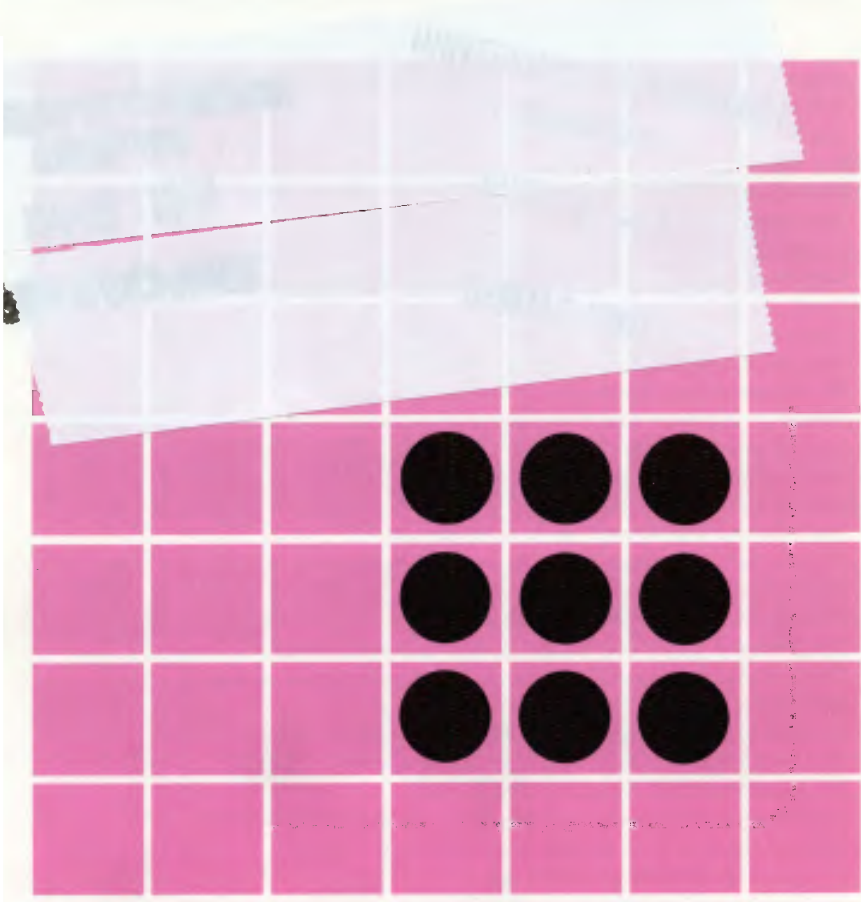


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Introduction

In this brochure 'vocational training' is defined as actions to prepare people, both young persons and adults for employment as employed or self-employed workers. The term embraces both preparation for working life in general, provision for specific skills and adaptations to changes in the economy and society.

For the purposes of this brochure we shall therefore be concerned with initial vocational training, i.e. the educational level immediately after compulsory schooling, and vocational training for adults with a similar content.

Vocational training is provided in a large number of institutions. Initial vocational training includes full-time vocational education in secondary schools, apprenticeship training organized as part-time education often in the same schools combined with training in specific skills in a firm, short vocational preparation courses in skill centres or firms or even short training periods stretching over a couple of weeks combined with work. Adult vocational training is by and large more oriented towards the provision of specific skills and generally consists of shorter courses than initial vocational training.

The types of training mentioned so far comprise what we may call formal vocational training. In quantitative terms this type of training may be the least important however. The informal training which is part of the normal process of production in the thousands of firms in a modern economy may be much more important in terms of the number of people involved and the amount of resources used. We have very little systematic knowledge of this type of training however and we shall only refer to it occasionally in this brochure.

It is recognized that this informal training process needs a general foundation to be conducted efficiently. It is this general foundation which concerns us in this brochure. There is on the other hand an on-going discussion on how general this foundation need be. A related issue is whether vocational training is best undertaken in firms or in institutions. This issue cannot be resolved on the general level of this discussion, but it is perhaps fair to say that development in all Member States has been, at least for initial vocational training, towards a system of training with a larger content of general education. However, the practical details associated with the learning of specific skills are seen as being more efficiently handled by the informal training undertaken in firms.

The importance of vocational training can be illustrated by some interesting figures contained in a report published by the Statistical Office of the European Communities relating to the position in 1975. In that year, over six million men and women undertook vocational

training, the number having increased by 20% since 1973. They represented 6% of the working population... Participants were drawn from all age-groups: 54% were young people under 25, mostly undertaking initial vocational training. Participants over 25 were mostly undertaking further training and retraining—they included over 200 000 people over the age of 50. Clearly vocational training is an important subject for a very large number of working men and women throughout the European Community.

Vocational training has gradually become an essential element in active labour market policy. While a vocational training policy cannot cure all economic and social ills, it is by now recognized in all Member States that in combination with other measures it can be a potent instrument towards alleviating many problems connected with labour market, regional and social policies.

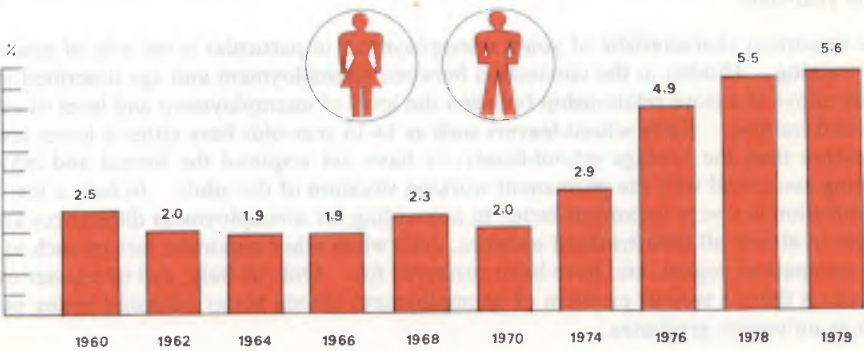
The growth in unemployment in the Community has been more rapid since 1973. The growth in unemployment from 1973 to 1978 was 1.5% per year, compared with 0.5% per year from 1960 to 1972. The rapid increase in unemployment in 1973 was due to a combination of factors, but the most important was the rapid increase in unemployment in the Community as a whole. The figure below shows the situation in 1977.

1. The present employment situation

In order to understand and evaluate the role of vocational training policy within the Community, a short survey of the present employment situation in the Community is necessary.

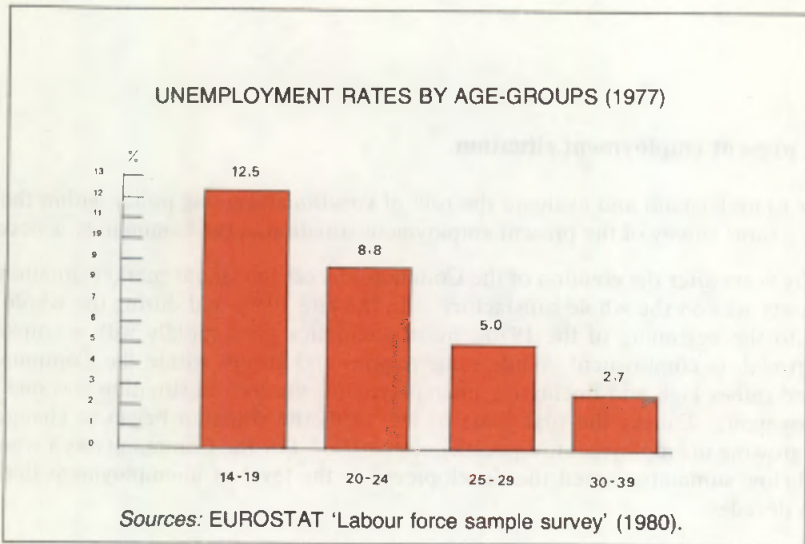
For many years after the creation of the Common Market the labour market situation in the Community was on the whole satisfactory. In the late 1950s and during the whole of the 1960s into the beginning of the 1970s, most economies grew rapidly with a concomitant strong growth in employment. While some regions and groups within the Community experienced rather high and fluctuating unemployment, the overall situation was one of low unemployment. During the first years of the 1970s the situation began to change, with rapidly growing unemployment, especially after 1973. For the Community as a whole, the Figure below summarizes well the development in the level of unemployment during the last two decades.

REGISTERED UNEMPLOYMENT AS % OF THE CIVILIAN WORKING POPULATION IN THE COMMUNITY (1960-1979)



Source: EUROSTAT 'Employment and unemployment'.

The growth in unemployment in the seventies has been more rapid among women than among men: from 1972 to 1978 the female unemployment rate rose from 2.4% to 6.4%, whereas the male unemployment rate rose from 3% to 5%. The largest differences in growth and level of unemployment cannot, however, be found between the sexes, but between age-groups. The Figure below shows the situation in 1977.

