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QUO VADIS?





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EDITORIAL

QUO VADIS?

BY PIERRE PIRSON, president NCK/CNC

Christian tradition links this expression to the crucifixion of St Peter. And it is important to realise that recent events and developments as rebeginning to resemble a historical way of the cross. The war in Ukraine and the return of an iron curtain is an unparalleled event, inflation is at its highest in 40 years, the financial markets have had their worst first half in a long time, the government's files, everything seems to be a source of uncertainty. And it must be said that the clouds are gathering.

The return of inflation to a level not seen since 1982

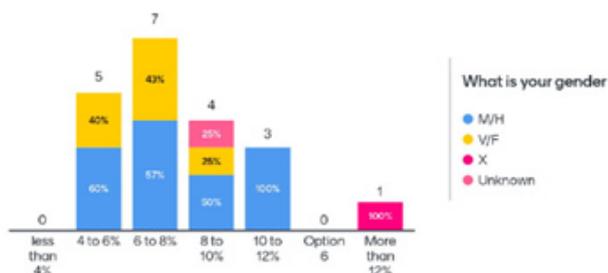
During our 2022 GA in March, I took the liberty of asking for a forecast of inflation for 2022 (see graph). It seems that the majority of us underestimated it.

In May 2022 inflation rose to 9.65%, the highest since October 1982. 1982 is not an innocent year for Belgium. On 22 February of that year, in order to restore the lost competitiveness of our economy and to put an end to the debt explosion of the 1970s, the Belgian government decided to devalue our currency by 8.5% (which has only happened twice in Belgian history). After the second oil shock in 1979, this automatically led to an increase in inflation, as the price of imported goods automatically rose by 8.5%.

Such a high level of inflation and especially its rapid arrival complicates the financial management of companies. The costs of energy, raw materials and wages, thanks to the protection of indexation.

This will have a major impact on all the decisions to be made in 2022 or even 2023, but above all it will make it difficult to predict the future, which, as we know, is likely to slow down investments and long-term projects.

What will be the average inflation in 2022



Energy prices and (the lack of) energy policy

No, I won't repeat the history of events. Prices have exploded, the war has its merits, it has only accelerated a problem that has been going on for a long time, we have taken ill-considered risks with the supply and security of our countries. This will have a heavy impact on our economy, our health care, our pensions,

It is a long time (2007) since the NCK/CNC alerted the public authorities to the dependence on gas and oil. And it must be noted that unfortunately only a criminal act of a dictator will have brought our politicians (partially) to their senses.

At the time of writing, the decision in principle to extend two nuclear reactors from 18 March 2022 has been slow to materialise, although it is expected to be finalised before the parliamentary recess (21 July). **A necessary step, but totally insufficient!!!**

Europe has started to reignite its coal-fired power plants, a decision that was unthinkable a short time ago, a decision that is the direct consequence of a short-sighted energy policy and that will cause hundreds or even thousands of additional deaths in Europe every year through air pollution. Despite this, the majority of forecasts for the coming

year speak of a gas supply problem for Germany in February 2023. Germany is planning to stop 4 GW of nuclear power at the end of 2022, while Belgium will also stop 2 GW of nuclear power (Doel 3 and Tihange 2).

But my good man will tell me that these are the plants with cracks... The rational answer is that these are not cracks but defects due to hydrogen, which we now know have existed since the construction of the plants and that these microbubbles have not evolved...

This rational answer does not reach the brains of people whose intentions are still being questioned, apart from stopping nuclear energy at all costs.

Speaking of prices, we are told that there will be no blackout. The semantics are now to talk about load shedding and very high prices. I don't know about you, but if I can't afford the heating anymore, or if I'm unloaded, I don't really see the difference with a blackout. Even if I understand the difference of concept, the result will be the same, I will be very very cold.

Unstable financial and bond markets

Some will say that the problem of falling financial markets seems to be a rich man's problem. But unfortunately it is more serious than that.

First of all, financial markets are a reflection of confidence in the economy. In short, confidence is not there, given the war, inflation and energy supply risks, so it is more a consequence than a cause.

