



CEDEFOP

about Vocational Training in the European Union

Letter from the Director

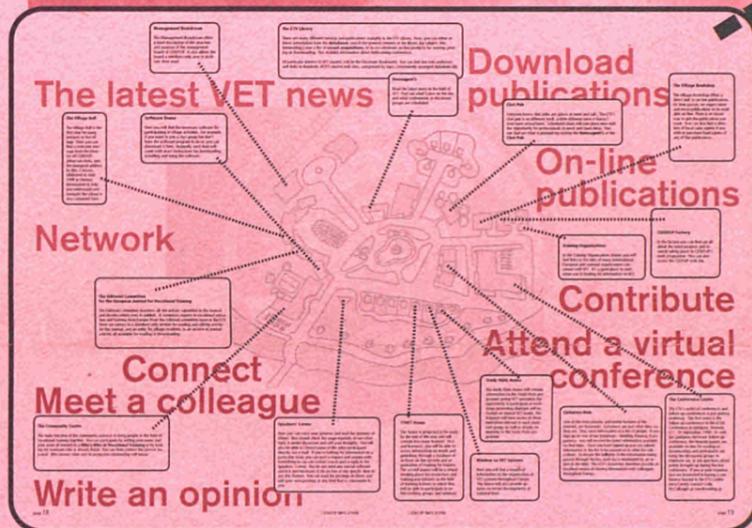
The last few months have seen a further consolidation of CEDEFOP's work. This is reflected in the appearance of a number of important new hard-copy publications, the opening of the European Electronic Training Village and a number of other initiatives.

At the time of the first major conference of the Austrian Council Presidency held in Vienna in early July, I was able to present to Mme Edith Cresson, the European Commissioner for Education, Vocational Training and Youth, a published copy of our major report on research in vocational education and training in Europe - *Training for a changing society*. The contents of this report were outlined in CEDEFOP Info 1/98 (pages 1 and 3). On page 3 of this issue you will find information about the two volumes of background reports used for its preparation, which we have recently published (in English). At the same event, Mme Cresson formally opened the European Electronic Training Village, through which CEDEFOP has provided not only access to a considerable amount of information stored in its data bases, but also to a number of forums where all those involved in vocational education and training (VET) can look for information and exchange views. It is therefore an interactive and not just an information facility. Detailed information about what is available in the ETV and how it can be accessed and used are contained in the dossier section of this issue of CEDEFOP Info (pages 17 to 20). An experimental CD-ROM with the contents of the village at the end of November is also being distributed with this issue.

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The Electronic Training Village (ETV) project was started in the spring of 1998 with the vision of making it much easier to find information on Vocational Training in Europe and in each of the EU Member States. Since its inauguration in June 1998 it has grown dramatically and has begun fulfilling its aim of promoting dialogue and sharing of VET information throughout Europe.

Virtual VET village



To learn more, turn to the dossier on pages 17-20.

An off-line CD-ROM of the ETV will be available in EN language, free of charge, in the New Year and can be ordered from CEDEFOP.

United Kingdom Lifelong learning through the University of Industry

An important element of the government's lifelong learning strategy is the University of Industry. In its recently issued prospectus (*), its role, objectives, priorities and resources are set out.

Unlike the Open University, which was established nearly 30 years ago, the University of Industry will not be a learning provider. Instead it will act as:

- an endorser of other providers' approved syllabi, courses and learning aids, encouraging them to fill gaps in provision and directly commissioning material as necessary,
- a broker, answering public enquiries, matching needs with what is available and providing information and referral services,
- a change agent, publicising the value of learning for adults,
- a directing force identifying skills shortages and co-ordinating action to investigate causes and to address them.

The objectives are to have by 2002

- 2.5 million individuals and employers using the University for Industry's learning information services,
- over 600,000 a year following learning programmes identified by the University,
- separate targets for the priority areas listed below.

The immediate priorities will focus on:

- the basic skills of literacy and numeracy,
- information and communication technologies in the workplace,
- small and medium sized businesses,

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France In January, satellite 'training' television

The *Délégation Générale à l'Emploi et à la Formation Professionnelle* (DGEFP - General Delegation for Employment and Vocational Training), the *Centre Nationale d'Enseignement à distance* (CNED - National Centre for Distance Learning), the *Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes* (AFPA - Association for Vocational Training of Adults) and the *Institut de gestion sociale* (IGS - Institute for Social Management) have signed an

agreement protocol. A station named TFS 'Télévision formation par satellite' (Satellite Training Television) will see the light of day in January. The partners are currently examining the possible contents.

This solution has one disadvantage but also one major advantage: on the one hand, the non-interactive nature of television, which is inferior

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Dossier

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sue. Statistics show that a large number of people in Member States but also elsewhere have already used the ETV and have registered as residents. A number of presentations of the ETV have been made at conferences and meetings, particularly of the social partners. I would urge all VET specialists to register as a visitor in the village and to let us have their views on its contents and utility.

In the dossier section of Info 2/98, we outlined our work on issues relating to the financing of training, and I am glad to report that two publications in this area have now

been published (see this page), while readers will see (from the article below) CEDEFOP's approach to the question of human resource accounting. At its meeting in Thessaloniki on 12/13 November the Management Board approved the establishment of the CEDEFOP transparency forum, which is to carry on the work initiated during the last few years to create greater transparency between VET qualifications (see CEDEFOP Info 1/98 - page 3). This approach will take account of the need for the recognition of prior learning and of qualifications obtained through work experience.

During recent months we have considered how CEDEFOP might contribute to the analysis and implementation of the proposals contained in the National Action Programmes (NAPs) for Employment prepared by Member States in the spring. In this connection we made a contribution

to the Commission's services. This was also presented at the October meeting in Bregenz of the Directors General for Vocational Training, who in addition received a paper relating to the transparency of qualifications. For this issue of CEDEFOP Info we received a number of contributions from Member States concerning implementation of the NAPs. These have been included in the electronic version available on our Internet site, but due to pressure of space, along with some other articles, have not been included in the hard-copy version.

A recent publication (*Mobility and migration of labour in the European Union and their specific implications for young people*), which has been much in demand, deals with the problems of mobility and as part of our work on this theme, we have organised two open seminars (one in Thessaloniki in June and one in Brus-

sels in October) and have produced a short newsletter. The text of this newsletter and the lecture given at the seminars and other information about this work, are all available on our Internet site.

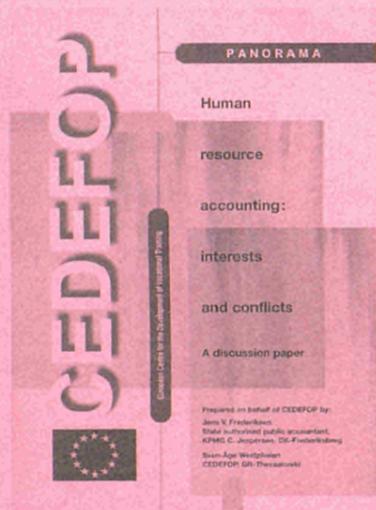
At its November meeting the Board approved the work programme for 1999. This is the last annual work programme within the framework of the 1997 to 2000 medium-term priorities and provides mainly for the continuation and conclusion of projects begun in the last few years. It will be available very shortly on our Internet site and in a hard copy version (in English, French and German) early in the new year. The Management Board agreed a timetable for the preparation of the guidelines for the period 2000 to 2003, which will need to take account of the role which CEDEFOP will play in assisting the Commission in the implementation of the second Leonardo da Vinci

programme which is at present being discussed in the Council and European Parliament, on the basis of a proposal made in May by the Commission. We intend to devote the dossier section of CEDEFOP Info 1/99 to a presentation of the views of the various institutions and the social partners on this new programme. Meanwhile one of the tasks of CEDEFOP will be to assist the Commission and the other partners involved in disseminating the results of the studies and projects carried out in the framework of the first Leonardo programme and to ensure that they are taken into account in VET policy making by all the partners concerned.