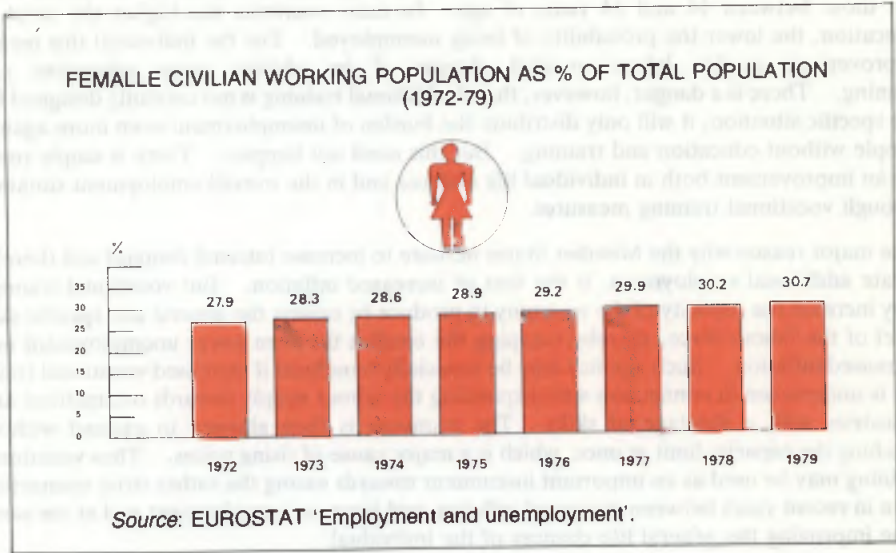


The unemployment rate among the 14-19 year-olds was for both sexes more than 5 times the unemployment rate for the 30-39 years age-group which has been chosen here to represent the typical unemployment situation for the adult population. The unemployment situation is somewhat better for the 20-24 years age-group, but still over 3.5 times higher than for the 30-39 year-olds.

One important characteristic of youth unemployment in particular is the role of education and training. Hidden in the connection between unemployment and age described in the figure above is a close relationship between the level of unemployment and level of education and training. Early school-leavers such as 14-16 year-olds have either a lower level of education than the average school-leaver, or have not acquired the formal and informal training associated with the permanent working situation of the adult. In fact, a low level of education is a very important factor in accounting for unemployment differences among groups in almost all industrialized societies, even when other important factors such as age, sex, occupation, region, etc. have been corrected for. Only in Italy, and to a lesser extent France, is there a serious problem of unemployment among better educated young people such as university graduates.

A somewhat bright spot in the generally discouraging picture is that changes in the youth labour force in the Community will not add to the problems of employment. Between 1980

and 1990 it is foreseen that the youth labour force will increase by only 50 000 in the Community, from 20.145 million to 20.195 million. On the other hand, if activity rates for women increase as they have in the recent past, which there is every reason to believe, the problems associated with creating sufficient employment for adult women and avoiding that this increase in the general labour supply leads to additional problems for other groups such as young people will be formidable. The Figure below shows the increase in female activity rates between 1972 and 1978.



While the general level of unemployment within the Community was 5.6% in 1978, unemployment between the regions of the Community showed considerable variation. The regions hardest hit by unemployment in 1978 were Campania in Italy, Limburg in Belgium and Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom with unemployment rates of 19.2, 11.2 and 10.6% respectively. The lowest level of unemployment was on the other hand found in Luxembourg (G.D.) with only 0.8% unemployment and Tübingen in Germany with 2.0%. The ratio of the unemployment rate in the region with the highest level of unemployment to the region with the lowest was as much as 24.1:1. Thus there is a strong case for measures to reduce regional inequalities in the level of unemployment. Such measures may, as we shall see, be found in a common vocational training policy.

The outlook for the labour market situation is problematic for most Member States as they enter the 1980s. High unemployment may prevail for a long time, in the worst case during the whole decade. The reason for this lies in the difficulties of designing economic policies which in the face of rising energy prices and increasing energy shortages can increase employment and production without accelerating inflation and creating paralysing balance of payments problems.

Despite the problems and the black outlook, it is nevertheless possible to alleviate the unemployment situation by various social and economic measures. The Commission feels that vocational training is an instrument which can be used in an active social and labour policy at the Community level.

2. The contribution of vocational training

In Chapter 1 it was observed that there is a close connection between education and training and the rate of unemployment, especially for the younger age-groups in the labour market, i.e. those between 14 and 24 years of age. In most countries the higher the level of education, the lower the probability of being unemployed. For the individual this means improvement in his labour market chances if he obtains more education and training. There is a danger, however, that if additional training is not carefully designed for the specific situation, it will only distribute the burden of unemployment even more against people without education and training. But this need not happen. There is ample room for an improvement both in individual life chances and in the overall employment situation through vocational training measures.

One major reason why the Member States hesitate to increase internal demand and thereby create additional employment, is the fear of increased inflation. But vocational training may increase the capacity of the economy to produce by raising the general and specific skill level of the labour force, thereby escaping the conflict between lower unemployment and increased inflation. Such a policy may be especially beneficial if increased vocational training is undertaken in connection with expanding the labour supply towards occupations and industries with a shortage of skills. The economy is then allowed to expand without reaching the capacity limit at once, which is a major cause of rising prices. Thus vocational training may be used as an important instrument towards easing the rather strict connection seen in recent years between increased inflation and increased employment and at the same time improving the general life chances of the individual.

The transition from education to work is a difficult period for many young people, especially if they start out with only compulsory education or even less. Many need a period of relatively protected employment combined with various types of vocational training and basic education to become acquainted with the exigencies and responsibilities of the adult life of work. For others increased confidence and some additional insight is all that is needed to make the transition into a stable job.

Adult workers are in general much less afflicted by unemployment than young people, but at the same time they are much less mobile. Thus the combination of declining industries and concentration of such industries create pockets of heavy unemployment. Examples may be found in France and Belgium in connection with the decline in steel and iron industries, in the contraction of shipbuilding in Scotland, and in the textiles industry's fight all over Europe to stay alive in the face of fierce foreign competition. To fight unemployment in these cases, new workplaces have to be created. But for these new workplaces to be viable in the long run, new industries are required which often need a more skilled workforce or a differently trained workforce than that of the declining industries. Therefore a sound regional policy with the aim to create new workplaces must be combined with vocational training preferably at a Community level since these problems are general for the Community as a whole. In this field the Community pursues a coordinated policy. Aid to indus-

trial and infrastructure investment is provided through the European Regional Development Fund and the European Investment Bank. Aid to vocational training is organized within the European Social Fund, an institution we shall return to in Chapter 5.

The opportunities for reducing unemployment by means of vocational training are illustrated by the figures for job vacancies. In January 1980 when under the combined influence of adverse weather and the economic recession, unemployment in the European Community reached over 6 1/2 million, there were nevertheless over 600 000 job vacancies registered with the public employment services. In fact informed observers believe that the total number of vacancies was some three or four times this figure since many employers fail to register job vacancies. In certain regions of the Community unemployment was almost non-existent. In Luxembourg the unemployment rate was only 0.8%. High unemployment in some regions contrasts with shortage of manpower in other regions; industries with declining employment exist side by side with industries with a constant shortage of skilled manpower. Among the declining or problem industries we find the originators of the industrial revolution such as textiles and clothing and the traditional heavy industries like iron and steel, shipbuilding, etc. Among industries almost desperate for more workers, we especially find the new information industries, using relatively large numbers of very skilled workers and little capital. The structure of economic development resulting from changes in technology and competition from low-cost countries creates unemployment in some industries and employment in others, but the net impact on employment may be positive if effective vocational training schemes are devised.

The Community is committed to a better distribution of world income and a rising standard of living in the developing countries. But in order for developing countries to develop, it is imperative that they industrialize and export to other countries, among them the Member States of the Community. Their industries are, however, often the competitors of old industries in the Community. This competition is often felt most in the case of the newly industrialized countries. As trade develops between the Community and these countries, production and employment in old industries in the Community decline. What is often forgotten is that these countries import a large number of goods and thereby create employment in the Member States. But employment is created in industries different from the declining ones and the need for skills is different. Vocational training can be used as an instrument towards increasing the number of people with the skills needed in the expanding industries, and thereby ease the imbalance created by competition.

The same problems are essentially encountered in connection with the rising energy prices and energy shortage and the increasing numbers of micro-processors used in all kinds of production activities. Higher prices of energy lead to other methods of production requiring different types of labour, but not necessarily less labour. Likewise, the introduction of micro-processors may dramatically increase the productivity of the workforce, lowering prices of a number of products which in its turn increases demand. Thus, while it is obvious that employment may be reduced, and often substantially reduced in many industries as a result of this technological revolution, total employment may, however, increase. A very important point is that for employment to expand new skills will be needed and to meet this demand vocational training geared towards these needs has to be devised.