However, there is also a problem with the second pension pillar. All group insurance systems are based on capitalisation. And the capitalisation of equity and bond investments are therefore negatively impacted. The global equity market

had its worst first quarter since 1990, when the global market index was created. BUT unlike the covid-crisis, which “only” affected equities, this crisis is also affecting the value of government bonds. The price of the US 10-year bond, the world’s most popular safe haven, had its worst first half since1788 (the year it was created).

Fortunately, our pension funds are also protected by the responsibility of our companies. But this will put an even greater burden on their costs.

Government reforms...that are overdue and need to be monitored.

The real good news is the potential for flexibility at the request of workers (4-day week, hours adapted to alternating custody, right to disconnect). Potentially, because the devil is in the details, we are waiting to see the legislative texts to have a precise idea. In the meantime, I invite you to read in the section “political parties in the social debate” the intervention of the PS concerning these reforms agreed with Mr Nicolas Gillard, the French-speaking spokesman of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Labour Mr Pierre-Yves Dermagne. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our political contacts in this section who regularly enrich the framework and our thinking.

It is certain that these decisions will generate discussion at the level of social consultation and will be an additional challenge for the management of the teams.

For the rest, we note that the energy-, pensions- and tax reform files do not provide clarity for the future. The NCK/CNC’s position on these issues is clear, it is about securing a future for our country without attacking the incomes of those who work hard and are the most taxed in the country that taxes workers the most in the world.

If we think that the government will not dare to touch the second pillar, we can only note the repeated attacks on the company car. I must admit that I find the media and even sometimes people who claim to be experts to be despairing when they claim that the state could make money on

this issue. It is simply a question of taxing you more when the level of taxation is already unfair. And if company cars were to disappear, how many older, more polluting vehicles would be put on the market? Let’s remember that in Belgium, the electrification of the car industry is currently carried out by the company car.

In conclusion, I would like to say that while times will be tough, it also means that our companies, our citizens and our country will need leaders to lead the companies through these difficult times.

The value of managers is never higher than in these tumultuous times. The country needs you and, even if it sometimes gives you a hard time, let us continue to defend it and our rights.



BY: PIERRE PIRSON: DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY OF FECEC
(EUROPEAN FEDERATION FOR MANAGERS AND EXECUTIVES IN THE BANKING SECTOR)



It had been more than two years since we had had the opportunity to meet physically together. The solidarity of FECEC members with the actions of our Polish colleagues who are 200% involved in helping refugees had the natural consequence of bringing us together in Krakow, which symbolically brought us closer together, 250 km from the border.

It was an opportunity to share information on subjects that are sometimes common, sometimes specific to the banking world.

All countries are marked by the return of inflation and rising interest rates. Everyone is feeling the pressure of shortages and the fear of recession. But a country like Poland, outside the Eurozone, had already seen its interest rates rise to 6.45% on 20 May 2022. The (mis)management of variable rate loans and, to my surprise, the existence of Swiss franc loans to individuals, make the situation difficult in the short term. Bank staff are, as in other countries, victims of negative customer reactions to this difficult situation where banks restrict credit conditions or face defaults. The main common concerns are still branch closures and automation. The new fact is that the representatives' main concern is the negotiation of indexation, a subject on which we Belgians are a little better protected.

Although it is always a pleasure to meet my European colleagues, I came back from Krakow with a lot of concerns and the impression that the crisis started with the energy price crisis and the war in Ukraine hit the satellite countries of the Eurozone much harder but that a domino effect could not be excluded. The solution will be, as always, learning and solidarity.

The next General Assembly will take place on 9 December 2022 in Paris and will see the election of a new steering committee and a new bureau. Belgium, following the excellent electoral results of the 2020 social elections, will have more weight to bring to bear. Natascha Van Horenbeek (BNP Paribas Fortis), Johan Criel (KBC) and Pierre Pirson (ING) will be the 3 voices for Belgium.

FOR SUSTAINABLE ELECTRICITY : BETWEEN MYTHE AND REALITY

BY ROLAND GLIBERT, GENERAL DELEGATE NCK/CNC

The CNC/NCK participated in a conference organised at the headquarters of the Belgian Federation of Technological Industries (Agoria) by the non-governmental organisation 100TWh All with the support of weCARE (European NGO) and SEII (European Society of Engineers and Industrialists).