Johan van Rens
Director
November 1998

Human resource accounting - interests and conflicts

The purpose of a recently published CEDEFOP report (*) is, using case studies, to provide an overview of the main terms within human resource accounting (HRA) and to present the positions of the main stakeholders.



The challenge

Until recently, the "value" of an enterprise as measured within traditional balance sheets, e.g. buildings, production plant, etc., was viewed as a sufficient reflection of the enterprise's assets. However, with the growing emergence of the knowledge economy, this traditional valuation has been called into question due to the recognition that human capital is an increasingly important part of an enterprise's total value. This has led to two important questions:

- how to assess the value of human capital in addition to an enterprise's tangible assets and
- how to improve the development of human capital in enterprises.

The emergence of methods for accounting human resources aimed at measuring, developing and managing the human capital in an enterprise, can thus be said to reflect the need for improving measuring and accounting practices as well as human resource management.

Defining human resource accounting

Human resource accounting (HRA) as an approach was originally defined as the process of identifying, measuring and communicating information about human resources in order to facilitate effective management within an organisation. It is an extension of the accounting principles of matching costs and revenues and of organising data to communicate relevant information in financial terms.

The accounting of human resources can be seen as just as much a question of philosophy as of technique. This is one of the reasons behind the variety of approaches and is further underlined by the broad range of purposes for which accounting human resources can be used, e.g. as an information tool for internal and/or external use (employees, customers, investors, etc.), and as a decision-making tool for human resource management (investments in human resources as well as personnel management in general).

Many unanswered questions

However, providing adequate and valid information on human resources in statistical terms and within traditional balance sheets has proved extremely difficult. Consequently, new approaches introduce financial as well as non-financial information in human resource accounting.

There are still immense problems to overcome before a coherent and reliable measuring technique is established. Part of the dilemma originates from basic questions such as:

- Is HRA only for internal use in enterprises?
- Should HRA have a standard format for comparability purposes?
- Should HRA be included in traditional financial statements?

These basic questions are followed by methodological and technical ones:

- Is it possible to obtain data on human resources which are reliable and comparable across enterprises?
- Will the costs of gathering and processing this information exceed the benefits of doing so?
- How to establish a coherent terminology?
- How to link reporting on human resources with improved human resource management?

Yet, despite the many problems and unanswered questions, the reasons for developing HRA methods can be summarised in the following six points:

- inadequacy of traditional balance sheets in providing sufficient information on enterprise performance,
- measuring problems deriving from the valuation of human resources,
- redistribution of social responsibilities between the public and private sectors,
- security versus flexibility in employment,
- improved human resource management,
- formal learning versus in-firm competency acquirement.

The policy dimension

The focus on HRA in enterprises has led to a growing interest by stakeholders who have started to identify and formulate their positions. The main stakeholders, such as the enterprises, investors, employees, trade unions and governments, are therefore gradually becoming aware of the potential of HRA, albeit from different perspectives.

The basic questions in this perspective are:

- Should HRA be mandatory for enterprises alongside financial statements, i.e. should HRA be regulated by law and/or social partner agreements?
- If mandatory, what kind of information should be included in such statements?
- If voluntary, how to secure the interests of, say the employees, at enterprise level?

Governments, notably in the Scandinavian countries, and the European Commission have identified public sector interests in HRA. This ranges from a desire to support further improvement of enterprise competitiveness to an interest in diminishing the public sector funding of vocational education and training and, more generally, the implementation of lifelong learning.

If, and this is still a big *IF*, the public sector, nationally or internationally, decides to promote HRA, three ways forward can be identified:

- the voluntary market-based method (the ISO standard method), i.e. develop a consistent framework which can be operational across sectors and countries and promote this through a rewarding and image campaign,
- the voluntary rewarding method (the Investing in People method in the United Kingdom), i.e. develop a consistent framework supported by rewarding mechanisms once it is introduced and approved at enterprise level (enterprises pay for their training evaluation whether they meet the standard or not),
- the compulsory method (the Green accounting method in Denmark), i.e. identify disclosure on human resources as a societal concern and prepare (inter-)national regulations.

(*) "Human resource accounting: interests and conflicts - A discussion paper" CEDEFOP panorama 5085, 1998, 55 p. Language: EN Cat.-No.: HX-18-98-445-EN-C; ISBN: 92-828-3334-8

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Publication of original expert contributions

CEDEFOP publishes background material to the first report on European vocational training research

CEDEFOP has now compiled 22 expert contributions in a background report. These articles formed the basis of the Centre's first report on vocational training research in Europe, which was published in early 1998.*

The original papers concentrate, among other things, on the institutional framework of vocational training and the way it is regulated and financed. A series of contributions sheds light on how vocational training has developed in socio-economic terms. The experts examine the effects that employment, the labour market, technological change and new forms of work organisation have on training and qualifications. Other authors analyse the costs and

benefits of training, examine the correlation between qualifications, productivity and growth, and discuss future trends in work and training.

Other articles are devoted to the process of vocational training. They examine the information requirements people have when choosing a career, and look at problems that arise when transferring from training to employment. Further issues in this field are the goals and implementation of continuing training in Europe, and training and employment opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Several authors dealt with questions on the content of training and curricula. Their contributions focus on key qualifications, new learning



Vocational Education and Training - the European Research Field Background Report Volume I and II, Volume I: 360 p., Volume II: 330 p., ISBN: 92-828-3612-6, Price: 19 ECU (excl. VAT) It is only possible to order both Volumes. May be obtained from the EU sales offices

environments, new learning venues, and the role of new media, as well as the evaluation and recognition of non-formal knowledge and skills.

The background report is rounded off by articles on the European aspects of vocational training in comparative research and the recognition and transparency of qualifications.

* "Training for a changing society - A report on current vocational education and training research in Europe", 1998, 294 pp., Languages: EN (DE, FR in preparation) Cat. No. HX-09-97-018-EN-C price: ECU 19 + VAT.

Source: CEDEFOP/SK

Europe

Many ways to finance continuing training

Leonardo project examined ten models from four countries of the European Union.

The way training is financed is a crucial factor in continuing vocational training, as this determines whether an individual is able to exploit continuing training opportunities. The project 'Models for financ-

ing continuing vocational training for the employed and unemployed' provided partner states (Germany, Denmark, The Netherlands and Norway) a very first forum to discuss this issue. The Bundesinstitut für

Berufsbildung (BIBB - Federal Institute for Vocational Training) launched and coordinated the project under the Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

Employers' funds and job rotation

The four countries involved presented no fewer than 10 different financing models. These included the Dutch practice of setting up employer funds in individual branches, the Norwegian scheme supported by the social partners and labour administrations, and the German funds for particular occupations, e.g. scaffolders. Many models for job rotation were also presented. These involve combined qualifications for the employed and the unemployed, as practised in Denmark and Norway, and also experimentally in Germany.