The problems thrown up by the expanding information industry and automation are so large and widespread that they need to be tackled through a Community approach to policy which includes education and vocational training.

It is not suggested that vocational training on its own can solve the problem of unemployment. But as the analysis in this chapter has made clear, it has a very significant contribution to make, such that vocational training must be given a leading role in the fight against unemployment. Naturally action in other policy areas is also necessary — in the fields of regional, industrial, fiscal and economic policy, as well as other aspects of manpower policy. Ideally vocational training should play its part within a coordinated policy covering all these fields.

Vocational training in the Member States

Vocational training in the Member States can be characterized by reference to two model systems:

- (a) the apprentice system, which is a combination of practical training in firms and theoretical training in schools and training centres;
- (b) full-time vocational training within the educational system sometimes as streams within secondary schooling and sometimes organized in separate training centres.

(a) and (b) represent pure cases. Actual vocational training systems in Member States include elements of both models, but it still seems natural to organize a discussion of vocational training around these pure cases. Member States may be classified according to the extent to which their vocational training systems are based on one or other of these models, as follows:

- *apprenticeship system predominates*: Germany and Denmark;
- *full-time vocational education predominates*: France, Belgium and Italy;
- *neither model predominates* (both the apprenticeship system and full-time vocational education are important forms of vocational training): the Netherlands, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Member States where vocational training is mainly organized on the basis of an apprenticeship system

Federal Republic of Germany. The core of the German vocational training system is the so-called dual system which may be described by reference to three main characteristics:

1. After leaving compulsory schooling, training is organized as an apprenticeship arrangement whereby the trainee enters into a training contract with a firm. The practical training in the firm is combined with part-time education in a vocational school.
2. Private firms are responsible for the in-firm training, which, however, is regulated, guided and controlled by Federal legislation.
3. Apprenticeship training is mainly financed by the firms themselves, with some help from the State in special cases.

An indication of the importance of the dual system is that in December 1978 there were over 1 million apprentices in Germany, representing over 50 % of young people in the 16-19 age-group. Over 70 % of young people who leave full-time school at 16 enter an apprenticeship.

In Germany school attendance is compulsory for all young people up to the age of 18. For young people in the 16-18 age range the legal requirement is only part-time school attendance. In fact about half the young people leave full-time school at 16 and attend training schools on a part-time basis for one or two days a week until the age of 18. For apprentices this provides the theoretical part of their training. For young people who are not apprentices the training schools provide courses appropriate to their needs.

A new element, the idea behind which we shall encounter in some form or another in all Member States, was introduced into the vocational training system in Germany in 1969. This is the so-called one-year basic vocational training provided on a full-time basis in a training school, where one aim is to put greater emphasis on elements of basic theoretical knowledge common to a set of occupations. Another objective is to introduce some flexibility into the system so that young people are not tied to one of the 452 occupations for which training is required at the moment they enter the apprenticeship system. Basic training is given in one of thirteen occupational areas, e.g. commerce and administration, metal work or electrical engineering. The original aim was to integrate this basic training year fully into the apprenticeship system. For various reasons this has proved difficult. But for many young people who have not succeeded in obtaining a training place in the dual system, this year has developed into a much sought-after preparation for the world of work.

Many firms especially among the crafts do not have the resources to provide a fully satisfactory company-based training. To complement the on-the-job training undertaken in such firms inter-company training workshops have been set up in recent years. As a consequence of the unsatisfactory on-the-job training situation in many regions, off-the-job training workshops have also been introduced recently. They offer an alternative to on-the-job training without being tied to specific firms.

There are, however, facilities for vocational training outside the dual system, the most important being full-time vocational schools. There are three types of these: (a) schools which provide qualifications in occupations not covered by the dual system, (b) those which provide training for one of the occupations covered by the dual system and where time spent in school counts towards the period of on-the-job training, and (c) vocational schools which lead to a complete qualification for one of the occupations included in the dual system.

It is a reflection of the problems encountered by many young people in the labour market that the one-year basic vocational training is that part of the system which has expanded most rapidly. While the total number of people involved in initial vocational training increased relatively slowly between 1971 and 1979, the one-year basic vocational training which offers an alternative to young people who have difficulties obtaining a training place has increased steeply during the 1970s, and now involves 7% of the total number undergoing initial training compared with 0.2% in 1971. However in 1978 and 1979 there was also a marked increase in the number of young people entering the apprenticeship system.

In a country like Germany where so much vocational training is organized through firms a close involvement of the Social Partners in training is necessary. They are involved on three levels, as members of Vocational Training Committees, of *Land* Committees for Vocational Training which advise the *Länder* governments on problems concerning vocational training, and in the Central Committee of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training which advises the Federal Government on basic problems concerning vocational training.

Denmark too has a system for vocational training organized around an apprenticeship system. As in the Federal Republic of Germany the apprenticeship arrangement is organized on a dual basis, theoretical education in a technical college and specific training in a firm with which the individual trainee has signed a training contract.

Denmark has also, like the Federal Republic, seen the need for a somewhat more flexible apprenticeship system where the choice of a specific occupation is somewhat delayed. What is called new basic vocational training starts off with a year at a technical school after compulsory schooling is finished, during which the aim is to provide a relatively broad introduction to a group of occupations. The young person chooses one of eight groups. The basic training which lasts for a year and constitutes the first part of this new training model, is common for all occupations within one group. The second part of the training lasts between 2 and 4 years depending on occupation. During this period the student alternates between a firm and instruction at school. The new system which initially was designed for the least qualified young people who left school after 9 years of compulsory schooling was also seen as replacing the old apprenticeship system in due course. This plan was, however, rejected by the Folketing and at present there are therefore two parallel systems of vocational training in Denmark, the new system and the old apprenticeship system.

The total number of trainees in the Danish vocational training system has expanded quite strongly, but all the expansion has taken place in the new system. The number of apprentices in the old system has declined rather sharply during the last ten years.

Apart from the new system of apprenticeship, training courses have been designed to meet the serious unemployment situation in Denmark. These are mainly for workers over 18 years of age and consist of two types:

(a) semi-skilled worker training and

(b) further training for skilled workers and salaried employees:

- In the former, the training aims at giving participants who have not been apprentices the knowledge and proficiency which corresponds to the technical development and conditions on the labour market. Courses normally last 2-3 weeks but can vary from 1 to 10 weeks. There are over 400 courses.
- The latter is also only open to people over 18 and the aim is to update their basic training and develop their proficiency and technical knowledge to be able to employ new production methods and techniques. Courses are generally short, lasting as in the former case from 1 to 3 weeks, but may last as long as 10 weeks.

We cannot leave the description of the Danish vocational system without mentioning the vocational preparation courses which have largely been reserved for young unemployed between 18 and 25 although younger people may participate. These courses are organized locally and provide a broad introduction to one or several branches of industry but do not give any formal vocational competence. Courses run in general for 6 to 8 weeks followed by 4 weeks of practical experience.

The Social Partners have a general and considerable influence on vocational training in Denmark through the extensive labour market organizations and more specifically through the Joint Vocational Training Committees which follow occupational developments closely and recommend changes in vocational training. Membership in the training committees is shared equally by employers and employees.

Member States where vocational training is mainly organized around full-time vocational education

France is an example of the Member State which has chosen the other alternative, i.e. mainly full-time vocational education in school. The French vocational training system distinguishes between (a) initial vocational training (*formation professionnelle initiale*) for the 16-19 age-group, which includes full-time vocational education in schools and apprenticeship training, and (b) further vocational training (*formation professionnelle continue*) where the target group consists of young people and adults who have already left the ordinary educational system and are unemployed or who want to return to the educational system for some reason or another. At present initial full-time vocational education consists of 2 years in vocational schools (*lycées d'enseignement professionnel*) where about 700 000 pupils are enrolled each year.

In contrast the apprenticeship system which is organized on a dual basis as in Germany and Denmark enrolls only 100 000 young people in each of the 2 years it takes to obtain a skilled worker's certificate. Apprenticeship training is in principle open to all young people who have completed compulsory schooling, but does not have the status accorded to it in Germany and Denmark. However, the French Government's policy is to promote apprenticeship. In 1977 it took a number of measures to make apprenticeship more attractive to employers and young people (e.g. by offering exemption from social security charges) and these have had the effect of increasing the number of apprentices.

Furthermore, in 1980 the French Government prepared a draft law on the subject of 'formation en alternance' (alternating work and training) which aimed to extend the apprenticeship principle of linking work in a firm with training in an educational institution more widely through the vocational training system.