Philippe Hendrickx made a critical analysis of the Belgian government's energy policy on electricity production under the responsibility of Minister T. Vanderstraeten. Vanderstraeten.

He denounced the Minister's decision to entrust ELIA with the elaboration of the country's electricity supply plans. As a reminder, ELIA is a private company in charge of the management of high voltage electricity transmission in Belgium, which is remunerated in particular for the quantities of imported electricity.

The plan proposed by ELIA is based on the construction of subsidised gas-fired power stations and the massive import of electricity from neighbouring countries.

The government's decision of 18 March to keep Tihange 3 and Doel 4 (2000MWe) in operation is a step in the right direction, but it does not meet the total electricity capacity requirement of 6000MWe in 2025.

The random commissioning of gas-fired power stations in 2025 and the equally random increase in intermittent energy capacity will not make it possible to make up for the lack of production capacity. In 2021, intermittent energy production stood at 20.5%, divided into 12.5% wind and 8% solar. This will result in the need to rely heavily on imported electricity.

The 2003 law on the cessation of nuclear power as a means of producing electricity must be adapted to the current situation of climate emergency: modification of the law. The design of Belgian reactors is among the best in the world in terms of safety (double containment, 2nd level of protection against external accidents, etc.).

Finally, in the 2050 perspective, where the abandonment of fossil energies and therefore the majority switch to electricity are planned, consumption will double to 180 TWh. Nuclear power will have to occupy a predominant place as a decarbonised, pilotable medium. New nuclear power plants must therefore be built.

Several interesting presentations contributed to the information on the topic of sustainable electricity. These presentations can be found at www.100twh.be.



CLIMATE, CRISES: THE PLAN TO TRANSFORM THE FRENCH ECONOMY THE CARBON THINK TANK-Ed Odile Jacob February 2022

BY ROLAND GLIBERT, GENERAL DELEGATE NCK/CNC

Climat, crises: Le plan de transformation de l'économie française



At a time when youth climate protests are taking place around the world, a report has been published by a French think tank on the energy transition. The shift project aims to bring the French economy into line with a 5% annual reduction in GHGs by 2022, a reduction compatible with France's climate commitments. Different sectors have been analysed, from energy to housing, from mobility to agriculture, from industry to finance, from education to health. For each of these 15 sectors, a survey of the situation was the starting point for proposals to reduce GHG emissions over the long term. The implications for employment were assessed in each case.

This transformation plan takes into account not only the reduction of GHGs but also the exhaustibility of fossil energy sources: 80% of the worldwide energy production comes from fossil fuels. According to the International Energy Agency, the peak of conventional oil production (excluding Canadian oil sands and American shale oil and extra heavy

oil)) was reached in 2008. Peak gas production is not expected before 2030 at the earliest, coal is still available in large quantities.

The various proposals for reducing CO₂ are easily transposable to the Belgian situation. They are based on a systemic approach that focuses on physical flows and takes into account scarce resources. These proposals are intended to be practical so as to open up a realistic path to decarbonisation within a long-term transformation. Finally, they are not based on the gamble of economic growth or on technological developments that are supposed to happen but have not yet been tested.

Among the various sectors analysed by different authors, we have selected energy and agriculture.

Energy

For energy, the author in charge of this sector, the electricity system will become the major energy infrastructure of tomorrow. 20% increase in electricity consumption will be recorded by 2050. In the decade 2040, 80% of the reactors will reach 60 years of age and, if the construction of EPRs (2/2 years) is included, nuclear power and hydroelectric power stations will only meet about 65% of consumption in 2050. The balance will have to be made up by renewable energy sources, mainly wind and photovoltaic power, and a small complement of thermal power stations fuelled by biogas. The electricity grid will have to be adapted to the deployment of renewable

energy sources and allow the control of machines and equipment connected to the grid. Finally, two large networks of charging stations will be needed.

For electric cars and light-duty vehicles, a “slow” network will be deployed at homes and workplaces to ensure daily recharging, and a “fast” network along motorways and highways that will allow rapid recharging in 30 minutes.