Exchange of valuable ideas

Three transfer seminars then tested the practicalities of transferring these models. Participating academics, practitioners, policy-makers and representatives of public administra-

tions came to the conclusion that none of the presented models could be implemented easily in another country. That applies not least to the job rotation models. They require an integrated labour market and training policy which involves the employed and the unemployed equally. The so-called 'segregation model' is the most prevalent system in Germany. Labour market and vocational training policies are largely divorced from each other. It would be impossible to implement large scale job rotation without structural changes and a new direction in policies. Participants were able to take home valuable ideas on specific aspects in the respective national debates on the financing of continuing training.

The two-volume final documentation on this Leonardo project is available in German and English at a price of DM 35.00 (around ECU 18) per volume from W. Bertelsmann Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 100633, D-33506 Bielefeld; Tel.: (49-521) 91 10 10; Fax (49-521) 911 01 79.

Source: BIBB/CEDEFOP/SK

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Impressum

IN CEDEFOP on vocational training in the European Union

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CEDEFOP Info is published in DE, EN, FR and contains information on vocational training in Europe, in particular the findings of work carried out by CEDEFOP and reports from the social partners and the Member States. It is provided free of charge upon request.

Articles with a source reference do not necessarily reflect the views of CEDEFOP.

Unsolicited manuscripts, books and other material will be carefully examined and assessed. Requests for contacts, news of forthcoming conferences and other information would be welcomed. For this, however, CEDEFOP bears no responsibility.

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Layout/Design: Rudolf J. Schmitt, Berlin
Technical production with DTP: Axel Hunstock, Berlin

Printed in Belgium 1998 Cat. no.: HX-AD-98-003-EN-C

CONFERENCES – SEMINARS – EXHIBITIONS

17 to 19 February 1999
Toronto/CAN
 Human resource Professionals
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 Annual Conference
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13 to 15 April 1999
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 HRD Week
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 UNESCO in cooperation with the
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9 to 11 July 1999
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 International Conference on
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Bi- and multilateral cooperation/ Training policy/ Initial training

Bi- and multilateral cooperation

Germany/France

German and French artisans working hand in hand

Transnational vocational training: Tradition greets the future at Cologne's 'Fettenhof'.

German and French apprentices and journeymen and women are modelling themselves on their common tradition and infusing it with new life. The Compagnons du Devoir are working hand in hand at Cologne's 'Fettenhof': they are turning the building into a lively European meeting place and training centre for the craft trades. The setting and activities create an international atmosphere where young people can become acquainted with a binational community life.

Foundations are built on common ground

'Fettenhof' is the German branch of Compagnons du Devoir, the French Association of Journeymen with its headquarters in Paris. Registered under the name, the Association ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir Deutschland e.V., it now has the status of a non-profitmaking organisation under German law.

Young German and French craftsmen and women of the future are given the chance here to experience the merging of Europe first hand, through cross-border training and projects. The starting point for this is almost perfect, since in the European craft trade sector there are many similarities between France and Germany. For example, in addition to other forms of training, France also has a dual system of vocational training, 'formation en alternance', that is similar to Germany's dual system.

Opportunities for young Germans

The craft trades followed by the Association ouvrière des Compagnons du Devoir Deutschland e.V. are consistent with the German occupational structure and cover five areas of training: building, metalworking, transport, leather and window dressing and food. Apart

from providing opportunities for French journeymen, there are two project types designed for the training of young Germans in craft trades: a training course in France for apprentices up to the age of 20 and an exchange programme for apprentices and journeymen and women. On request, the Compagnons will organise group exchanges for this target group in France. The training can last anything from several weeks to several months. The Compagnons finance these projects with European Union funds from the Leonardo da Vinci programme and from the bilateral agreement between Germany and France which supports programmes such as those of the German-French Youth Foundation (DFJW) and the German-French Office (DFS/SFA).

Contact: Mr Gregor Meschede, Les Compagnons du Devoir Deutschland e.V., Fettenhof, Venloher Straße 1203, D-50829 Cologne, Tel. (49-221) 50 47 60, Fax (49-221) 50 26 45.

Source: News, information from the EU exchange agencies in NRW, No 3, August 1998/CEDEFOP/SK

Germany

European dialogue with insiders from the dual system of vocational training

The Seven Country Conference discussed the state of the German vocational training reform

The German Ministry of Education described the dual system of vocational education as 'a top priority locational factor' at the Seven Country Conference on Dual System Vocational Education held in Bonn in July 1998. The German Minister of Education had invited experts from Denmark, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland to the conference which focused on the theme 'Meeting challenges - learning from each other'. All the participating countries have a dual system of vocational training, though in very different forms. In Switzerland, Denmark and Germany the majority of young people pass through the dual system of vocational training, while in Austria, school and dual training are equally balanced. In Luxembourg young people trained under the dual system vocational education are in the minority; the dual system is mainly found in the craft trades sector and the retail trade.

At the beginning of the conference the German Ministry of Education outlined the path Germany has taken to reform its vocational training. The modernisation concept allows for the possibility of multi-phase training and new skilled occupations for practically inclined young people. In future, high performers should be given the chance to gain additional qualifications. More flexible training courses will give training enterprises the scope they need to define the training profiles that best suit their needs. Vocational schooling is to comply more closely with the needs of company requirements.

In a European dialogue representatives from the participating countries at the two-day conference discussed the state of German reform and debated longer-term proposals for the further development of vocational education and training. The final report on the results of the conference should be available by the end of 1998 from the German Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology, Press Department, Heinemannstr. 2, D-53175 Bonn, Tel. (49-228) 57 20 40, Fax (49-228) 57 25 48, e-mail: presse@bmbf.bund400.de

Source: BMBF/CEDEFOP/SK

Germany

First European Conference for Journeymen and Journeywomen focuses on cooperation cultures

Opening event of the transnational ADAPT project for SMEs and the craft trade sector

This transnational project, involving Germany, the United Kingdom, The Netherlands and Austria, is designed to promote the development of a 'European cooperation culture' between management and staff in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The first European Conference for Journeymen and Journeywomen held in Cologne in June 1998 was the start of a series of congresses

on this subject. The project is sponsored by the EC Initiative, ADAPT*.

The Westdeutsche Handwerkskammertag (WHKT-Association of West German Chambers of Handicrafts), which organised the first of these congresses, invited skilled workers and journeymen and women from all over Europe, as well as vocational training experts and representatives of the Chambers. The

primary aim of the first European Conference of Journeymen and Journeywomen was to make use of the innovative potential of talks between European workers' organisations on the varying degrees of cooperation in the EU Member States. To stimulate discussion the organisers gave a presentation on the successful cooperation between journeymen, master craftsmen and

the Chambers in shaping vocational training in Germany. The goal was to sensitise congress participants to the idea of a European culture of cooperation and to provide a forum

for discussions on the different approaches to this in Europe, by sharing experiences with transnational project partners at the Journeymen and Journeywomen Conference.

The contact point is the consultancy for transnational EU projects, Westdeutscher Handwerkskammertag (WHKT), Ms Martina Leyendecker and Ms Gudrun Wittig, Sternwartstraße 27-29, D-40223 Düsseldorf, Tel.: (49-211) 3000 7781, Fax: (49-211) 3007900, e-mail: gwittig@handwerk-nrw.de

*ADAPT - A Community Initiative 'Helping the labour force to meet industrial changes' to promote employment and help the labour force to adapt to industrial change (1994-1999)
Source: News, information from the EU exchange agencies in NRW, No 3, 1998/CEDEFOP/SK

Good practice makes perfect

While national systems for education and training may vary, the need to inform all citizens of the opportunities available to them remains consistent and is a fundamental requirement for promoting lifelong learning. Under the Leonardo da Vinci programme 1996 call for proposals, two UK-led projects were selected to pilot their proposed 'Good Practice Guides' each with a common theme in supporting vocational training whilst being quite different in both their approach and intended target audience.

