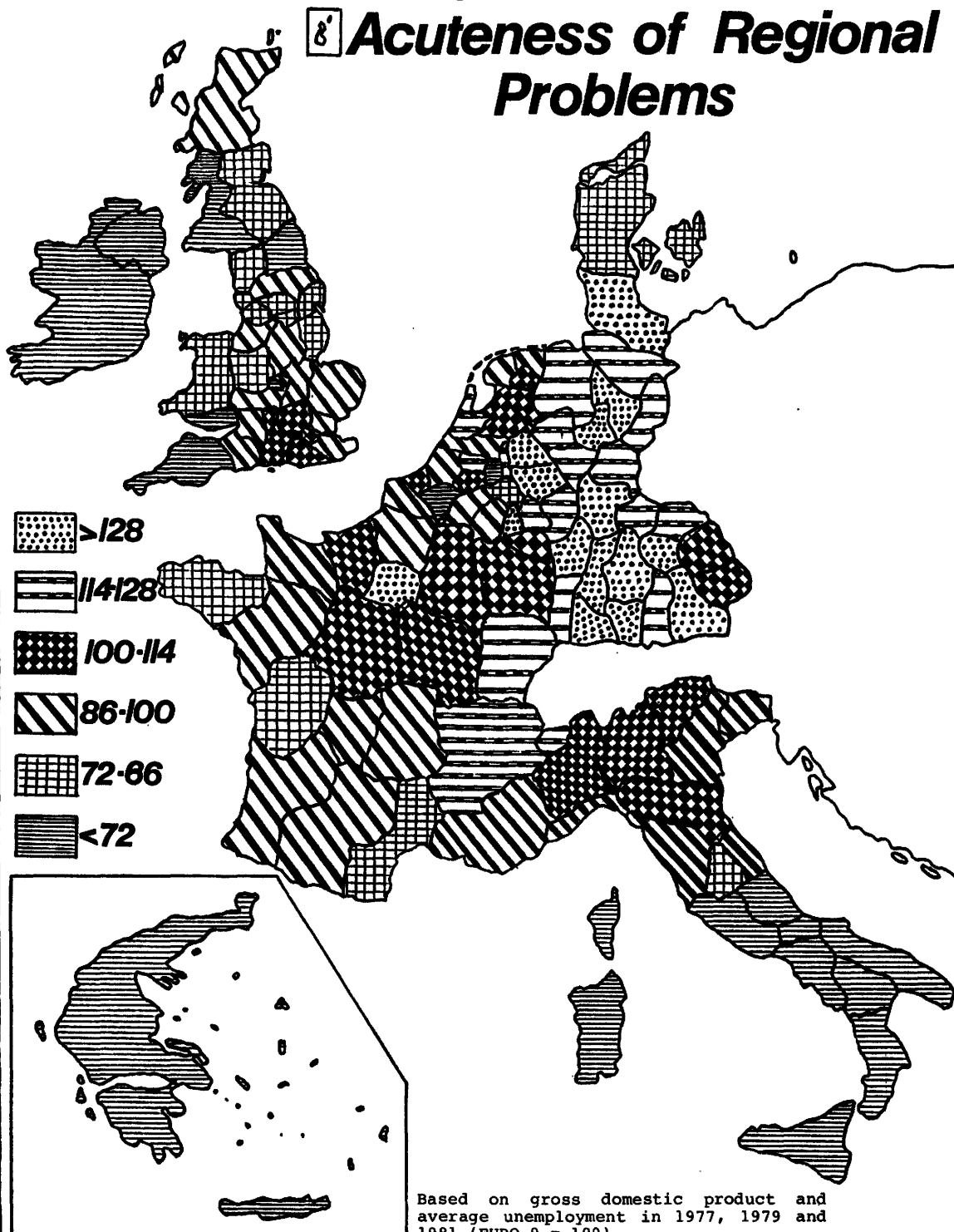
EIB 1985
Design and text:

Alan Burnett

be most marked in regions which have already significant regional problems. This population movement has tended to exacerbate existing disparities. The pamphlet - which is available free of charge from the Commission of the European Communities - also examines the implications of the proposed enlargement of the Community on existing regional disparities as well as the likely regional problems of Spain and Portugal. It is from such an analysis of regional problems and disparities that the major instrument of Community regional policy - the European Regional Development Fund - can best be directed towards the eventual eradication of large scale unemployment and economic stagnation.

FIG. 2

Integrated Index of Acuteness of Regional Problems



A Guide To European Abbreviations

One of the most annoying traps awaiting the inveterate reader of European Community literature is the frequent use of abbreviations. Community reports, pamphlets and journals are littered with strings of letters which have great meaning for the initiated but serve only to confuse the occasional reader. Indeed, at times, the Bulletin may have itself been guilty of expecting its readers to be familiar with ECU's, MEP's and ACP's. In order to purge our past sins - and provide our readers with a simple explanation to some of the more frequently used abbreviations - we present the following Plain Mans Guide To European Language.