The economy will have to move away from oil and gas by 2050. Housing will have to replace gas equipment with electric equipment, petrol stations will be gradually reduced. These changes will have a major impact on employment.

Secondary energy sources will be strategically deployed.

Electricity will remain the main energy source, but other forms of energy will be produced in relatively small quantities. These are wood and gas obtained from methanisation plants. Agrofuels and hydrogen that will be produced in 2050 will be used in aviation and industry.

The transformation of the energy system requires a planning and governance structure for the energy transition. The author recommends that such a structure be set up as of today under the authority of the French government.

Agriculture and food

The agri-food sector in France is currently responsible for about 25% of GHG emissions. Emissions from production are largely linked to livestock farming (methane) and soil cultivation (80% of nitrogen oxide emissions in France). CH₄ and N₂O are greenhouse gases with a higher global warming potential

than CO₂.

For the authors, it is a question of producing differently by developing practices to decarbonise agricultural production and increase the sector's energy autonomy.

Downstream, for food, we should aim to reduce milk and egg production by a third, halve fishery products and triple beef, pork and poultry production.

For the energy autonomy of the agricultural sector, part of the agricultural biomass produced will be converted into energy for field work. Animal feed flows and fruit and vegetable imports will be reduced. Distribution channels will be reorganised to promote the connection between local producers and consumers.

The depletion of mineral fertiliser resources (phosphate and potash deposits) and nitrogenous fertilisers (increasing scarcity of the fossil fuels needed to synthesise them) will make it necessary to rediscover a circularity of inputs.

Finally, we must put an end to imported deforestation. The production of soya, palm oil and cocoa is a major factor in deforestation in all the major equatorial forests.

Through these two sectors it appears necessary to practice sobriety. This sobriety is also requested for the 13 other sectors that are analysed. As indicated in the introduction, the analysis does not take into account major technological developments that will be discovered in the future. This approach, which some authors call “ecodecroissantism”, is opposed to an “ecomodernist” approach, which is based on the gamble of major technological leaps (mastery of fusion, CO₂ capture, new types of bakeries, synthetic foods, etc.) that will occur in the coming years.



GENERAL ASSEMBLY CNC/NCK 2022

BY ROLAND GLIBERT, GENERAL DELEGATE NCK/CNC

The General Assembly of the NCK/CNC was held remotely on Thursday 31 March.

A minute's silence was observed for the victims of the war in Ukraine.

The National Executive Board and the National Committee that were presented in 2021 at the previous GA have not been changed.

The president Pierre Pirson presented his assessment of the actions that had been programmed for 2021. Within the framework of the professionalization of the CNC/NCK, the training provided to the elected members of the Works Councils was successfully carried out and followed, the political contacts were maintained and developed, the management of the administration was improved. The project to offer conferences to our members was limited to one conference on the subject of pensions and little action was taken to anticipate the next elections.

Pierre Pirson recalled the difficulty of arbitrating between his professional time, his private time and that devoted to the exercise of his mandate and the importance of the support of the members. For the year 2023, he plans to give up his mandate as President while maintaining his support to the CNC/NCK as for example General Secretary within the BEN (National Executive Bureau).

The economic and social situation resulting from the war in Ukraine was discussed through various indicators: the falling consumer confidence indicator, the rise in the long-term bond (OLO) in line with the surge in of the price of gas.

And then comes the reality , Perfect storm ?



- The CNC/NCK has appealed through FECEC and CEC to the European Commission officials, Mrs Ursula Van der Leyen, Mr Michel and Mr Borrell to help the Ukrainian refugees.
- As a reminder, the NCK/CNC made a donation of 2500€, in favor of Ukrainian refugees.

In the absence of Frédéric Baudoux, our French-speaking lawyer, Nikolaas, the Dutch-speaking lawyer, gave an update on the legal service of the NCK/CNC. Our lawyers, with the help of Philippe Hendrickx, gave training in social law.

Various cases have been dealt relating to breach of contract, discrimination, employment contracts, etc. Our lawyers' interventions have made it possible to obtain satisfaction through amicable agreements in many cases without going to the labour court.