Vocational Training & Educational Support Helplines (VTESH)

The original idea for the VTESH project came during the life of the last UK government when a fund for helplines was being nurtured and selected funding made available to those offering information and support to individuals accessing learning.

While it was apparent that these helplines might be an excellent extension to existing information provision, questions remained on how they could be introduced, what needed to be considered and where does their organisation begin? There followed the VTESH proposal and the idea of creating a one-stop shop (a good practice guide) for all those considering some sort of helpline

provision, in addition to providing the mechanism for existing helplines to review their current provision.

Led by London West Training Services with Careers Europe (the UK National Resource Centre for Guidance), DEADAL-CEP (a specialist industry recruitment body in Greece) and the Instituto da Soldadura e Qualidade (the lead training body for the welding industry in Portugal) as partners, the project had its work cut out in order to achieve its original goals of a transnational good practice guide serving each of the industry's training and guidance divisions.

Initial activity in each of the countries involved the identification of existing helpline provision and appointment of a national specialist steering group (in the UK this included the newly established na-

tional learning helpline - Learning Direct). In each of the countries, further consultation took place with the ministry responsible for vocational training and in all cases it is expected that the final publication will have some impact on future provision in this area. It should be stressed that the guide does not impose national standards but provides recommendations for new and existing helpline provision.

The result of this project will be the release (December 1998) of the VTESH Good Practice Guide in hard copy and in a shortened version on the Internet. Languages will be English, Greek and Portuguese.

Further information:
Paul Guest, Careers Europe, 3rd Floor, Midland House, 14 Cheapside, UK-Bradford BD1 4JA, Tel.: (44-1274) 829600, Fax: (44-1274) 829610 or consult the VTESH Web Site: www.lwts.org.uk/vtेश

A good practice guide for public sector employees

The second project, led by South East Employers aims to improve the quality of vocational training and support individuals, who may not previously have had access to training, to take responsibility for their own development. The mechanism chosen to meet these aims, as with VTESH, was to produce a good practice guide, but in this instance covering continuous vocational training for public service employees.

The partner organisations (United Kingdom, Belgium and France) are all local authorities (or related organisations) aiming to provide effective public services. They have identified the need to make their staff more flexible and adaptable and to help them manage the changes they

are facing. By taking part in a transnational project, the partners have been able to draw on a wider pool of expertise and experience.

The first year of the project saw the setting up of working groups, featuring representatives from all partner organisations, in order to carry out research, share ideas and develop the material to be used in the guide. The draft guide has now been successfully piloted, in each country, amongst front-line staff in public sector organisations who will be end users of the final version. The final version, for release in autumn 1999, is to be produced in hard copy and CD-ROM and will be in French and English. It is anticipated that it will encourage individuals to identify and obtain the skill they need both for current and future work roles - the first steps on the path to lifetime learning?

Further information:
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Comprehensive reform of educational legislation

The reform of legislation governing basic secondary (general upper secondary and basic vocational) and adult education will come into force on 1 January 1999. The previous fragmented institutional legislation, based on institution types, has been replaced by more concise and functional legislation.

26 acts have been replaced by eight. The new acts focus primarily on the regulation of educational objectives and content, levels and forms of education, and students' rights and responsibilities. The new legislation essentially increases the powers of education providers. The new acts will be applied to municipal, state and private education.

The reform of the school acts inspired very lively debates both in the media and expert circles. The Parliamentary Committee for Education and Culture heard an exceptionally large number (over 300) of experts.

The legislative intent was to ensure educational equality by means of provisions governing the evaluation of the realisation of educational objectives. Consequently, parliament considered that the creation of a statutory evaluation system was particularly important as regulation of the educational process is being replaced increasingly by legislation based on objectives and activities. The Parliamentary Committee for Education and Culture stated in its report that evaluation should focus primarily on the providers of education and on whether they develop their programmes in compliance

with the general principles in the legislation.

The new acts include obligations for inter-institutional co-operation. For example, institutions providing basic vocational education must co-operate with other educational institutions in their region. Co-operation must be practised with other vocational institutions and general upper secondary schools, but also with universities and AMK (polytechnic) institutions. Furthermore, the new legislation also includes special provisions concerning the recognition of studies completed in other institutions.

Providers of secondary education will have more latitude than at present in deciding on the time to be allocated to instruction and how to

organise education. Providers may purchase educational services from associations or foundations with a licence to organise education. However, the providers will be responsible for ensuring that the purchased services be arranged in accordance with legislation.

Higher education

A new University Act came into force this autumn, superseding 20 separate acts on universities and other institutions of higher education. It does not apply to the AMK institutions (polytechnics), governed by a separate 1995 act. The new act increases the universities' autonomy. As previously, universities will continue to have faculties, but these will no longer be decided on by legislation, as each university may now

individually decide on which faculties or other units to establish. The new act also allows university administrations to include members other than those representing staff and students. In other words, universities are encouraged to establish closer connections with society in general, particularly business life. University rectors have hitherto been appointed from within the university in question, but under the new act, it is also possible to elect a person from outside, who fulfils the prescribed qualification requirements.

Source: NBE



Training policy

Intercultural learning: a necessity in Europe

The composition of the population of Europe has changed dramatically in recent decades. As well as indigenous Europeans, there are now in about all countries, large numbers of people originating from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

It is therefore important that the multicultural nature of society is addressed from the earliest years of basic education. Learning about and with each other can be accomplished by intercultural learning. Intercultural learning is also important in vocational education and training. In work situations, people increasingly have to deal with a diversity of customers and colleagues with whom they have to co-operate or who have to be approached in a customer-friendly manner. The plumber, the nurse, the engineer, indeed all practitioners of occupations will need to have the social skills which enable them to deal with differences.

In order to prepare trainees to operate in a multicultural society, a VET network has been set up to develop arrangements which give shape to intercultural learning. CINOP coordinates the network on behalf of the Intercultureel Onderwijs (Intercultural Education) project group. The concept of the ABCD crown developed by Ido Abram, is used. In this, two pairs of concepts play a role: autobiography (A) and biography (B), and conflict (C) and dialogue (D). Using these four concepts, what intercultural learning may mean in prac-

tice is worked out. Autobiography (identity or self-image) indicates how someone sees him or herself. Biography or image indicates how others value someone. Where these two pairs of concepts overlap, an interaction arises which may develop into a conflict, but which may also result in a dialogue where people converse openly with each other. Intercultural learning is aimed at stimulating dialogue. One-sided images are therefore avoided and an interaction arises between identity and image. Trainees in this way learn to recognise, identify and deal with differences. The path to cultural enrichment is opened.

The network was to deliver its results in October 1998 in the form of a brochure usable in the VET field for giving shape to intercultural learning. It can be obtained from CINOP and will also be available for downloading from the Internet at www.aric.nl/intercultureel-leren/index.html.

For further information, please contact Muriel Cronie at CINOP, tel. (31-73) 6800 837 or by e-mail: mcronie@cinop.nl

Source: CINOP

Structural changes in the Ministry of Education

On 1 September 1998 the Danish Ministry of Education was radically re-structured. The aim is to streamline the ministry to prepare for a future in which education will have an increasing importance in society.

