



Economic and social innovation for progress in Europe

Next June, the EUROCADRES congress will take place in Brussels. It will be held at the offices of the European Economic and Social Committee.

A congress, held once every four years, always provides an opportunity both to review the past and look to the future. Representatives of member organisations will thus debate the results achieved in recent years:



- These include our priority actions for encouraging growth in employment, guaranteeing the conditions for freedom of movement (inter alia the recognition of professional qualifications and the portability of pension rights), equal opportunities, working conditions (management models, working time and work loads) etc.
- These also include, the initiatives we have taken with "FEMANET", the professional and managerial women's network, and with the "mobil-net" Charter and advisers to tackle problems of mobility.
- We shall examine the nature of our participation, on behalf of European professional and managerial staff, in the social dialogue with employers' organisations and the European institutions.
- We shall also discuss the issue of how professional and managerial staff are organised in our various European countries, the way in which we respond to the concerns of our member organisations, the development of our resources and the progress made in our internal operations by improving our constitution.

The future will lie with the team which will be elected by Congress. It will unfold against the background of a new Europe shaped by the Treaty of Nice, which provides the basis for the necessary enlargement to the Central and Eastern European Countries, but which has failed to lay the foundations for the absolutely essential deepening of the Union and which has not resolved the decision-making difficulties. The debate in Europe is also marked by the new importance given to employment, qualifications and mobility. The Stockholm summit of 23-24 March continues the strategy launched by the summit held in Lisbon in the spring of 2000. These are indeed crucial issues for EUROCADRES, and they are now being recognised and given their proper place on the European agenda. We welcome these developments, whilst remaining firm in our call for genuinely innovative policies, not mere declarations, to promote economic and social progress in Europe.

EUROCADRES-Flash is published in three languages: English, French and German. If you wish to receive it on a regular basis, please contact your trade union or the EUROCADRES Secretariat in Brussels.

Please note:

- EUROCADRES Congress 2001: 7-8 June in Brussels, at the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, rue Ravenstein 2.



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EUROCADRES has moved

At the beginning of the year our Secretariat moved into its new offices in the International Trade Union House, boulevard du Roi Albert II in Brussels. Address details are on page one of this edition of Flash. Please make a note of these new details so as to be able to find us.

Stockholm: employment, qualifications, mobility: a response to EUROCADRES' concerns

It has now been agreed that every year in the spring, a summit of Heads of States and Governments will be held, to discuss employment issues. This year's summit took place in Stockholm on 23-24 March 2001.

EUROCADRES took part in the meeting of the Standing Committee on Employment on 6 March in Brussels, (chaired by Swedish Minister, I. Thalén), and in a meeting between a social partners' delegation and the European Commission and the Presidency of the Union (conducted by Swedish Prime Minister, G. Persson), in Stockholm on the eve of the Summit on 22 March 2001. Discussions were prepared by a Communication from the European Commission recommending measures to "realise the European Union's potential".

Among the ten priority areas identified by the Commission, the first was "more and better jobs", then "a new European labour market, open to all with access for all", followed by "the IT skills gap", "Research, innovation and enterprise" and "frontier technologies." Obstacles to mobility, and the problems of recognising qualifications, were also mentioned. The Commission is expected to present new proposals for "a more uniform, transparent and flexible regime of professional recognition", including "ways of ensuring more widespread automatic recognition". Further, before the end of 2001 a "proposal on the portability of supplementary pensions" will be presented. Finally, it is expected that a "high level skills and mobility task force" will be set up.

This meets the demands which EUROCADRES has been lobbying the Commission about and, in recent months, the French Presidency. This is, therefore, an important step forward for us, although we are fully aware that ambiguities remain. The aim of full employment must be maintained when economic circumstances become more uncertain. It should also be clear that removing obstacles to mobility must lead not to deregulation but to the development of appropriate regulations so that workers have the option of mobility under good conditions. It is also important to ensure consistency with other European measures, such as the employment guidelines in

which mobility is merely mentioned – for the first time – and which place more emphasis on lifelong learning.

After the Stockholm summit, some time will be needed for finalising, adopting and implementing the measures. We intend to continue keeping a close watch on the whole process.