For the latter category, for example, the legal department took charge of the dispute between the management of a consultancy company and the executives who demanded that their time off be taken into account.

Three topics were discussed with the political circles: pensions, labour reform and energy.



For pensions, the threat of a change in taxation on the 2nd pillar has been averted.

The equality of the pension system between men and women was defended. The ceiling for the calculation of the statutory pension has supplementary pension depending on the pension regulation.

The NCK has been following the government's work on labour reform and there are proposals to increase the activity rate to 80% by better involving the long-term sick.

In addition, the issues of burnout among professional and managerial staff, flexibility of working hours (e.g. 4 days/week) and training as an individual right were followed up. The possibility of starting work with a new employer at the end of a contract is also a demand of the CNC. Philippe Hendrickx, Vice-President of the NCK and President of the Energy Federation, presented the actions undertaken in the energy debate. A reminder was given of the importance of this federation within the CNC, 41% of the elected members of the Works Councils of CP326 Gas and Electricity are NCK members.

At the European level the federation is a member of the Federation of Energy and Research Managers (FECER) and the European Confederation of Managers (CEC).

The CNC actively participated in the energy debate in favour of maintaining nuclear energy. This took the form of participation in various events: Tihange and Doel, stand up for nuclear in collaboration with 100TWh, meetings with various political party presidents, interventions in the Dutch and French-speaking media and social networks (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter) On a platform "Citizen Energytaskforce, a con-

ference was given on "Security of supply and price of electricity" (comparison of stopping or keeping nuclear power).

On 18 March the government decided to extend the life of the two most recent nuclear power plants for 10 years, the dismantling operations will apply to the other plants. 486 managers (95% members of the NCK) are currently working in the nuclear sector. 15% of these managers will be assigned to this dismantling, part of them (240 managers) will be transferred to new Engie entities: Bright and Blue the remaining staff not taken over will be subject to negotiation within the framework of the Renault law.

The expertise shown in the interventions in the media and social networks has given the CNC greater visibility. This visibility can be used in other issues that concern the defence of executives.

Telework, mobility and company cars are topical issues.

The NCK wishes to share their experience and ideas with its members. 4 members attending the GA put themselves forward to be part of a working group.

Membership fee 2022.

Individual and group membership fees have remained unchanged since 2014.

The index evolved as follows:

- January 2014: 101.6
- January 2022: 118.21



The GA proposes to modify the contributions from 1 January 2023 onwards according to the following table.

Bijdrage – cotisation – Last reviewed in 2014

		Virement/overschrijving		dom par an/per jaar		dom par mois/per maand	
		current	new	current	new	current	new
Index Jan 2014	100,60						
Index Jan 2022	118,21						
Individual	Single	125	145	115	135	9,75	11,5
	Young/unemployed	62	72	52	60	4,5	5,5
	Retired	52	61	42	50	3,5	4
	Couple	145	165	135	150	11,5	13,5

Finance

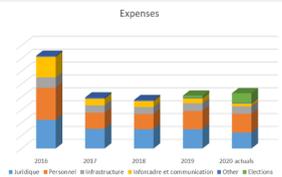
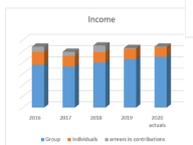
Expenditure in 2021 is lower than in 2020. Revenues are up thanks to group contributions.

The figures below show the evolution of expenditure and income since 2017.

CNCK finances

5th year in row with Expenses < Income

- Expenses much lower than 2016
- Staff cost
- Juridical
- E-Inforcadre



- Income growth linked to groups

BENIFITS for our members

Terms and conditions: contact the secretariat.

For current or additional information see www.cnc-nck.be members benefits

1 LEGAL COVERAGE OF OCCUPATIONAL RISK :

Supplementary insurance

- In the context of professional activity, this insurance relates to :
 - to the civil remedy,
 - to the criminal defence
 - to civil defence
 - to the driver's guarantee
 - disputes arising from social legislation and the employment contract.

Annual premium:

2 HERTZ:

Car rental at 10% off the national price.

3 LEGAL ADVISE ON LABOUR LAW :

This legal advice is extended to family members living in the same household as the CNC member.