The present system of further vocational training is regulated by a law of 16 July 1971, and has grown rapidly as a consequence of the serious unemployment in France especially among the young. The organization of further education in France differs between the various groups in the labour market:

1. *Salaried employees* in the private sector. Further vocational training for these workers is financed by the firms themselves through a levy on firms with more than 10 employees. The individual employee may, subject to certain rules, claim educational leave in order to follow a course of further training.
2. *Civil servants* (both at national and local level). Further training for these workers is provided by the government.
3. *The unemployed*. Special training and retraining courses for the unemployed are one of the fastest growing sectors in the training system.

In addition there are training courses for special categories such as migrant workers or the handicapped.

The Social Partners influence French vocational training on various levels:

- (a) on the national level through the Consultative Vocational Committees which are organized by occupational branch and advise the Ministers of Education and Labour on improvements and changes in vocational training.

- (b) on the local level through the regional Committees for Vocational Training, Social Progress and Employment, and
- (c) in the vocational training establishments themselves.

The institutions mentioned under (a) and (b) are also active within further education. In addition there are various bodies in firms (*comités d'entreprise, délégués du personnel*) which are informed and consulted on such matters as the right to educational leave and the general training policy of the firm.

In *Belgium*, full-time vocational education in schools, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, is as in France numerically the most important part of the initial vocational training system. Full-time vocational education is organized as a stream within senior secondary education which lasts from 15 to 18 years of age. It provides for entry into working life, but includes, due to its flexibility and the possibility of combining options, the possibility of pursuing further studies. While full-time vocational education at present enrolls almost 50 000 pupils, the total number of apprentices is less than half, or about 23 000. Most apprenticeship training is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Middle Classes and has a duration of 4 years. The emphasis is on practical training in firms under supervision of an apprenticeship secretary, but the apprentice must attend a certain number of courses in school during the period of apprenticeship.

A new measure introduced in 1977 is the system of traineeships for unemployed young people. Private firms and public bodies which are above a certain size (50 employees) are legally obliged to take on unemployed young people as trainees in the proportion of one trainee per 50 employees. The young people are given a practical initiation to working life through working in the firm. The unique feature of this system (both for Belgium and for the European Community) is that firms are obliged in law to participate.

Vocational training for adults is organized by the National Employment Office (ONEM). ONEM directly manages about thirty training centres and has also created a number of centres in collaboration with firms.

There are also different vocational courses organized by firms, the most important probably being the one organized by the Building Trading Fund (FFC) which is run on a joint basis by the Social Partners.

Some special training centres exist for people under 25. The courses arranged here begin with a period of induction, observation and guidance, after which the young people can enter the real cycle of training. For young people over 18 and adults who have given up their studies on their own accord there are special courses with the objective of providing the practical knowledge and skill for a particular trade. For handicapped people over 18 there is the possibility of obtaining individual training for rehabilitation.

In *Italy* most emphasis is on the initial vocational training of young people within full-time educational and training institutions. In fact there are two parallel vocational training systems that undertake this task. A young person who reaches the end of lower secondary schools in Italy at the age of 14, the minimum school-leaving age, and who does not wish to continue in general education, has two alternative ways of achieving vocational training:

- He can remain within the school system attending either a technical institute (*istituti tecnici*) offering a 5-year course leading to technician level (and from there possibly to university) or a vocational school (*istituti professionali*), offering a 2 or 3-year course

leading to a recognized certificate, with the possibility of enrolling for a fourth and fifth-year course leading to a final examination giving access to university.

He can leave the school system and attend a vocational training centre. He follows a one or two-year course leading to a certificate which has a rather lower status than that offered by the vocational training bodies within the school system. The vocational training centres are run by a wide variety of bodies, both public and private (e.g. municipalities, religious organizations, trade unions, etc.), but are financed and supervised by the regional governments. Their major task is the initial vocational training of young people under the age of 20, not only of school leavers but also of the young unemployed who turn to the centres for help. There are approximately 1 640 vocational training centres with some 200 000 trainees.

Vocational training for adults is relatively undeveloped in Italy. There are a number of projects involving the retraining of workers affected by schemes of industrial redevelopment. These are organized at regional level and involve around 60 000 workers a year. In addition the larger industrial firms both public (e.g. IRI) and private (e.g. FIAT) make considerable efforts to train their own employees.

Although there are a large number of apprentices in Italy (over 600 000 in 1975), it is incorrect to consider them to be within the vocational training system. Although in principle apprentices should receive some 3-8 hours per week in complementary off-the-job vocational training, in fact hardly any do so (in 1975 less than 2%). Only a small minority of apprenticeships are completed successfully.

The Italian government has tried to encourage other forms of training for young people in firms. Under Law 285 of 1.6.77 it introduced a new measure entitled 'Training contracts of fixed duration' (Contratti di formazione a tempo determinato). A State subsidy was given to an employer who took on an unemployed young person on such a contract and provided him with both a job and opportunities for off-the-job training. However the measure was not a success. Only about 3 000 young people have benefited from this measure. Another measure involving alternating training and on-the-job experience (Progetto alternanza) is still at an experimental stage.

Other Member States

Initial vocational education in the *Netherlands* presents a somewhat different picture from most other Member States. Vocational full-time education is introduced already at the age of 12 and lasts until the age of 16. The four-year period, which is called 'lower vocational education' is organized in two phases: the first two years, from 12 to 14, constitute a bridging period between basic education and vocational education; the second two years, from 14 to 16, consist of vocational preparation subjects. In lower technical education which constitutes the most important part of lower vocational education, instruction is given in 7 occupational areas, e.g. building, electrical engineering, printing, etc. Only 15% of the graduates from lower technical education proceed to intermediate vocational education which lasts from 2-4 years, on a full-time basis.

Another possibility of obtaining more vocational training is, however, to enter into an apprenticeship contract. In the *Netherlands* this is organized on the basis of the usual dual

system, i.e. practical training at the place of employment combined with off-the-job education in school. The tendency has been to increase the general content of off-the-job education and relegate specific training to the place of employment.

The number of apprentices in the Netherlands has been roughly constant when seen in perspective. It has, however, fluctuated widely. In 1960 there were 53 667 apprentices, which increased to 72 185 in 1965 to fall to 57 947 in 1975. In 1977 the number had again increased to 61 239.

In addition to training opportunities provided through vocational schools and apprenticeships, a large number of retraining and additional training courses are now available to people who are threatened by unemployment or who require supplementary training to maintain their level of qualifications. In view of the difficult employment situation it is only natural that these courses have shown the fastest expansion in recent years.

The training measures promoted by the Ministry of Social Affairs are aimed towards the unemployed or workers threatened by unemployment. These measures are of three types:

1. State-controlled training in adult training centres;
2. training in both private and subsidized institutes;
3. training in and by industry, known as State and industry training (SOB).

Over 17 500 people entered one of these courses in 1978.

Training in industry in the Netherlands is important and annually attended by thousands of adults. These courses are financed by industrial sectors or individual firms.

The Social Partners in the Netherlands are involved in vocational training through the national and regional training boards. The principal tasks of the national boards are, e.g.:

- ensuring that overall programmes are established,
- checking (employers and apprentices) to ensure observance of apprenticeship agreements.

The regional boards provide social and pedagogic guidance for apprentices.

Their tasks include information on apprenticeships and maintaining contact with parents, apprentices, schools and Provincial Employment Offices.

The system of initial vocational training in *Luxembourg* bears some resemblance to the Dutch system. It is organized in two phases. The first phase, called the 'observation and orientation phase', consists of three years (from 12 to 15) full-time in secondary school. The second phase, which leads to a qualification as a skilled worker, also lasts three years. It may be taken in one of two ways: either by means of full-time education in a school or within the apprenticeship system (i.e. practical training in a firm complemented by part-time theoretical training in a school). The young people who have followed these different streams, take identical examinations and receive the same qualification.

For adults or for people who have finished their education there exist the possibilities for further education and training, organized by:

- (a) The Ministry of Education,
- (b) Professional associations,
- (c) The municipalities,
- (d) Private organizations recognized by the Ministry of Education.

The Social Partners influence both initial vocational training and further vocational training. These is for example a commission for industrial apprentices on which the Social Partners are represented.

In the *United Kingdom* much vocational education is undertaken in industrial establishments. Until 1964 the organization and scope of vocational training was based on voluntary cooperation by industry. Gradually this situation was felt to be more unsatisfactory. There was general agreement on the need for institutional change, and the Industrial Training Act was passed in 1964. This Act enabled the government to set up the so-called Industrial Training Boards (ITBs). Each board was assigned certain industrial sectors. These boards had three major objectives: to see that an adequate amount of training was carried out, to improve the quality of training, and to spread its cost equally over industry. The boards imposed a levy on firms in their industry and were able to pay grants to those employees who provided training to a standard approved by the board.