ACP
African, Caribbean and Pacific States

CAP
Common Agricultural Policy

CCT
Common Customs Tariff

CEDEFOP
European Centre For the Development of Vocational Training

CFP
Common Fisheries Policy

ECSC
European Coal and Steel Community

ECU
European Currency Unit

ECWS
European Centre for Work and Society

EFILWC
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

EIB
European Investment Bank

EMF
European Metalworkers Federation in the Community

EMS
European Monetary System

EP
European Parliament

ERDF
European Regional Development Fund

ESC
Economic and Social Committee

ESPRIT
European Strategic Research and Development Programme into Information Technology

ETUC
European Trade Union Confederation

ETUI
European Trade Union Institute

IMP
Integrated Mediterranean Programme

MEP
Member of the European Parliament

OJ
Official Journal of the European Community

SME
Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

UNICE
Union of Industries of the European Community

WEU
Western European Union
and of course, not to forget.....

EEC
European Economic Community

AN OCCASIONAL REVIEW OF QUESTIONS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OF INTEREST TO TRADE UNIONISTS

EUROPEAN TRADE UNION INSTITUTE

Question from Mrs Nicole Chouraqui (France) "Can the Commission specify the amount of Community aid granted to the European Trade Union Institute, the purpose of such aid and whether research carried out by this Institute is intended for the institutions of the European Community?"

Answer given by Mr Richard on behalf of the Commission: "The aid granted by the Community to the ETUI was as follows -

1978: 350,000 ECU 1979: 550,000 ECU 1980: 650,000 ECU 1981: 750,000 ECU 1982: 825,000 ECU 1983: 875,000 ECU 1984: 985,000 ECU

The purpose of this aid was laid down in the Council Resolution of 21 January 1974 concerning social action programme (1); the aim is to promote better training and provide better information for workers and their organisations. The research carried out by the Institute is intended for all the Community institutions and is widely circulated throughout all the relevant economic and social circles.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Question from Mr James Fitzsimons (Ireland) "Can the Commission provide details concerning the level of activity in the construction industry in each of the Member States during the period 1983 to June 1984?"

Answer given by Mr Cockfield on behalf of the Commission "Compared with 1983, overall production in 1984 increased in the Federal Republic of Germany (+4%), Belgium (+5%) and in the United Kingdom (+2.6%); the level of production remained constant in Denmark and the Netherlands, but dropped in France (-5%), Ireland (-7 to -8%) and in Italy (-3.5%). With regard to 1985, production is expected to increase slightly in the Federal Republic of Germany (+1.2%) and Denmark (+3%). The situation will probably remain unchanged in Belgium, whereas there is likely to be a slight decline (from -1% to -3%) in the other Member States."

The answer also contained information on trends in employment in the construction industry in certain Member States. Taking the base year of 1975 to equal 100 in each case, the following index figures refer to the level of employment in the construction industry in the first quarter of 1984:- Belgium (63.3), Denmark (72.4), Federal Republic of Germany (77.2), Ireland (78.1) and the United Kingdom (77.0)

ETUC CONGRESS, Milan, 1985

This issue of the European Information Bulletin will be going to press before the ETUC Congress in Milan which takes place between the 13 and the 17 May. However a special issue of the Bulletin will be produced on the Congress with reports on the key debates and the new Programme of the ETUC. This year one of the key debates will be on "The Role of Work, Workers and their Trade Unions in the Society of Tomorrow" and the special issue of the Bulletin will review the debate and the decisions on this topic. The special ETUC Congress issue of the Bulletin should be available by the end of June.

NEWS FROM EUROPE

Positive action for women

The Council of Ministers of the European Community has adopted a new Recommendation on the promotion of positive action for women.

The principal elements of the Recommendation are: the adoption of a policy of positive action and the construction of a national framework for it, extending positive action to both public and private sectors and calling on public employers to play an exemplary role, information to be made available to the public at large and in the workplace, commitment by national equal opportunity committees and agencies, and both sides of industry, the collection of information on steps taken, and the monitoring and evaluation of these measures.

The general aim of the Recommendation is to promote national positive action policies designed to overcome the de facto inequalities from which women have always suffered on the labour market. The Recommendation, which applies to both the private and public sectors, stresses the significant role of the latter in the furtherance of positive action, as did the previous Resolution of 1982 on the promotion of equal opportunities for women.

Telework

Telework is defined as work carried out by a decentralised unit, person or group, separate from its establishment in which the intensive use of telecommunications is involved. The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions has recently released a report "Telework: Impact on Living and Working Conditions" which reviews the development of telework and its likely effect on working conditions.