A small department (ministry) and three major agencies will secure a better coherence between all educational levels as well as an upgrading of the ministerial services to the institutions. The agencies will be responsible for all administrative, preparatory and legislative tasks, while the department is to concentrate on its role as policy advisor to the minister. This should give the minister much better opportunities for drawing up overall policy lines instead of being involved, as hitherto, in detailed decision making. The objective of the restructuring is to provide greater coherence between educational programmes by administratively breaking down existing barriers. One important policy objective behind the new structure is to separate responsibility for tasks related to content, from those related to the running of institutions.

The three agencies will be responsible for:

- educational programmes,
- institutions, and
- state education grant and loan schemes.

The new agency for educational programmes will be responsible for all administrative tasks and for advising the minister on content-related educational issues. The agency must

prepare legislation concerning educational programmes, pedagogy, formulate educational aims and objectives, and ensure supervision within the different areas. Thus, it will be serving the users of the educational system. The agency will be separated into 5 divisions:

- compulsory school,
- upper secondary education,
- vocational education and training,
- higher education,
- general youth and adult education.

As a consequence, the former Department for Vocational Education and Training (ESA) has been split up and many of its functions placed in other divisions. By creating the new educational institution agency, which will be responsible for all issues related to the governing and financing of institutions, the Ministry of Education will be in a better position to exploit best practices from the different areas of education. The structure will also allow for a more coherent of making priorities and defining economic standards (taximeters) across the different educational areas.

Source: Undervisningsministeriets Nyhedsbrev nr. 9, 1998 / DEL, Copenhagen

Pre-apprenticeships offer a stepping stone to employment

New form of initial training for young people who perform below par

With the 'pre-apprenticeships', Austria is treading a new path towards helping young people whose learning and performance are below par to find work. Pre-apprenticeships, a result of the National Action Plan on Employment, is a form of initial vocational training which targets existing training occupations. It covers the training contents of the first year of an apprenticeship, but is spread over two years. On successfully completing the preliminary course, trainees receive a certificate from their training enterprise and a vocational school certificate. The two together qualifies them for enrolment in the second year of the appropriate training occupation.

For the scheme's planners, a smooth transition to traditional apprenticeship training was particularly important. They wished to avoid any kind of stigmatisation of the trainees in their later careers. But young people who do not continue with their training also gain some benefits from the scheme. After successful completion of the pre-apprenticeship they have a qualification, recognised by the representative bodies of workers and employers, as a 'qualified assistant'.

Trainees on pre-apprenticeships are protected by the same laws as apprentices with regard to working conditions and social benefits. The labour-market authorities are now trying, by means of a special support programme, to motivate enterprises and vocational training institutions to take on this difficult training task.

Workers' representatives placed special emphasis in the planning of the scheme on reserving pre-apprenticeships exclusively for disadvantaged young people, particularly those who failed to complete their schooling. In this way they hope to prevent young people who would be capable of training in ordinary apprenticeships from resorting to pre-apprenticeships because of a lack of normal training opportunities.

The pre-apprenticeship scheme is initially limited in duration to the year 2000. In the meantime, labour-market authorities are watching to see how well the scheme is accepted on the labour market. The final decision on whether to continue with the scheme will be taken on the basis of their observations.

Source: abf-austria - Working party on vocational education and vocational training research/ CEDEFOP/ISK

Training market: 35 proposals to promote initiatives by private organisations

The *Fédération de la formation professionnelle* (FFP - Federation of Vocational Training) has presented, in the form of a white paper (*), 35 proposals for the reform of training in France. They are all part of the reform announced by Martine Aubry, Minister for Employment and Solidarity.

Private training in France accounts for almost two-thirds of training programmes. Training bodies now find themselves confronted with a three-fold challenge: meeting increased demand against a background of international competition; the demand for a comprehensive improvement in the efficacy of the system in terms of results and quality; and the need to invest in tools which incorporate new technologies.

According to the FFP, the French legislative framework within which the training infrastructure must develop has become overly complex as a consequence of modifications, which largely paralyse and reduce the flexibility of private training bodies. The regulations and controls imposed on them have thus been questioned. The feeling is that training should be seen as the provision of an ordinary service which is prepared in advance and is followed up subsequently.

The FFP proposes that the profession should be 'freed' from the constraints imposed on it. This would lead to the emergence of a real economic sector of vocational training which is also confronted with the

arrival of the Single European Market and competition from foreign operators.

- In the same way, amongst its 35 proposals the FFP suggests:
 - simplifying the administrative procedures for the setting up of alternance contracts and to introduce an 'alternance service voucher' for very small businesses;
 - opening private training bodies to apprenticeship;
 - creating training time savings account;
 - setting up tax incentive schemes in order to encourage individuals to undergo training;
 - increasing the financial resources devoted to regional initiatives such as training vouchers which will encourage individual demand;
 - increasing the financial resources for individual training leave;
 - reviewing the scheme for leave based on skill assessment and to guarantee better interconnection with training;
 - promoting the initiative for the replacement of employees undergoing training by job seekers who in turn are undergoing training;
 - promoting the practice of distance learning;

- creating a national scheme for the validation of skills acquired on the job;
- setting up a European reference system of skills for training occupation;
- simplifying access to assistance from the European Social Fund (ESF).

* 'Formation professionnelle: libérer les initiatives des organismes privés et clarifier les règles' March 1998

For more information, please contact the FFP, 3, rue Léon Bonnat, F-75016 Paris, Tel.: (33-1) 44 30 49 49, Fax.: (33-1) 44 30 49 18

Source: Centre INFFO

Sweden introduces apprenticeship

The Swedish government has launched a system of apprenticeship for young people. This apprenticeship will be integrated in the upper secondary school, and the municipality and the schools will be the bodies mainly responsible for its implementation.

Since the 1970s there has not been any real apprenticeship system in Sweden although the social partners have established within certain branches, e. g the building trade, their own systems for employees who have completed upper secondary schooling. As a pilot project, apprenticeship systems were introduced in 20 municipalities in September 1998. The effect of the system is a prolongation of upper secondary education from three to four years. During the third and fourth years the students will be apprentices at work places for a total of 500 hours. This means that the vocational programmes in upper secondary school will be extended from 2,400 hours (of 60 minutes) over three years, to 2,900 hours over a maximum of four years.

The objectives of the apprenticeship programme are:

- to meet the changing competence needs within working life,
- to give employers the opportunity to have an influence on the contents of training and how it is implemented,
- to give students the opportunity to spend a larger part of their training within a national upper secondary programme at a working site.

The new initiative will be an option within the upper secondary school national programme and will finish with an apprenticeship in working life, mixed with theoretical studies. Generally speaking, about two years will be planned in the same way for all students, i.e. for both those who will follow an apprenticeship and those who take the traditional way to accomplish a programme. It will be important to use the possibility to have the so called *Arbetsplats-*

förlagd utbildning - APU (short term work placement) at the beginning of the programme since it then will give a foundation for apprenticeship during the latter part of the upper secondary programme.

The student should attain the same educational goals in apprenticeship as in traditional education, and like all other kinds of upper secondary education, apprenticeship should also prepare for higher education.

The school has the overall responsibility for the student/apprentice. The nationally agreed aims for each national programme are the basis for the training, and the teachers have to participate in the planning and the accomplishment of the apprenticeship.

For each programme where apprenticeship is an option, there will be a council with representatives from the labour market branch in question, from the school staff and from the students. The principal, or the person the principal appoints, will be

the chairperson. The tasks of the council are to:

- suggest the local aims of the apprenticeship
- suggest guidelines on how to draft an apprenticeship contract
- find apprenticeship places
- be a resource to make it possible to accomplish a good quality apprenticeships.