The experience gathered after the boards had been established and had functioned for some time led to a number of changes laid down in the Employment and Training Act of 1973. The three major objectives mentioned above ceased to be mandatory for the boards. Companies which met their own training needs and small firms were exempted from the levy.

Currently there are ITBs covering firms in the manufacturing, construction and some extractive and service industries, employing more than 12 million people.

Another consequence of the Employment and Training Act was the establishment of the Manpower Services Commission, composed of representatives from the Social Partners, local government and education. One of the executive arms of this Commission is the Training Services Division which is assigned the responsibility for the national training effort, including the Industrial Training Boards.

The Training Services Division has as objectives to assist in the development of the national training system, to meet the manpower needs of the economy, to offer training to individuals consistent with abilities and wishes in skills for which there is a demand, and to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of training generally. The TSD spends the major share of the MSC total resources, or altogether £ 312.5 million in 1978/79.

This amount was shared by four programmes:

- (a) Meeting the training needs of industry
- (b) The Training Opportunities Scheme (more than 65% of the total)
- (c) Training, research and information
- (d) Management, including supervision of the ITBs.

The Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS) has grown rapidly. It provides training facilities to enable individuals to acquire a new and better job. Training is carried out in Skill Centres, Technical Colleges and some employers' establishments.

A second arm of the Manpower Services Commission is the Special Programme Division which operates two new special programmes, the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) and the Special Temporary Employment Programme (STEP) which are designed to provide a constructive alternative to unemployment, particularly among the young and long-term unemployed. Responsibility for the implementation of YOP and STEP has wherever

possible been delegated to 28 Area Boards comprising representatives of the Social Partners, voluntary organizations, local interests and education interests.

STEP provides jobs for the unemployed in projects that benefit the whole community. However only rarely is any vocational training provided. The aim of YOP is much more closely related to vocational training: it is the preparation of unemployed young people for a job. YOP places great emphasis on providing work experience for a major cause of youth unemployment is felt to be that employers are reluctant to recruit young people who have had no previous experience of work. YOP breaks the ensuing 'vicious circle' by organizing work experience for unemployed young people in private firms, in training workshops, in community service units and in *ad hoc* projects. The British government guarantees that all young people who remain unemployed for more than 6 months shall be offered a place under the YOP programme.

However the special programmes are reserved for unemployed young people. Far more young people obtain their initial training through an apprenticeship. There are nearly 500 000 apprentices in the UK; in terms of the relative importance of apprenticeship within the vocational training system, the UK ranks behind only Germany and Denmark within the European Community.

Colleges in the further educational sector (such as technical colleges run by local authorities) make a very substantial contribution towards vocational training in the following ways:

- day and bloc release courses for people in employment, including apprentices;
- courses for the young unemployed under the YOP programme;
- retraining for adult workers under the TOPS scheme.

A noteworthy feature of the British system is the successful cooperation between the educational services (responsible for these colleges) and the employment services (which provide the participants and much of the finance).

In *Ireland* much vocational training within the vocational school system which comprises:

- secondary vocational schools, which provide vocational education for young people both up to the minimum school-leaving age, and subsequently;
- regional technical colleges which provide courses for apprentices and high-level technicians.

By far the most important institution for vocational training in Ireland is the Industrial Training Authority, An Chomhairle Oiliúna-AnCO), which in 1967 was given the responsibility for training at every level in industry and commerce throughout Ireland. AnCO seeks to achieve its overall aims through apprenticeship training, company-based training and training for individuals.

Apprenticeship training starts at the age of 15 or 16 and ends 5 years later. In the new apprenticeship system which is gradually being introduced (over a 5-year period from 1976 to 1981), all apprentices will receive a period of off-the-job training in the first year, followed by a number of years on-the-job to gain practical experience. The off-the-job training will be in centres approved by AnCO and run either by AnCO, the vocational schools or industry.

Company based training is financed through a grant/levy system. Firms above a certain size pay a levy into a special fund. In return they receive back up to 90 per cent of the levy in grants if they follow training requirements laid down by AnCO.

For the training of adults and apprentices AnCO has established eleven permanent and five temporary training centres throughout Ireland. The trainees are men and women who have become unemployed. Some are sponsored specially by their firms on courses for updating their existing skills.

Men and women over 16 may apply for adult courses with AnCO. The average length of courses is four months, but they vary from one to two weeks to eight months. Towards the end of 1975 AnCO started a Community Youth Training Programme in an effort to meet the problems of unemployed school-leavers. The young people work on projects, which are proposed by local authorities and community bodies and are financed by AnCO if they have a satisfactory training content.

The Council of AnCO is appointed by the Minister of Labour. The Social Partners occupy 10 of the 14 seats. The chairman, however, is always independent.

Conclusion

One thing that is very clear from this brief survey is the great diversity among Member States. The vocational training systems of no two Member States are identical, and, although one can select pairs of countries with certain 'family resemblances' (e.g. Germany-Denmark, France-Belgium, and Netherlands-Luxembourg), in fact the differences between the countries are the more striking. However there are common features. The apprenticeship system exists in all Member States. Even in France and Belgium where apprenticeship is less important than elsewhere, there are substantial numbers of apprentices and both governments are making efforts to promote the apprenticeship system as one way of tackling the problem of youth unemployment. Another common feature is that in all Member States schools and colleges within the educational system account for a substantial proportion of the total training effort. Even in Germany and Denmark, the traditional strongholds of the apprenticeship system, the theoretical part of apprenticeship training is given on a bloc-release or day-release basis in schools within the educational system. Furthermore in these countries there is a strong movement towards a greater proportion of initial training being provided in the form of a year's full-time vocational education in a school.

There would appear to be a growing awareness throughout the Community of the value *both* of practical experience and on-the-job training in firms *and* of vocational education and off-the-job training in schools and specialized training institutions. Both forms of training are an essential feature of an effective vocational system, particularly in relation to the initial training of young people. The actions of Member States in seeking to encourage the one or the other feature that was previously under-represented in their system may well lead to a substantially greater degree of conformity among Member States' vocational training systems in the future.

4. Why a Community vocational training policy?

The basic principles of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community in 1957 are the free movement within the Community of persons, services, goods and capital.

The subsequent gradual removal of tariff barriers led to problems of adaptation. When tariff barriers are lowered or removed it almost always happens that some industries lose and

others gain. The establishment of the Community was on the other hand based on the conviction that the net gains for the Community as a whole would be positive. The Community as a whole was therefore prepared to compensate the losers. The losers could, for example, be found among the coalminers in Belgium and the Netherlands which could no longer compete with cheaper German coal. Among the winners were the various national engineering industries which expanded as a result of the opening up of the European market. One way of adapting to this situation was to initiate a programme of vocational training, retraining people to meet the needs of the expanding industries and so avoid that declining industries created problem regions. Since this was a problem common to the whole Community and to some extent a consequence of the very creation of the Community, it had to be met on the Community level by common vocational training measures. This is the historical reason for the importance of vocational training in the Treaty of Rome.

The creators of the Treaty saw a common vocational training policy as resulting from the general principles on which the common market is based. On reflection, it is easy to see why. The establishment of a common market leads inevitably to common economic and social problems and prospects for every Member State. The removal of economic boundaries and barriers puts so to speak all Member States in the same economic boat. Economic and social problems confronting each Member State will have a larger common dimension than before. This common dimension must be reflected in the instruments by which one attempts to master these problems. Thus, as was described in Chapter 3, the challenges posed for economic and social policy by the new data technology, by the energy crisis and by the structural changes in the world economy must be met by a common policy because the existence of the common market has made these problems common, to a larger extent than if the States had been acting on their own.

Cultural, social and institutional differences between Member States still leave however by far the most important economic and social policy decisions with the individual Member States. Respect for the diversity of the educational and vocational training systems and practice is a cornerstone in the policy of the Community. It cannot be otherwise if Community policies are to work. Solutions for which everybody must share responsibility, cannot be reached if the wide differences which still separate Member States are not recognized and unless solutions which respect the particularity of each Member State are developed.

It has for a long time been recognized that for a market to function effectively, information about all aspects of the market must be spread effectively to all market participants. This is also important in the case of vocational training. It is no longer the case if it ever was, that workers, as represented in classical economic theory, are one homogenous factor of production. Quite the contrary, due to the fact that the different occupations and economic sectors require different skills, the need to distinguish between types and levels of skills often bearing the same name and superficially having the same content could in reality be very different in the different Members States. It is therefore obvious that the movement of workers from one Member State to another could be seriously hampered by lack of information on the part of firms as to the content of vocational training in the various Member States. For a worker the willingness to move is also influenced by information on the opportunities open to him, an information which can be found in a common approach to vocational guidance for all Member States.