Meeting with Commissioner Anna Diamantopoulou

On 21 February last, a EUROCADRES - CEC joint delegation met Anna Diamantopoulou, European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs. The issues to be tackled at the Stockholm summit (outlined above, with the new focus on qualifications and mobility) were at the heart of this meeting, during which the importance of lifelong training was stressed.

We also called on the Commission to do all in its power to implement the social agenda decided at Nice. This concerns working conditions, with discussions under way on telework, and the need to revise the working time directive to bring an end to the current exclusion of professional and managerial staff. Equal opportunities are also affected, with the need to encourage women's access to professional and managerial positions. Finally, the enlargement of the Union to the Central and Eastern European countries must take full account of the European economic and social model, and take care to avoid social dumping and a "skills drain".

The meeting demonstrated that the Commission recognises not only the importance of professional and managerial staff but also their role as social partners in the process of building Europe.

First European sectoral agreement on Telework

The European Telecommunications Network Organisations and UNI, together with Commissioner Diamantopoulou, formally signed the agreement setting out Guidelines for Telework in Europe which was reached in the Social Dialogue Committee for Telecommunications on 6th February. The SDC reached the agreement to give effect to the joint statement it made to the Lisbon summit. Given the extent of teleworking amongst professional and managerial staff, these guidelines will be significant for them. They emphasize that telework will be voluntary and covered by collective agreements. They provide for:

- retention of employment status and conditions
- equality of access to career development and advancement
- arrangements to prevent exclusion and isolation
- the same rights of communication with trade unions as other employees

In addition to covering the appropriate health and safety regulations as well as covering EU member states, candidate countries where ETNO companies operate will be expected to apply the guidelines. The agreement can be found on the UNI website.

Company mergers, concentration and privatisation

The EUROCADRES symposium held on this subject on 20-21 November in Brussels brought together professional and managerial staff, trade unionists and experts from around twenty European countries, who were welcomed by the president of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, Göke Frerichs. An introductory report by Tony Edwards of Kingston University (United Kingdom) provided the basis for the symposium. This report focused on the results of a survey of EUROCADRES member organisations, and examined a number of cases in the banking sector, telecommunications or privatisation.

During discussions, participants often drew attention to the difficulties in understanding the objectives of the mergers and reconstruction that occurred so frequently in Europe. It was also difficult for both professional and managerial staff and trade unions to obtain the necessary information in good time. Another key question involved management methods and enterprise cultures, where the dominant company usually imposed its culture on the other business involved, with a trend towards favouring the "Anglo-Saxon" model, with short-term financial management criteria, to the detriment of the "European model" whose medium-term approach took more account of social and environmental aspects.

In drawing some initial conclusions from this symposium on behalf of EUROCADRES, Dirk Ameel (LBC-NVK, Belgium) underlined the importance, for professional and managerial staff and all employees, of having their right to information and consultation respected. Swift exchanges of information between the trade unions concerned in the different countries were of vital importance. Dirk Ameel called for negotiations in every case, covering all problems. In particular, there ought to be guarantees regarding training, mobility, working conditions etc. A support unit could provide an effective tool for follow-up and appeal.

Finally, it appeared that the existing European procedures are useful but insufficient, since they only refer to competition law. In the future they should carry out effective checks on whether employees' rights to information and consultation are respected, and also include consideration of the consequences for employment and economic and social conditions.

For more information about professional and managerial staff in Europe and the work of EUROCADRES visit our web site at the following address: <http://www.etic.org/eurocadres>

Lifelong learning: towards a European agreement?

During the first months of the year the social partners met to examine better ways of responding to the needs of providing lifelong training. EUROCADRES, which held a symposium on this subject in December 1999, was represented in these discussions by Käthe Munk Ryom (AC Denmark).

The ETUC, which led the trade union delegation, identified four priorities:

- identification of needs in terms of qualifications and skills,
- training tools and processes
- recognition and validation of skills
- investment in human resources.

Discussions progressed in a fairly positive fashion, but it is not yet clear whether employers are ready to commit themselves to implementing the agreed European guidelines at enterprise level. However, this is an essential condition if an agreement is to be reached.