For each student within the apprenticeship system a contract will be drawn up between the school, the student and the responsible person at the work place, but also at the work place the student will remain a student. This contract will indicate the length of the apprenticeship and will contain an agreement regarding the goals the student is expected to reach during the apprenticeship. The contract also contains information about the working site(s) in question and the tutor(s) responsible.

Swedish employers are very anxious to have apprenticeship. In a report from the Swedish Employers Federa-

tion, however, greater flexibility, with more influence for the companies is demanded. The length and content of apprenticeship should vary according to the different needs of the companies. Training must not be regulated centrally, but has to be developed according to local circumstances. Different solutions have to be accepted in order to make the apprenticeship function in different company structures. Companies should get financial compensation for the training provided.

The Swedish Employers Federation as well as the Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO) agree that apprentices should be students and not employees during the apprenticeship. This is an important difference between Sweden and many other countries in Europe.

Source: SEP

Future of TECs assured in partnerships with local development agencies and trade unions

Since the advent of the Labour government there has been much speculation over the future of the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) - in Scotland Local Enterprise Companies (LECs).

Worries over their future were dispelled by the Secretary of Trade and Industry at the recent TEC national conference when she said TECs would continue to have a key role in delivering the government's training and skills development programmes and in making a broader contribu-

tion to its agenda for improving competitiveness and productivity. However they would need to work in partnership with the new Regional Development Agencies to develop a coherent and targeted strategy for improving the competitiveness of the regions. The Minister for Lifelong

Learning said TECs would need to concentrate on young people without qualifications, skills gaps and information technology.

Lately the TECs have worked closely with the Trade Unions Congress (TUC). A joint TUC/ TEC National

Council initiative called *Bargaining for Skills* (*) aims to use social partnership to raise employees' skill level and thereby attain the National Education and Training Targets. *Bargaining for Skills* is giving priority to raising the knowledge of union representatives about both work-related learning and lifelong learning by providing courses, briefings and publicity events and consultative

skills. So far union involvement in learning has covered some 300 enterprises.

(*) "Working together for lifelong learning: a guide for TECs/CCTEs (Chambers of Commerce, Training and Enterprise) and trade unions", TEC National Council, Tel.: (44-171) 735 0010, Fax: (44-171) 735 0090, Price: UK£ 10

Source: IPD

Modern apprenticeships

According to the annual IRS (Industrial Relations Services) survey(*) of young people's employment, the Modern Apprenticeship scheme is becoming an essential part of skills development.

In a survey of 107 employers across the spectrum of industry, almost two-thirds of respondents are involved in the scheme and almost all believe it is a success, whilst 81% view the scheme as an important or essential part of their medium and long term strategies.

Employers, many suffering from skill shortages and recruitment difficulties, appear to be returning to the youth labour market. The Modern Apprenticeship scheme has helped revive interest in long-term ap-

proaches to meeting skills needs and young people are reaping the benefits in terms of high quality training and employment. However work based training still does not attract bright young people, who prefer to pursue an academic career which may offer better long term possibilities than manufacturing industries, which are so easily affected by cyclical conditions.

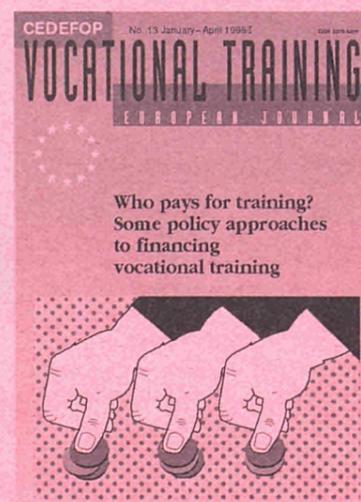
(*) Survey of Young People's Employment - IRS Employee Development Bulletin, IRS 18-20 Highbury Place, London N5 1QP, Tel.: (44-171) 354 5858, Fax: (44-171) 359 4000

Source: IPD

European Journal "Vocational Training"

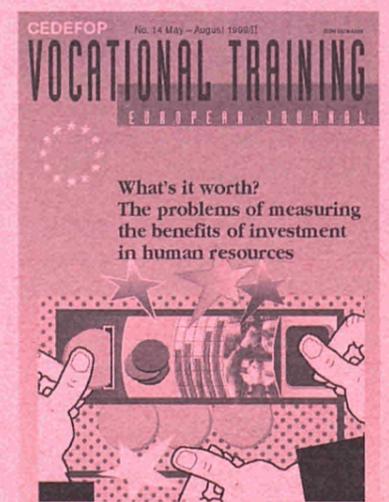
has been published in DA, DE, EL, EN, ES, FR, IT NL and PT. From 1997 it is published in DE, EN, ES and FR. (ISSN 0378-5068)

Single copy ECU 7
Annual subscription (3 issues) ECU 15



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Continuing education and training policy/ Employment policy/New training organi- zations and programmes

Continuing education and training policy

Belgium

Learning sabbaticals for Flemish officials

Within the framework of the Ministry of the Flemish Community's new management and human resources policy, some 10 000 civil servants will be able to take sabbatical leave for learning purposes. Since September 1998, the different departments and sections of the Ministry will be allowed to determine priority themes and work out concrete arrangements for personnel at all hierarchic levels.

The underlying idea is that civil servants gather additional knowledge, experience and good practice on innovation in the private sector and bring these back to the public sector, thus allowing the officials to broaden their competences, to augment their capacity and to widen their career perspectives.

Since 1991, the budget for training officials had already been raised from FB 7 to 160 million (ca. ECU 173 400 to 4 000 000) per year. Individual informatics, communication or management training is already available.

The learning sabbatical implies practical training periods in enterprises, although public services other than the Ministry or Department are not excluded. Also, the reverse should be possible, i.e. accepting staff from the

private sector who want to experience the public sector. In order to guarantee maximum quality and effect, the Flemish Minister of the Civil Service, initiator of the project, requires careful guidance of the 'sabbatarian' by the training official inside the department in question and the interdepartmental training co-ordinators, while of course also appealing to the trainee's sense of responsibility. The co-ordinators will also determine the relevant themes and, in co-operation with the employers organisation, Flemish Economic Union (VEV), search for appropriate potential locations.

Further contact: Ms. Van Leuven, Ministry of the Flemish Community, Dept. of Education, Training & Communication Section, RAC/Arcadegebouw, B-1010 Brussels, Tel.: (32-2) 210 63 26, Fax: (32-2) 210 53 85
Source: Financieel Economische Tijd/ICODOC

Italy

Training in the public sector

In February 1998 the first national conference on training in the public sector was held in Rome. The event was part of a wider debate on the reform of the public administration which must above all include a revitalisation and renewal of training systems for public sector employees.

The event acquired special importance because it testified to a turnaround in the concept of state bureaucracy and highlights the will to place the training and re-training of human resources at the centre of the modernisation process.

The Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, speaking at the conference, emphasised this change and the importance of moving away from a concept of treating public administration staff as a cost and not as a resource.

The Minister for the Public Office Service, highlighted the need to focus on training and re-training of staff as the answer to the challenges of the year 2000. Regarding investment in the training of public employees, he added that "with few exceptions, too little continues to be spent on training, although the latest reports indicate that much is now being done, partly thanks to EC funds and the far-sighted decisions

of the Comitato Interministeriale per la Programmazione Economica - CIPE (Interministerial Committee for Economic Planning), which has allocated substantial funds over three years".