However the Community is concerned with many matters other than free movement. The Community's vocational training policy is very much more than facilitating the free movement of workers and alleviating some of the unpleasant side effects arising from the free movement of goods. For example vocational training has a major group role to play in relation to regional policy. A major concern of the Community is to reduce the disparity in terms of income and wealth between its richer and poorer regions. A Community with wide disparities in wealth between its component parts cannot thrive. A special priority needs to be given to the economic development of the poorer regions. Some of these regions (e.g. Southern Italy) are poor because their level of industrial development is low; others (e.g. Scotland) because their traditional industries are in decline. In both cases the Community provides financial aid to encourage the development of new industries. However these new industries depend on the availability of a skilled labour force, and so aid to vocational training is necessary. It is necessary for the Community to intervene to achieve the necessary transfer of money from the richer to the poorer regions; not only because it is to achieve a Community aim, but because often a transfer between Member States is required.

Transfer of monetary resources only is not sufficient however. Technical aid and cooperation may in some cases be more beneficial. And this transfer of resources may not be a one-way traffic from richer regions to poorer. The poorer regions may have developed approaches to problems of employment and the place of vocational training in an employment policy which may be valuable for other regions.

Finally it is appropriate for the Community to give a lead to the Member States in promoting vocational training for the benefit of various categories of individuals who are often at a disadvantage on the labour market. An obvious example are migrant workers. The creation of the Community has led to a big increase in intra-Community migration, and hence the Community has a special responsibility of ensuring that proper attention is given to their training, which might otherwise be neglected. Another example are women workers. A major development of the sixties and seventies has been the rising demand of women for a proper place in the working world with access to the more skilled and higher jobs that can only be achieved after appropriate training. In this field the role of the Community is rather to propose and form common rules and policies for the Member States with the aim of assuring that progress towards the achievement of women's demands is smooth and harmonious. Similar categories where Community action is called for are the handicapped and the young unemployed.

To summarize, a common approach to vocational training follows therefore from the need for the common market to function efficiently, and from the principle of solidarity without which the Community can never develop beyond a market.

5. The Community's vocational training policy

The 'general principles'

The Treaty of Rome, which set up the European Economic Community in 1957, provides for the development of a Community vocational training policy. Article 128 of the Treaty states that the Community shall 'lay down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market'.

The Treaty itself did not set down once and for all the guiding principles for a common vocational training policy, but wisely decided that this would result from an evolutionary process where, as experience accumulated, a common vocational training policy would gradually emerge.

In 1963 ten general principles were established.¹ They provided for a comprehensive and ambitious common vocational training which had as its aims, among others, 'to bring about conditions that will guarantee adequate vocational training for all; and to organize in due course suitable facilities to supply the labour forces required in the different sectors of economic activity'. These aims were to be achieved by cooperation among Member States with the aid and encouragement of the Commission.

The Advisory Committee on Vocational Training

As one instrument to guide this process and also to act as a forum for discussion and advice to the Commission, the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training was established in 1963.² The Committee is composed of representatives of trade unions, employers and governments from all Member States, selected for their knowledge and experience of vocational training matters. It meets twice a year and frequently issues advice to the Commission on important matters of vocational training policy.

The harmonization of qualifications

One of the general principles established in 1963 was that levels of training should be harmonized progressively, with a view to the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents confirming completion of vocational training. Harmonization of qualifications is a necessary precondition for freedom of movement, one of the basic principles of the Treaty. For freedom of movement can never be fully realized unless educational and occupational qualifications awarded by one Member State are recognized by others. A lack of comparability among training levels will certainly constitute a serious obstacle to free movement. Furthermore, rapid technological change may aggravate the situation. Harmonization of qualifications serves to improve the transparency of the labour market, thereby enabling the needs of industry to be more fully met by improving information on the qualifications of workers from other Community countries. In so doing it may also lead to improvement in the quality of national training systems by making these more responsive to the needs of the economy and worker's requirements.

As an example of the work undertaken to harmonize qualifications is the effort to compare qualifications of a fairly homogenous occupational group across Member States, that of electrical fitters.

Rather more progress has been made in the mutual recognition of qualifications in the medical field, particularly those of doctors and nurses.³

¹ Council Decision of 2 April 1963 laying down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy (OJ 63 of 20.4.1963).

² Statute of Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (OJ 190 of 30.12.1963).

³ For example Council Directive of 16.6.1975 concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas etc. in medicine, etc. and Council Directive of 27.6.1977 concerning the mutual recognition of diplomas etc. of nurses.

Vocational guidance

A further general principle established in 1963 was that special importance should be attached to a permanent system of information and guidance, or vocational advice for young people and adults. In 1966 the Commission issued a Recommendation on the development of vocational guidance.¹ Vocational guidance is seen as an important instrument to create a more effective labour market and to help educational institutions adapt to the work. It is also considered that most of the problems to be solved in establishing an effective vocational guidance system are rather similar in all Member States. Hence the need for cooperation in this area. The Commission has regularly published reports on the activities of the vocational guidance services in the Member States. The last report, covering the years 1971 to 1974, was published in 1975. A further report, covering the years 1975 to 1979, is in course of preparation.

Equality of opportunity

One of the basic principles of the European Community, set out in Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, is the equality of men and women in employment—that they should receive equal pay for equal work. However, in all Member States women tend to be concentrated in certain sectors providing low-paid work with few or no possibilities for further training, and girls and women are generally ill-prepared by education and training for the life of work. Quite apart from the essential justice in striving for equal treatment of men and women in employment and training, what makes the inequalities at present a vocational policy issue is that equalizing training and education opportunities for women with those of men will in the medium and long term mobilize talents and human resources hitherto underdeveloped, leading to a more competent and qualified labour force for the benefit of the whole Community.

The rate of progress towards equalization was, however, in the view of the Commission far from adequate in the years following the establishment of the Community, and this recognition led the Council of the European Communities to adopt a Directive on equal opportunities² where in Article 1 it is stated that: 'The purpose of this directive is to put into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment as regards access to employment, including promotion, and ...vocational training'. This means that Member States shall ensure that vocational guidance, vocational training, advanced vocational training and retraining shall be accessible on the basis of the same criteria and at the same level without any discrimination on grounds of sex' (Article 4 c).

Recommendation on vocational preparation

During the 1970s unemployment especially among the youth became a very serious economic and social problem in all Member States. The unemployment rate among people in the

¹ Recommendation of the Commission of 18.7.1966 on vocational guidance (OJ 154 of 24.8.1966).

² Council Directive of 9.2.1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment of men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (OJ L 39 of 14.2.1976)

age group 14-19 is almost three times the average rate of unemployment. It has been found that this abnormally high rate of unemployment can be accounted for by a set of factors specific to young people:

- (a) insufficient basic education,
- (b) lack of knowledge of the world of work,
- (c) lack of basic vocational skills,
- (d) very little practical work experience.

Since this is a common problem to all Member States explainable by the same common causes, it would seem natural that the policies to solve or at least alleviate unemployment be based on the same general principles. This recognition has led the Commission to recommend¹ that Member States introduce vocational preparation programmes to alleviate youth unemployment. Such programmes should according to the recommendation include:

- (a) vocational guidance,
- (b) strengthening of basic skills as well as social skills needed at work,
- (c) understanding of basic principles of social and economic organization, rights and duties of workers,
- (d) some specific vocational training,
- (e) practical experience of work.

Member States have responded to the Commission's Recommendation by organizing measures for young people including:

- (i) vocational preparation courses in technical colleges and vocational training centres (e.g. the 'Grundausbildungslehrgänge' of the Bundesanstalt für Arbeit in Germany),
- (ii) new forms of practical training combined with a job in firms (e.g. the 'contrat emploi-formation' in France),
- (iii) organized work experience in firms (e.g. the work experience on employers' premises organized within the Youth Opportunities Programme in the UK),
- (iv) practical training and work experience on projects promoted for the benefit of the local community (e.g. the Community Youth Training Programme in Ireland).

An analysis undertaken by the Commission indicated that, in 1978 (the year following the issue of the Recommendation), over a million young people benefited from various forms of vocational preparation in the Member States of the European Community.

Linked work and training

The continuing problem of youth unemployment has moved the Community to propose rather more specific action to help young people. It was noted that a major source of the difficulties experienced by young people in finding employment was their lack of practical experience of work: this applied not only to unqualified school-leavers but also to young people with a qualification which had been obtained after attending a course at a vocational education institution that involved little contact with the world of work. Furthermore it was clear that many young people in employment were receiving no vocational training and thus were in danger of remaining in insecure unskilled jobs for all their working life.

¹ Commission Recommendation of 6.7.1977 on vocational preparation (OJ L 180 of 20.7.1977).