4 CARLSON WAGONLIT TRAVEL :

Discount offered on various trips ordered via the website: <http://leisureatwork.cwtonline.be/index.aspx>

5 TRAINING SESSIONS

The CNC regularly organises training sessions. These are free of charge for members (or with a minimal participation fee). Non-members pay the full rate (min. 145).

Meer informatie ?

Contacteer het NCK secretariaat via

info@nck-cnc.be.

NATCOM/COMNAT AT BEKAERT

BY ROLAND GLIBERT, GENERAL DELEGATE NCK/CNC

Our vice-president Koen Gregoir (Manager Be care and Compliance Bekaert) invited the Comnat to meet in Zwevegem, headquarters of a world famous Belgian group. Bekaert is present on all continents (27,000 employees) and is specialised in the drawing and coating of metals.

It produces wires for well-known uses such as fencing, concrete reinforcement, tyres, but also for more unexpected uses such as champagne corks. A visit to a showroom where all these many applications were brought together was a pleasant surprise and impression.

Koen and his colleague accompanied a visit to a part of the factory where drawing and coating are carried out.

The traditional Natcom/Comnat meeting with sandwiches took place in pleasant and functional premises. The sandwiches were replaced by an excellent meal served in a beautiful setting.

Thanks a lot Koen!



Left to right: Serge Bodart, Roland Glibert, Pascale Lobé, Didier Ramon, Pierre Pirson, Luc Vinckx, Koen Gregoir



POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE SOCIAL DEBATE

Contributions from those political parties that responded to our call.



For several months, the increase in energy and commodity prices has been a cause for concern.

This increase is due in particular to the end of the health crisis (economic recovery and high demand) and the war in Ukraine (uncertainties about energy supply and rising prices).

This poses concrete financial difficulties for households (with declining purchasing power and fears for the future) and for companies, which are facing serious supply difficulties as well as an explosion in labour costs.

The Federal Government's responses have provided welcome relief but require a very large budget. They must be transformed into structural and definitive measures in favour of competitiveness and purchasing power with, for example, a reduction in personal income tax, the reduction of VAT to 5% on commercial goods, a higher pension, etc. for those who have worked,...

The MR is opposed to price freezes, which deny the equilibrium between supply and demand. This idea poses many problems: prices are rising today because the costs borne by producers and distributors are increasing.

If prices can no longer move freely, employment will be turned into an adjustment variable and many jobs will be lost. In France, EDF, which is 80% owned by the French state, is currently indebteding itself on behalf of consumers to make price rises more bearable, but this is still public funding. In the end, it is always the taxpayer who pays.

As far as the debate on wage training is concerned, although we are not currently calling for the abolition of the automatic wage indexation system, this can only be maintained in parallel with the 1996 law, which prevents too much wage slippage in comparison with our neighbouring countries (NL, FR, DE).

The 1996 law and its moderating character also make it possible, as far as possible, to limit inflationary spirals.

The "price-wage" crisis that we have already seen in Belgium in recent months is damaging to our economy as a whole.



The world of work has changed. We have seen new ways of working emerge or become generalised, such as teleworking, e-commerce or the platform economy. Pierre-Yves Dermagne, Minister for the Economy and Labour, has taken measures that are adapted to the reality of today's working world and that prepare for tomorrow.

Because without strong measures to increase well-being and strengthen skills, we will not succeed.

The news has a dual purpose: to adapt the world of work to the reality of the 21st century and to converge towards the government's aim of achieving an 80% employment rate. To achieve this, the Deputy Prime Minister fo-

cused on three areas:

1. Measures to improve work-life balance

- For the first time, the proposed flexibility measures are tailored to the needs and demands of the worker and not only to the requirements of the employer
- A worker may voluntarily work 4 days instead of 5, with an extra day off each week.
- We have also thought about separated parents who will have the possibility to reduce their working time one week and increase it the following week, to adapt to the alternate custody of their children. The right to disconnection reinforces this system to allow workers to really disconnect from their work outside working hours.