Negotiations on temporary work

In 1995 the European Commission launched consultations on flexible working and security for workers in three forms of atypical work: part-time work, fixed term contracts and temporary work. Two framework agreements were concluded (in 1997 for part-time work, and in 1999 for fixed term contracts) which have now been enshrined in directives.

The issues surrounding temporary work remain to be resolved, and negotiations began in July 2000. Barbro Sundqvist (SIF, Sweden) is representing EUROCADRES in these negotiations. Progress has been very slow. The need for equal treatment for temporary and company staff is refuted by employers, who regard this as a national question. The call for framework rules to govern the use of temporary work has also been met with refusal by the employers.

The ETUC considers that if this deadlock continues, it will be for the European authorities to shoulder the responsibility for providing the essential regulation of temporary work.

EUROCADRES mobil-net

The network of trade union advisers which EUROCADRES set up last year to answer questions from mobile professional and managerial staff and to offer them assistance, is now in operation. During the year 2000, these trade union advisers followed training sessions organised by Rachel Annand (UNISON, United Kingdom), under the supervision of Mona Hemmer (AKAVA, Finland). They have been provided with a guide to the various issues involved in mobility, and are accustomed to working as a network. They are also in contact with other public and professional, national and European trade union networks set up in this field.

To contact the network, please mail our Secretariat: sat@eurocadres.org

Professional and managerial staff in Europe

How are professional and managerial staff organised in the different European countries? What is their involvement in collective bargaining? How are they affected by the process of individualisation? These are some of the questions tackled by Emmanuel Mermet, researcher at the European Trade Union Institute, in a study published in collaboration with EUROCADRES with financial support from the European Commission. There follows a brief summary of his findings.

Professional and managerial staff form a recognised and identifiable group, inter alia in European statistics. They cannot be ignored as a proportion of European employees, since they represent an average of 18.4% of all employees in the European Union. As a percentage of the workforce, they have steadily increased in recent years. However, the study shows that national statistical systems need to take a more consistent approach to assessing occupational categories.

Professional and managerial staff, in general, work long hours. Compared with the average for all employees, they work more than 4 additional hours a week. The result is a heavy workload.

Legal definitions of professional and managerial staff are generally rather vague, except

in Italy, and to a lesser extent in France and Denmark; they usually make reference to levels of qualification or to independent powers of decision. This means that it is necessary to take more account of the measures and definitions in agreements affecting professional and managerial staff in the majority of European countries.

In some countries professional and managerial staff are not covered by collective agreements; elsewhere they are included in more general agreements covering all employees or white-collar workers. Finally, in some cases they are covered by specific collective agreements, or by special annexes to general agreements.

They are organised in a range of very different ways: professional and managerial trade unions affiliated to general confederations, professional and managerial bodies, associations, or secretariats within general confederations. Professional identity is a key element in the trade union representation of professional and managerial staff, and is conditioned by history and industrial relations in each country, particularly in the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom, enabling professional and managerial staff organisations to acquire significant weight, including in negotiations. At the same time, in France, Belgium and Italy, professional and manageri-

al trade unions have gained in independence by comparison with traditional forms of trade unionism. However, it should be stressed that legislative and contractual advances in all the countries are to the credit of professional and managerial trade union organisations, whose importance has been strengthened with the tertiarisation of the economy.

Finally, individualisation is increasing rapidly, which brings the role of collective bargaining and collective agreements into question. If this is true for all employees, it is professional and managerial staff who are bearing the brunt of these developments. Hence their organisations are attempting to bring influence to bear on the process, trying to negotiate or control it, and are even beginning to organise some groups of self-employed workers.

This overall picture of the situation of professional and managerial staff calls for action on the part of trade union organisations, inter alia through legislation or on a contractual basis. This applies to numerous problems which are common across the different countries, underlining the need for national organisations to increase their European coordination.