Hence in December 1979 the Council passed a Resolution¹ on linked work and training for young people. The Resolution states that 'the prospects of employment for young people are poor,... a significant proportion of the total unemployed are young persons without adequate vocational training... it is necessary to adapt vocational training systems,... by developing linked work and training, that is... the inclusion, during the period of transition to working life, of periods combining training and practical work experience'.

According to the Resolution, the Member States are to encourage the development of effective links between training and experience on the job. The Commission is to afford technical support, promote the exchange of experience and finance a series of small-scale experimental projects.

The European Social Fund

In attempting to develop a common vocational training policy the Community is not limited to the setting of guidelines and laying down general principles. It has also instruments which allow it to pursue this policy with its own means. The most important instrument in this sense is the European Social Fund. Its history is longer than the Common Market and originates in the programmes established by the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) to finance programmes for job creation and retraining to help workers in the coal and steel industry adapt to new economic circumstances. This programme inspired the Treaty of Rome to provide for the creation of a Social Fund, the object of which was to promote the geographical and occupational mobility of workers within the Community, particularly those workers whose jobs were affected by the development of the Common Market.

For a number of reasons, in particular its slow and cumbersome procedures, this Social Fund was not a complete success. However a new Social Fund came into being on 1 May 1972 which has led to a more dynamic Community employment policy with a rapidly increasing number of interventions.

Before describing the Fund's operations specifically and in more detail, a return to a discussion of its objectives is needed: the principal objective of the Social Fund is to increase living standards of Europeans, one of the principle aims of the Community. But realizing common policies, however beneficial they may be in aggregate and in the long term, is bound to have various undesirable effects for various population groups and for certain industries in the short run. The European Social Fund helps to smooth out difficulties by assisting programmes for these workers. It thereby helps create conditions for a better employment situation and renewed economic progress.

In a fundamental sense the Community can only survive and develop if inequalities between its countries, regions, economic sectors and categories of workers are effectively and continuously reduced. Consequently the Social Fund gives priority to groups most affected by economic crisis and to workers in problem regions. In 1979 Italy and the United Kingdom, where unemployment especially affects highly-populated regions, received 36 and 25% respectively of available funds.

¹ Council Resolution of 18.12.1979 on linked work and training for young people (OJ C1 of 3.1.1980).

Another example of the way in which the Fund has concentrated its efforts on the most serious problems is the priority it has given to Ireland, a country which in terms of unemployment and income per head is worse off than any other Community country. In 1979 7.5% of the Fund's aid was allocated to Ireland, which accounts for less than 1.5% of the Community's population.

Since it was first set up in 1960 the European Social Fund has assisted three and a half million workers. In 1979 alone close to one million workers received assistance from the Social Fund throughout the Community and about 775 million units of accounts¹ of aid were granted (approx. 524 million pounds).¹ In 1980 the budget has been increased 17% over 1979 to reach 909 million units of account (approx. 545 million pounds).

The Fund operates by granting financial aid to programmes that are set up and managed by the Member States. As a general rule, the level of the Fund's aid is fixed at 50% of the cost of these programmes, the remaining 50% being met by the Member States' governments. Over 80% of the Fund's resources are spent on vocational training. In fact the title 'European Social Fund' is rather misleading; in some ways, it would be more accurate to call it the 'European Training Fund'. The balance of the Fund is spent on a variety of measures to help various categories of workers, which are described in more detail later.

An analysis of the aid granted by the Fund in 1979 is presented in the table on page 29. This classifies the activities of the Fund under four headings:

- Regions
- Categories of workers
- Sectors and enterprises
- Pilot schemes and preparatory studies

Regions

In 1979, 41.6% of the Fund's resources were allocated to aid training programmes organized by Member States in certain priority regions. Regions are considered eligible for the Fund's aid when (in the words of the Fund's regulations) they are suffering a serious and prolonged imbalance in employment because they are less developed or there is a decline in their main activities. A special priority is given to aiding training programmes in five regions where the problem of unemployment is especially serious: Southern Italy, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Greenland and the French Overseas Departments. The Fund's aid to training programmes in these regions is fixed at 55% of the cost.

Categories of workers

Aid for programmes in favour of various categories of workers made up 53.1% of the Fund's activities in 1979. Young people received the largest share of this aid. As indicated in Chapter 1, youth unemployment is one of the most serious social problems facing the Euro-

¹ EUA (October 1980) = BFR/LFR 40,57 / DKR 7,82 / DM 2,53 / FF 5,87 / LIT 1207,64 / HFL 2,75 / UKL 0,58 / IRL 0,67.

pean Community. The Fund backs up the efforts of the Member States to tackle this problem by aiding problems of vocational preparation set up in accordance with the Commission's Recommendation (see page 36). In addition the Fund aids programmes to promote the employment of young people through recruitment subsidies and job creation projects. In 1979, 9.1% of the Fund's resources were spent on these employment promotion measures, one exception to the general rule that the Fund's aid is restricted to vocational training programmes.

European Social Fund

Aid granted in 1979

	Amount (million EUA)	%
<i>Regions</i>	322.30	41.6
<i>Categories of workers</i>		
Young people		
aids to training	230.99	29.8
aids to employment	70.56	9.1
Women	18.48	2.4
Migrants	31.94	4.1
Handicapped	59.93	7.7
<i>Sectors and enterprises</i>		
Agriculture	11.96	1.6
Textiles	14.11	1.8
Groups of enterprises	1.09	0.2
Technical progress	10.01	1.3
<i>Pilot schemes and preparatory studies</i>	3.08	0.4
Total	774.45	100.0

Other categories helped by the Fund are women, migrants and handicapped workers:

- *Women*: Aid is given to specific operations designed to help women over 25 who either are seeking to enter the labour market (often after a break during which they have been caring for their young children) or have lost their jobs.
- *Migrant workers*: A wide range of measures designed to help migrant workers and their families receive aid, including integrated programmes for people moving from one Member State to another, the training of social workers and special teaching for migrants' children.
- *Handicapped workers*: The Fund aids programmes to assist the entry or re-entry of the handicapped into economic activity. A special priority is given to aiding projects of an innovative character involving not more than 200 people. The Fund aids not only special training but also the adaptation of workplaces to make them suitable for handicapped workers.

It can be seen that in respect of young people, migrant workers and the handicapped much of the Fund's aid is granted to operations that are not vocational training. However it should be noted that even for these categories aid to vocational training is an important aspect of the Fund's work,- in the case of young people overwhelmingly so.

Sectors and enterprises

This heading covers a diverse group of the Fund's operations which, together, made up less than 5% of its spending.

Some of the resources spent are directed towards two specific economic sectors; textiles and agriculture, probably the two sectors which have experienced the fastest decline in their labour force since the war. The Fund supports programmes aimed at providing people in the most viable sections of the textile industry additional training, and interventions to train people leaving the land. Spending on agriculture has declined considerably in recent years as the exodus from rural areas in Europe has slowed down. A relatively small proportion of the Fund is spent on helping workers in industries that are forced to adapt to the requirement of technical progress, e.g. training watch-makers to produce quartz watches.

Pilot schemes and studies

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that the Fund acknowledges the need for social experimentation to find the programmes best suited to meet a common problem in Member States. Thus, it finances pilot projects and studies in all sectors mentioned above. The results are distributed throughout the Community to help those responsible to improve employment prospects and working conditions through better information about policy measures and increased knowledge of the social mechanisms at work.

Education programme

A different approach to the development of vocational training in the Community was adopted within the context of the Community action programme on the preparation of young people for working life,¹ agreed in December 1976. Initial vocational training is considered as one element in the whole set of provisions spanning the final years of compulsory schooling and the first years in employment which are concerned with the transition of young people to adult life. The grave youth unemployment situation had served to highlight the underlying problems of transition which exist irrespective of the economic situation.

The four-year action programme, now extended for a further year, was designed to provide a framework for a cooperative learning process between Member States. The main axis of the programme is an interaction network of thirty pilot projects, involving several hundred educational and training establishments and thousands of youngsters all over Europe, at an

¹ Resolution of the Council and Ministers of Education of 13.12.1976, Bulletin Supplement 12/76.

annual cost of about 6 million EUA. These projects—up to 50% subsidized by the Community—are linked together by a series of interproject visits and colloquia and by a unique Community system of continuous evaluation. The projects seek to examine new approaches and develop possible solutions to a number of common problems. They revolve around the following themes:

- the educational and training needs of school-leavers who find difficulties in obtaining employment;
- the lack of interest in study and in work shown by many young people and ways of stimulating their participation;
- the design of specific measures to overcome the disadvantages faced by groups such as young girls, children of migrant workers, the handicapped;
- the development of continuous educational and vocational counselling based on cooperation between those responsible for education, guidance, training and job placement;
- initial and in-service training of teachers to equip them to give young people a better preparation for working life.