During the conference, it also emerged that central and local administrative departments need to speed up the process of achieving independent management. The training and recruitment of public employees was also discussed at the annual public administration forum held in May. The Prime Minister emphasised the need to re-model training paths, especially for managers. In their case, as Minister Bassanini confirmed, specific projects with training experiments abroad will be drawn up by the end of the year.

The Minister of Finance also called for the end of the present system of recruitment, based almost exclusively on public competitions. In his

opinion, this system does not necessarily select the best candidates and the public sector needs instead to resort to a free market for recruitment and wages. These remarks triggered a broad debate.

For further information contact:

a) Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Dipartimento per la Funzione Pubblica, Corso Vittorio Emanuele II 116, I-00186 Roma, Tel.: (39-06) 68991, Fax: (39-06) 6873701

b) Forum della Pubblica Amministrazione c/o Istituto Mides s.r.l. Via Alberico II 33, I-00193 Roma, Tel.: (39-06) 6875575, Fax: (39-06) 68802433, E-mail: servizi.forumpa@tin.it, Web-site: <http://www.forumpa.it>

Source: ISFOL

Continued from page 1

Lifelong learning through the University of Industry

- four industrial sectors - automotive components,
- multimedia publishing, environmental technology and services and distributive and allied trades - requiring special attention.

Access to the service will be only by open and distance learning means including CD-ROM, Internet and analogue TV from the home, employers' premises and learning centres.

After a series of pilot projects to test specific aspects of the intended service focusing on individual em-

ployability and business competitiveness, the University will be launched in 2000 at a cost of about UK£ 50 million (ca. 71 mECU).

Separate proposals have been published for Scotland and Wales.

A role for trade unions

A new report (**) by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) the national organisation for adult learning emphasises the crucial role trade unions have as ambassadors for adult learning.

Drawing on existing experience to help stimulate demand for learning from the workforce and to reduce employee's wariness by endorsing the University for Industry, trade unions will help create the conditions necessary to transform workplaces into learning organisations. The report commissioned by the Department of Education and Employment and the Trades Union Congress also suggests that unions should ensure that no employees should be excluded from participation in the University.

The Department of Education and Employment's National Adult Learn-

ing Survey 1997 (***) has found that 78% of men and 70% of women are involved in either taught or self-directed learning. Of those who had received taught learning 58% said it was connected with their job at the time, 17% said it was with future paid work in mind, whilst only 3% had voluntary work in mind. 17% said it had no connection with current or future work. Almost half the respondents who were in the labour market thought that it would be necessary for them to participate in some job related training or education in the future in order to get a good or better job.

(*)The University for Industry "pathfinder prospectus" and summary are available free of charge from Prolog, PO Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6ZQ, Tel.: (44-845) 602 2260 or on the Internet at: www.gov.uk/dfee/ufi/index.htm

(**) "Partnership for learning" John Payne and Alistair Thomson, available from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), 21 De Montfort Street, Leicester LE1 7GE, Tel.: (44-116) 204 4200, Fax: (44-116) 285 4514, Price: UK£ 6

(***) National Adult Learning Survey 1997, Sarah Beinart and Patten Smith, available free of charge, ref. NALS 97 DfEE Publications, PO Box 5050, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6YJ, Tel.: (44-845) 602 2260, Fax: (44-845) 603 3360

For further information: Employment and Lifelong Learning and International Directorate, Department of Education and Employment, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street London SW1P3BT, Tel.: (44-114) 259 4384 (Jeannette Pugh), Fax: (44-171) 925 6000

Source: Employment and Lifelong Learning and International Directorate/IPD

Reform of continuing vocational training—discussion on training leave and financing continues

Political parties and social partners are preparing a comprehensive reform to improve the continuing and further education and training system. The reform is seen as the last big one of this century. However, delay may arise, due to lengthy discussions on practicalities and the distribution of costs.

The speed of change in modern society is greater than ever before. Changes in technology, markets and social relations create needs. Facing the challenge for frequent updating and expansion of competence at all levels of economic and social life posed by these needs, comprehensive reforms have been agreed and implemented at all levels of the Norwegian education system during the 1990s. Both structural and content changes have been introduced in compulsory school, in general and initial vocational education and training, and in higher education.

In September 1996, the government appointed a committee to investigate and analyse major aspects of an improved system for continuing and further education and training for adults. The social partner organisations were strongly represented in this committee, together with representatives of educational institutions and public authorities.

This, the so-called "Buer" committee, (after the name of its chairman), was to "... investigate the basis for .. an adapted, targeted and comprehensive system for adult training and competence development in working and social life .. The investigation was to cover training of employees and the self-employed, as well as individuals who, for different reasons, today are excluded from the labour market."

The committee's final report was presented as a Green Paper (*) in October 1997 and addresses a broad range of issues related to a new comprehensive system of continuing vocational training (CVT) for adults. Several principles were discussed and agreed. However, conflicting interests among committee members made it difficult to agree on concrete recommendations to the government on organisation and financing.

On the basis of this report, the government in May 1998 presented a White Paper on CVT reform to the national assembly (*Stortinget*) (**). It suggests major principles and supports the proposals agreed in the Buer Report. In September, the Storting started discussing the White Paper.

Guiding principles

Both the Green and White Papers emphasise the following principles as the basis for reform:

- The reform will include all adults in and outside the labour market and will have a broad, long-term perspective.
- Employers, employees and the government must all make a contribution when it comes to funding, organising, adapting, developing and implementing the reform.
- The competence reform must be based on a broad concept of knowledge, comprising both theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as creativity, initiative and entrepreneurial and cooperative skills. Attitudes and values are also part of this concept of knowledge.
- In view of the corporate structure and the distribution of population in Norway, it is important to give special attention to the development of competence in small and medium-sized enterprises and to development in the regions.
- As far as possible, education and training for adults should be aimed at meeting demands, be flexible, available and adapted to the needs of the individual and the enterprise, and build on the individual's competences, both formal and non-formal.
- A system must be established to document and assess adults' non-formal learning. This system should be recognised both in the workplace and in the education system.

□ Admission to upper secondary education and higher education must be based on the total competences of the individual, both formal and non-formal.

Unsettled questions

The need for CVT reform is obvious. However, there are difficult negotiations to be completed between the public authorities, employers, employees and educational institutions in order to reach agreement on questions related to:

- legal and practical arrangements as regards training leave
- financing arrangements and distribution of costs between taxation, employers and individuals
- recognition, assessment and documentation of non-formal competence
- organisation and responsibilities with regard to delivery of training.

Several public committees and task forces have been established in order to prepare concrete proposals on the various remaining aspects.

The final results of these joint efforts will probably be presented to the public early in 1999.

* NOU 1997:25: "Ny kompetanse. Grunnlaget for en helhetlig etter- og videreutdanningspolitikk". Abridged version in English: "New Competence. The Basis for a Total Policy for Continuing Education and Training for Adults".
Internet address: <http://odin.dep.no/kuf/publ/97/buer/es0.htm>

** Stortingsmeld. Nr 42 1997/98: "Kompetansereformen". Abridged version in English: "The Competence Reform".
Internet address: <http://odin.dep.no/repub/97-98/stmeld/42/engelsk/index.html>

Source: NCU, Norway

Portugal

Working party on the development of education and training for adults

The recognition of the right to education and lifelong training and the progressive change in the nature of professional activity in a modern society in particular have triggered the redevelopment of adult education in Portugal.