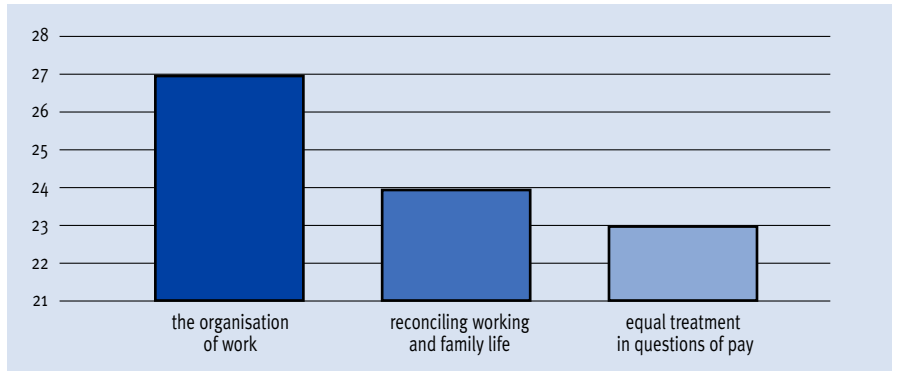
The EUROCADRES-FEMANET network: new initiatives

Our European network of women in managerial posts has been gradually developing for a year now, and presently covers thirteen countries. It encourages the active exchange of information and experience between its members, who are women in various managerial positions in enterprise or administration, or trade union officials responsible for equal opportunities. It operates chiefly through the Web to provide helpful information to members, and offers support to women managers who are often isolated in their working environment.

FEMANET met for the first time last November, in Brussels, to prepare the programme of its future activities and to examine the results of a survey carried out among members. This confirmed that among the dominant concerns of its members, questions linked to the organisation of

work came first, followed by the problems of reconciling work and family life and, finally, the equal pay issue. However, these different problems are equally important as they are inter-

dependent. The Network is therefore supporting the ETUC campaign against wage discrimination, from which women currently suffer.



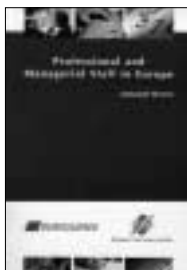
A network working group has recently met in London to consider these aspects in order to prepare some new initiatives. It is expected that there will be a workshop in the autumn to examine further various aspects of the organisation of work, which includes working time and workload as well

as management by women, or the career development of professional and managerial staff. Proposals for discussion within the network will then be finalised, and a colloquium will be held in spring 2002. The proposals will provide support both for professional life and for trade union action, and will

be designed for use in discussions with employers' organisations and the European Commission.

For further information, contact Maria Bertram: tel +32 2 224 0731, e-mail: maria.bertram@eurocadres.org

Recent Publications



• Professional and managerial staff in Europe

The study by Emmanuel Mermet of the European Trade Union Institute, published by EUROCADRES and discussed above, is available in French, English and German editions. It is available from our Secretariat.

• Realising the European Union's potential, consolidating and extending the Lisbon strategy:

This is the title of the contribution published by the European Commission at the beginning of February for discussion by the European Council in

Stockholm on 23-24 March 2001, and to which we have already referred. It covers ten priority areas:

- more and better jobs,
- new European labour market, open to all, with access for all,
- economic reforms for goods and services,
- integrated financial markets,
- the right regulatory environment,
- Europe 2002,
- the IT skills gap,
- research, innovation and enterprise,
- frontier technologies,
- effective social protection for an ageing population.

• Working time surveys

For the use of member organisations, EUROCADRES has drawn up a cohesive series of questions regarding the working time of professional and managerial staff. This questionnaire is intended to make it easier to carry out surveys in European countries, and to conduct comparative studies.

• Industrial restructuring

A resolution of the European Parliament adopted in February calls on the European Commission and the Member States to adopt a more pro-active strategy to industrial restructuring and its social impact. It recommends, inter alia, that the social dialogue should become involved at the very earliest stage. A text which reflects the concerns expressed at the EUROCADRES symposium of November 2000.

• The European Company statute

The project, which was designed to make it possible to set up a company directly under European law, has been deadlocked for the past 30 years following disagreements as to the way in which employees were to be involved. As a result of the policy agreement in Nice last December, this project can finally move ahead. The texts (a draft directive and regulation) are now under discussion by the Council with a view to adoption.

• Treaty of Nice

The treaty, signed in Nice on 26 February last, is now subject to ratification procedures in the Member States. It may be viewed on the web site: http://europa.eu.int/comm/nice_treaty/index_en.htm

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