The reform of vocational training is, for example, the subject of several pilot projects conducted in Belgium and France; new organizational arrangements for guidance, counselling and careers education are being experimented with in Ludwigshafen (Germany), Aarhus (Denmark), Shannon (Ireland) and many parts of Italy; the creation of new links between compulsory and non-compulsory education and training is being tested in London and in Baden-Württemberg; the development of systems alternating work with further education is being conducted in Denmark, Italy and the Netherlands. An interim report on these pilot projects was published by the Commission in October 1980.

Other aspects of the Community action programme include a series of workshops for administrators and teachers in the Member States, a study visit scheme providing travel grants for up to 700 specialists in vocational education and guidance in 1977-80, and a set of studies examining in particular the regional disparities in provisions for the transition of young people to working life and the scope for improved intersectoral planning in this field. A complementary set of new initiatives specifically concerning the education and training of girls were agreed in principle in June 1980 as part of the continuing cooperation started in 1976 by the Council and Ministers of Education.¹

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)

The social action programme launched by the Commission in 1974 included a proposal to establish a European Centre for Vocational Training. CEDEFOP was created in February 1975 by a Decision of the Council.

Its tasks are:

- to assist the Commission in encouraging at Community level the promotion and development of vocational training and continuing education,
- to establish a documentation service with regard to recent developments and research in relevant fields,

¹ Resolution of 9 February 1976 (OJ C 38 of 19.2.1976).

- to contribute to the development and coordination of research,
- to promote exchange of information and experience,
- to encourage and support initiatives facilitating concerted action in solving vocational training problems.

To fulfil these aims, the Centre:

- organizes courses and seminars,
- concludes study contracts and arranges for pilot projects to be undertaken within relevant fields,
- edits and diffuses useful information, especially through its periodical bulletin on vocational training.

CEDEFOP's Management Board has 30 Members, of whom:

- nine represent the governments of the Member States,
- nine represent the employers' organizations,
- nine represent the employees' organizations,
- three represent the Commission.

The European Trade Union Confederation and the Union of the Industries of the European Community each delegate an observer to the meetings of the Management Board.

At present the Centre employs 33 people and had a budget in 1979 of 3.22 million European units of account. It is situated in West Berlin.

Amongst the main areas of CEDEFOP's current activities are studies on:

- the vocational preparation of young people
- the social and material status of young people
- development of alternating periods of training, education and employment
- equal training opportunities for women and girls
- the training of migrant workers
- the relationships between education and employment and their impact on education and labour market policies, particularly in the light of technological development
- innovation in continuing education and training
- the role of training and the creation of new activities
- the structure and financing of the vocational training systems in the Member States of the Community
- the approximation of levels of vocational training.

Further information on CEDEFOP, including an up-to-date list of publications, which include a quarterly bulletin and mostly deal with the themes indicated above, can be obtained from CEDEFOP, Bundesallee 22 D — 1000 - Berlin 15, (Telephone: (030) 88 10 61).

The exchange of young workers

There is in the Treaty of Rome an Article 50 which states: 'Member States shall, within the framework of a joint programme, encourage the exchange of young workers'.

Although this Article is in the part of the Treaty dealing with free movement of workers, it seems probable that the founders of the Community had rather broader aims:

- to help supplement vocational training,
- to encourage training in the wider sense by helping young workers to acquire a broader understanding of living and working conditions in other countries,
- to build the Community. The foundation of the whole idea of a Community will remain fragile for as long as the young generation regards it as something which is far away and outside their grasp. The development of contacts and exchanges between young workers can make a substantial contribution towards breaking down barriers between human beings in the Community.

The first programme initiated in 1964 was aimed at encouraging long-term exchanges (3 - 6 months) involving vocational training with an employer. The Commission reimbursed travel costs and financed briefing and assessment sessions. Even though the exchanges seem to have had quite satisfactory results, as far as the individual participants were concerned, their scope was altogether too modest to have had any substantial impact since only 1 500 young workers benefited from this first programme, largely in the agricultural sector.

Even though the results from the first programme were not altogether encouraging, it was felt that with certain improvements the exchange of young workers could still make a contribution to a common vocational and educational policy. These considerations led to a second programme, established by Council decision on 16 July 1979.¹ The aims of the new programme are essentially the same as the first, but a number of changes were made. The possibility of young people spending a period abroad on a short duration exchange (3 weeks to 3 months) has been introduced. The implementation of exchanges is to be entrusted to bodies operating at a European level that can be relied upon to carry out exchanges effectively. Additional funds have been made available to enable more young workers to participate covering more industrial sectors.

Conclusion

In the last few years, the rise in unemployment, particularly among young people, has given an added urgency and priority to the developing actions of the European Community in the field of vocational training.

Attention has been given in this brochure to the situation of young people and the need to find new structures and methods to enable them to confront the challenges of a labour market undergoing rapid change.

The continuing search for a better correspondence between the education training and employment systems is of equal relevance to the adult population. An analysis of Community policies in other sectors such as agriculture, steel, shipbuilding, microelectronics, etc.—not undertaken here for reasons of space— would demonstrate the growing need for further training and occupational mobility for all age-groups in the labour force affected by industrial restructuring, and technological innovation. Continuing education and training could equally begin to play a key role in the more general debate about the redistribution of working time and 'non-work' time. Furthermore, in an enlarged Community, a new significance will be attached to continuing education and training in the context of rural development.

¹ OJ L 185 of 21.7.1979.

Further reading

STUDIES COLLECTION: EDUCATION SERIES

The European Development of Permanent Education, 1977, 92 pp.; CB-NQ-77-003-FR-C — No 3.

Management education in the European Community, 1978, 70 pp.; CB-NQ-78-004-EN-C — No 4.

Equality of education and training for girls (10-18 years), 1979, 76 pp.; CB-NQ-79-010-EN-C — No 9.

Special education in the European Community, 1979, 60 pp.; CB-NQ-79-012-FR-C — No 11.

Guidance and vocational training of migrant workers' children in the European Community, 1980, CB-NQ-79-013-FR-C — No 13.

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2. Stabilization of employment and earnings in the construction industry.
3. The training of managers and workers in the constructions industry.
— Programme of industrial activities. 1977.

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- COLLINS, B.A. (e.a.) — *Vocational training in West Germany*. Joint report by UK team. London: Anglo-German Foundation 1978. 14 pp.
- EUROSTAT — *General and vocational training* — Results of the specific survey on 'general and vocational training' annexed to the Community labour force survey conducted in 1973 in the six original Member States of the Community. EC, EUROSTAT. Luxembourg: EC 1975. 126 pp. — Sozialstatistik. 4/1975 — Social statistics. 4/1975. etc.
- '*Education and Training* — rapid information' — quarterly Bulletin of Statistics Office.
- '*Vocational Training*' — Bulletin of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, quarterly.

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The European Community and vocational training

Horvath de pressa et d'information - Ufficio d'informazione

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This booklet deals with vocational training both in the Member States and at Community level. Vocational training is becoming all the more important since it is generally recognized that its development will go some way towards improving the employment situation in the Community.

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- Steps to European unity — Community progress to date: a chronology
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Vocational training is of vital importance in a highly-industrialized society in which technologically-advanced industries and trades are assuming an ever greater role. All the Member States and all firms which provide training have been and are taking steps to develop vocational training and adapt it more successfully to the requirements of the labour market.

This booklet deals with vocational training for young people, adults and the many people who, because they have changed jobs, must do a refresher course or retrain.

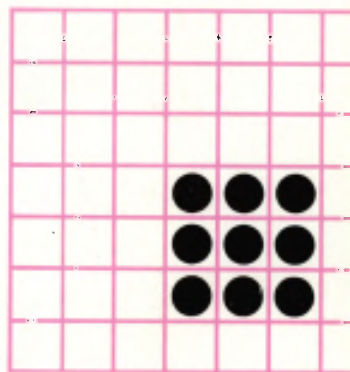
It is clear from an examination of the situation that vocational training has followed different paths from one country to another in the Community, although many similarities exist.

Vocational training is seen as one of the means of improving the employment situation in the Community, which is expected to have seven million unemployed in 1981.

Of course, vocational training alone cannot solve this vast problem. However, it is generally recognized that, together with other measures, the development of vocational training can go some way to improving the employment situation. It has been noted that the rate of unemployment is the lowest in regions with the highest levels of vocational training.

After reviewing the vocational training systems in the nine Member States, the booklet turns its attention to the role of the Community in this field.

Its role is confined to implementing, with the Member States and interested bodies, a number of general principles, most of which were defined in 1963 and have been evolving gradually ever since.



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