One finding of the report is that the development of telework has been slower than some early forecasts suggested. However, it seems likely that telework will expand considerably during the next

decade and trade unions are concerned about the future utilisation which could lead to ways of exploiting the labour force. Amongst the problems associated with this form of work are social legislation, insurance, conditions of the workplace, safety and health measures, security of employment, and the impact of telework on women workers. All of these issues are to be the subject of further research by the Foundation during the coming year. The Report is available price £7, from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Loughlinstown House, Shankill, Co Dublin, Ireland.

Euro-train

On April 25th a "Eurotrain", organised by the International Transport Workers Federation arrived in Brussels from Vienna. The journey was undertaken to draw attention to Europe's railway problems and in particular to promote greater investment in Europe's railway system. A union delegation met the EEC Commissioner for Transport, Mr Stanley Davies, who said that inevitable changes will be necessary in the industry to secure future investment and improve conditions for railway workers, and that Commission policy is to create a framework for co-ordinated action. Mr Davies pointed out that existing EEC legislation already goes some way to meeting union demands by compensating railways for their social role; compensate them for financial burdens not borne by their competitors; provide research and development aid; promote closer cooperation between national undertakings; and generally improve their financial situation. Mr Davies also stressed that the Commission had proposed additional measures to encourage governments and railway undertakings to act in the fields of finance, infrastructure, and integration of railways into regional planning.

Health and Safety Notes

DUTCH HEALTH AND SAFETY LAW

In 1980 the Dutch Parliament passed comprehensive laws on Health and Safety at Work (known as the Working Conditions Act). The first stages of this Act came into force in 1982 and the second stage was due to come into force in 1986. However it now seems likely that this legislation will be delayed, the Dutch Government being concerned about the cost to companies of implementing the Act.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS IN SPAIN

Industrial accidents fell by 9.25% in 1984, from 494,378 to 448,647. However the number of fatal accidents increased from 958 to 1,075, increases being particularly marked in the fishing, mining and construction industries. Between 1983 and 1984 fatal accidents in the construction industry rose by 6%.

PROTECTION OF WORKERS.

The Economic and Social Committee has adopted an opinion on the draft directive on health protection at work. The Committee endorsed by a large majority the Commission proposal on the banning of specified agents, namely:-

- 2-naphthylamine and its salts
- 4-aminodiphenyl and its salts
- 4-nitrodiphenyl

Once the proposal becomes a Directive the above agents will not be permitted alone or as an intentional constituent of a preparation. Member States would be able to grant exemptions from proscription only where adequate protection measures are taken. The Committee further stressed the need to include benzidine and its salts among the agents listed.

E.I.B. APPLICATION FORM

The European Information Bulletin is published by the Trade Union Division of the Commission Of The European Communities. The views expressed in the Bulletin are those of the Editor and are not necessarily those of the European Commission.

If you would like to receive regular copies of the Bulletin - which is available free of charge - complete the following application form and return it to the address on the following page.

I would like to receive regular copies of the EUROPEAN INFORMATION BULLETIN:

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Address:.....

.....Tel.No:.....

Occupation:.....

Trade Union:.....

Union Posts/Positions:.....

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NEWS FROM EUROPE

Industrial Disputes

Figures have become available from Eurostat - the European Commission's statistical office - on working days lost through industrial disputes within the European Community. The figures relate to the average number of working days lost through industrial disputes per 1,000 employees. (Figures from Belgium and Greece are not yet available) The figures relate to 1983.

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>WORKING DAYS LOST</u>
ITALY	802
IRELAND	382
UNITED KINGDOM	169
FRANCE	76
DENMARK	38
NETHERLANDS	27
GERMANY	2
LUXEMBOURG	0

ECWS conference

The subject of the 1985 annual conference of the European Centre for Work and Society will be the role of trade unions in the coming decade. The aim of the Conference is to present and discuss current trends, promote a dialogue between trade unions and all interested parties and provide an international forum for an exchange of experiences. The two-day Conference will be held in Maastrich in the Netherlands in November 1985 and the second day

of the Conference will concentrate on a number of themes, including:-

- * social power and class opposition,
- * the emergence of new pressure groups,
- * individual versus collective labour relations,
- * new technology and production systems,
- * trade unions and the internationalisation of the economy,
- * profiles of trade unions.

Prices

The following figures relate to the annual percentage increase in prices in January 1985.

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>% PRICE INCREASES</u>
PORTUGAL	24.6
GREECE	19.2
SPAIN	9.3
ITALY	8.6
FRANCE	6.5
IRELAND	6.2
DENMARK	5.8
UNITED KINGDOM	5.0
BELGIUM	5.0
LUXEMBOURG	3.8
NETHERLANDS	2.5
WEST GERMANY	2.1
EURO-10	5.5
JAPAN	2.6
SWEDEN	7.4
U.S.A.	3.6

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