2. Stronger rights for weaker workers

- Different categories of workers can be considered as more vulnerable groups in our labour market. They deserve to be better supervised and protected.
- Our text is in line with the spirit of the European Commission's draft directive.
- Some of these workers, who are in a self-employed relationship, may work for sever-

al platforms. They therefore have complete freedom in the way they perform work or can set their income. Others are clearly employees of a platform. In this case, the platform has to fulfil its role as employer, with all the obligations that this entails.

- "I don't know if the self-employed/employee border is particularly sharp today, but we will continue to work to ensure that the grey area that is abused by some multinationals disappears, so that everyone has the appropriate status," comments the Minister of Labour.
- It should also be noted that all platform workers will be covered against accidents at work, even if they are self-employed, at the platform's expense. Finally, variable part-time workers will no longer receive their working hours for the week at the last minute.

3. Strengthen the possibility of workers to develop their careers

- Questions had to be asked about discrimination in training. Why did women or older workers receive less training than younger workers?
- It is important for every worker to be able to train, whatever their age, gender or level of initial training. This is why the proposal for an individual

right to training of 5 days for all workers has been adopted.

- A worker who loses his or her job will also be offered, if he or she so wishes, a transitional route to another company during the notice period. This measure is intended to increase the chances of finding another job quickly.
- Finally, a dismissed worker will also be able to benefit from measures aimed at strengthening his or her employability during his or her pre-retirement period.

In conclusion, it should be recalled that our labour market faces structural challenges that are holding back the increase in the employment rate. These include lack of investment in training, low labour mobility, discrimination and a large number of occupations in short supply.

In the field of employment, other measures concerning shortage occupations are currently the subject of specific negotiations with the regions. Minister Dergagne has just signed a series of royal decrees that will come into force on 1 September.

These royal decrees will make it possible to grant the long-term unemployed, i.e. workers who have been unemployed for more than a year, who find work in a trade in short supply or in another region, an advantage equivalent to a quarter of the unemploy-

ment benefit.

This benefit will be granted for 3 months and will be fully cumulative with the salary.

In order to benefit from this advantage, all you have to do is apply to the unemployment office, which will check whether the worker meets the conditions.

“I supported this measure because I am sure that it is likely to encourage unemployed workers to find work in sectors where there is a shortage of labour or to dare to cross linguistic borders,” says Pierre-Yves Dermagne.

The measure was previously discussed in the Interfederal Platform. This body was created by the Federal Minister of Employment, Pierre-Yves Dermagne, to find solutions with all the the Ministers of Employment to the problems of shortage trades and to the stimulation of interregional mobility.



The Russian invasion of Ukraine has serious consequences for our economy and our purchasing power. Of course, all this is insignificant compared to the suffering that the Ukrainians have to endure. That is why we are supporting them as much as we can with humanitarian and military

aid and by taking in refugees.

Of course, the federal and Flemish governments are also trying to mitigate the consequences for our country, our economy, our companies and our citizens. We did the same during the Covid crisis, and with success.

At present, the best protection of purchasing power is automatic wage indexation. Several studies show that it is a very good shock absorber for a large proportion of employees and civil servants. For people on low incomes who are really in difficulty because of soaring energy prices, the social energy tariff has been extended several times. This targeted measure is also very effective. However, many families still face problems due to high prices.

This is why-To this end, we have taken additional support measures, such as a temporary reduction in VAT on energy prices, a heating bonus, etc.

These were necessary and in principle temporary interventions to solve the main problems in the short term. But our task now is mainly to find sustainable solutions for the long term. After all, the government cannot bail out everything all the time. If it did, the debts and budget deficits of all governments would increase.

Companies are also experiencing difficulties. With regard to purchasing power, the De Croo government has asked a group of ex-

perts, under the leadership of the Governor of the National Bank of Belgium, to issue a scientific opinion that should serve as a basis for possible complementary and highly targeted measures. General inflation must be curbed by the European Central Bank. Greater European cooperation is the way forward with regard to energy prices. Prime Minister De Croo is fighting for group purchases to reduce prices for companies and families. The cheapest kwh is the one you don't use.

This is why it is crucial not to support the purchase of energy per se, but rather, for example, investments in insulation and sustainable energy production. We can turn this crisis into an opportunity and accelerate the energy transition.

Finally, it remains crucial to continue to implement reforms of our economy, labour market, pensions... to help more people find a job. Work is and remains the best guarantee of a decent income and, at a macro level too, it is essential to keep our economy functioning and social security affordable.



The CD&V remains committed to the fight against poverty. In Flanders, the poverty risk is 8.5%. As Christian democrats, every human being counts. Poverty means that a person is left out of many aspects of our society and therefore does not fully count in practice. Furthermore, 8% of children grow up in poverty and 1 in 7 is born into a disadvantaged family.

An important lever in the fight against poverty is the growth pack. Since regionalisation and reform, more people are entitled to social benefits, and, as income rather than status is now taken as the reference point, the inactivity traps are also reduced.

With the reform, it was also decided to work with a fixed annual indexation of 2%. In recent years, the growth package has risen faster than life expectancy. When drawing up the budget, the Flemish government therefore decided to temporarily reduce the indexation to 1%.

Today, however, we see that, due to geopolitical circumstances, inflation is higher than it has been in the last 40 years. This is why this measure is no longer defensible for us as a family party. After all, no one could have predicted such inflation last year, but the reality is that families are now seeing their purchasing power put under considerable pressure. In addition to the index, the

CD&V also considers it necessary to strengthen social benefits in order to better support families with the lowest incomes.

In addition to the Flemish action plan to combat poverty, the CD&V is currently working on a federal plan to combat poverty, in which the increase in minimum benefits is central. For the CD&V, however, access to employment remains THE lever to fight poverty and exclusion structurally. In this respect, we are concerned with a work of quality for all, adapted to the abilities of each individual.

With the decree on work and care, the CD&V joins in the actions concerning employment and activation. The CD&V wants to strengthen as many people as possible and guide them towards a job in the regular and/or social economy. Even for people for whom paid work is not possible because of a medical, mental, psychological, psychiatric and/or social problem, a meaningful activity - temporary or not - is provided, so that no one has to stay on the sidelines.

The CD&V has already participated in the signing of the “Back to Work” protocol and therefore supports the ambition to create more and better employment opportunities for people with health problems in order to get them out of the vicious circle.

After all, being and remaining ill for a long period of time leads to

a loss of income, which can push people into poverty. On the other hand, a good job offers people opportunities for personal development, expansion of their social network, etc.

CNC/ NCK: INFORMATION AND FACTS.

- The fourth trade union alternative that has been specifically defending the interests of professional and managerial staff since 1966.
- The CNC is an independent association.
- The CNC helps its members: per year +/-1000 individual interventions +/- 200 interventions at collective level.
- Gives a voice to it's members.

OBJECTIVES OF NCK/CNC

- Improvement of working conditions for all workers including managers and executives
- The CNC/NCK is the only organisation that opposes fiscal and parafiscal discrimination.
- Defending our interests in a humanitarian context without belonging to a particular political party.
- Our association is fighting for legal recognition in order to be present at all levels of social dialogue.
- The defence of professional and managerial staff at European level through the European Confederation of Professional and Managerial Staff (CEC).
- Legal pension increased in relation to management contributions.

SERVICES OF THE CNC/NCK

- **Individual juridical advise and assistance**
 - Conclusion of employment contract
 - Working out an amicable agreement
 - Secondment and modification of function
 - (supplementary) pensionplan
 - Evaluation of function
 - Dismissal and outplacement
 - Company car package
 - Restructuring
- **Collective services.**
 - Organisation of an executive association
 - Reorganisation in the company
 - Analysis of collective labour agreements
 - Closure or sale of the business
- **The NCK/CNC is present in the works council and supports candidates in social elections.**



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JAARLIJKSE BIJDRAGE (€)	Bankover- schrijving		Domiciliëring	
	jaarlijks	jaarlijks	jaarlijks	maandelijks
Actieve leden	145	135	11,5	
Jonger dan 30 jaar	72	60	5,50	
Gepensioneerden	61	50	4,00	
Werklozen met uitkering, langdurig zieken	72	60	5,50	
Echtparen	165	150	13,50	

Collaborated to this issue:

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