The working population has a low level of training, little general education and few occupational qualifications. According to the figures compiled in December 1997 from the Instituto de Emprego e Formação Profissional (IEFP), around 280 000 young people under the age of 25 have not completed compulsory schooling (nine years); 68% of the unemployed registered with employment centres have attended less than nine years of schooling.

In July, the government set up the working party on the development of education and training for adults. This group is preparing education and training courses for adults, structured in three levels:

- Vocational training, level I
- Ninth year of schooling, level II
- Twelfth year, level III.

In these courses, apprenticeship and experience acquired outside an education system will be awarded a certain number of credits. The experience of apprentices and the credits which they hold at the beginning will be incorporated into their skill portfolio. Local units will be set up ('knowledge clubs') where adults will be able to talk about their experiences and assess their skills with the help of an educational psychologist.

The same working party will be responsible for launching and implementing the 'knowledge society project', the goals of which are:

- to create a national education and training agency for adults;
- to define a strategy and a technical system on the intra- and inter-ministerial levels in order to define and launch projects

- to cooperate with local authorities, educational and vocational training institutions, the social partners and private individuals with a view to elaborating and creating community adult education and training units
- to undertake the experimental and progressive construction of a system for the formal examination of knowledge and skills acquired in an informal manner.

This working party will operate for six months, after which a national agency will be set up for adult education and training.

Working party on the development of adult education and training
Av. 5 de Outubro 107-6°
P-1050 Lisboa
Tel.: (351-1) 7941993
Fax: (351-1) 7971082

Source: Journal "Diário de Notícias"/CICT

Belgium

'Leverage' funding for innovation oriented training

Following the 1995 - 1999 Flemish Employment Agreement, recent OECD reports and the European Amsterdam Summit, the Flemish Government adopted, in March 1998, a decree allocating an additional FB 665 millions (ca. 16.3 million ECU) to VET in companies.

The initiative is based on the reflection that economic, technological, legal and social changes confront both workers and job seekers with ever-changing job requirements. It aims at supporting training projects resulting from investments in new products or processes.

In order to qualify, projects have to meet four basic criteria:

- Only companies and sectoral organisations are able to apply for the extra funds. Training organisations, such as VDAB and VIZO, are excluded. Thus, the Flemish government underlines its wish that the

demand side of the training market takes the initiative in the renewal of training programmes.

- The fund is called 'leverage' as it is to be combined with additional financial means from the companies themselves, the European Social Fund, the sectoral organisations and/or the paid educational leave framework. The 'leverage' fund allows companies to recover up to 27.5% of the total cost of the training project (in which the wage cost of workers cannot be included).
- Each project has to prove that it reinforces the chances of workers, jobseekers or self-employed people on the labour market. As transfer-

ability of skills is required, company-specific training is not eligible. 20 participants taking up 20 hours of training each is the required minimum for eligibility.

□ Finally, the 'leverage' fund is part of the global innovation policy of the Flemish government. Only training projects set up to support the development of new products, the renewal of obsolete production, organisational procedures or the introduction of new regulations are eligible.

In competing for funds, projects can improve their ranking if they correspond to the following criteria:

- co-financing by the European Social Fund and/or the branch organisations;
- joint training projects with a minimum of three companies participating;
- participation of poorly qualified and/or long term unemployed jobseekers;
- development by the company of new products;
- innovation registered as exceptional with the IWT (the Flemish Institute for Scientific and Technological Research).

Over a hundred projects were submitted before the deadline of 30 April 1998 for the first call for proposals, and final approval by the Flemish Minister-President was expected in September.

The 'leverage' fund for innovation-oriented training uniquely combines social as well as economic objectives. Not only does it improve the position of workers and jobseekers in an increasingly complex labour market, it also provides new impulses to the competitiveness of companies established in the Flemish Community.

Further contact:
Ms V. Moens, International Relations, VDAB,
Tel.: (32-2) 50 60 417, Fax: (32-2) 50 60 428

Source: Financieel Economische Tijd/Decree of the Flemish Government, published in *Moniteur Belge* / VDAB

Ireland

Resolving skill shortages

A collaboration between industry, education and government has provided an insight into the growing skills shortage in the high technology sector in Ireland. The Expert Group on Future Skill Needs* quantified the future skill requirements of the sector from professional to technician level until 2003.

One of the group's objectives is to develop forecasting techniques that will assist in anticipating the future skill needs and the associated resource requirements of the economy. The importance of having an accurate method of forecasting future skill requirements of the IT sector to maintain its global competitiveness is emphasised.

Forecasting that the growth in demand for IT jobs will continue apace, the report anticipates a shortfall of

computer science professionals and technicians and of engineering professionals. This will happen even taking into account additional sources of skilled professionals and technicians such as returned emigrants, immigrants, existing employees trained by FÁS-Training and Employment Authority, post upper secondary education and in-company courses.

Practical proposals to address the shortfall include:

- conversion courses - one year intensive courses in specific fields of expertise targeted at graduates;
- employee upskilling - night and part-time study for people already employed in the IT sector;
- full time education - new higher education places would be required to deliver an extra 400 professional graduates annually and 2,000 new technician places;
- improved completion rates - from the current 80% (degree level) and 65% (technician level) to 85%

and 75% respectively. Studies are currently taking place into the reasons for dropout at these levels, and the group notes that this could be one of the most cost-effective ways of increasing the skills supply. Active promotion of all these options is considered important.

In addition, the report recommends that the existing campaign to attract more software sector people back to Ireland should be extended to the hardware electronics sector and that non-Irish people should be encouraged to work here. The need to develop new networks between the worlds of business and education

and to increase the proportion of Irish children taking technology education (currently only 17% of 17-18 year olds) is stressed.

An implementation group has been established to give effect to these recommendations. The Expert Group is now to focus its attention on the low and medium-skills areas in industry.

*Expert Group on Future Skill Needs: Building on Ireland's skill opportunities. June 1998. Available free of charge: Forfas, Wilton Park House, Wilton Place, IRL-Dublin 2. Tel.: (353-1) 607 3000, Fax: (353-1) 607 3030

Source: FÁS

New training organizations and programmes

Belgium

Educational forums for co-ordination of local training initiatives

In order to improve co-operation, mutual consultation and co-ordination between the different training providers at the local level, the Flemish Government has agreed to the creation of educational forums (Edufora) in which local education and training providers are represented.

The Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Service (VDAB), the Flemish Institute for Independent Entrepreneurship (VIZO) along with its regional training centres for the self employed, as well as the adult education framework (called 'Social Advancement Education') all have two representatives in the forums. Smaller providers such as socio-

cultural organisations, agricultural training providers, basic (elementary) education institutions and various other training organisations all have one representative.

Preparatory work on the 13 Edufora (one for each Flemish sub-regional employment area and one for Brussels) started in autumn of 1998.

Within 18 months each of them is to establish an educational objectives plan, which will be regarded as the long-term strategy for the specific region. Furthermore, a co-operation agreement between the Flemish Government and the VDAB, VIZO and the education authorities will determine how these plans will be integrated into the existing proce-

dures for recognition of new training programmes.

To support this new initiative, the Flemish Community will appoint two co-ordinators for the central management of the Edufora. A steering committee will be in charge of the project's strategic orientation and yet another core group will see to the daily follow-up. On the financial level, there will be a central budget for scientific support along with a local budget for each forum, consist-

ing of FB 1 million (ca. ECU 24 800) per year, to be augmented by FB 2 per year per inhabitant. After a five-year period, the Edufora should be able to operate from their own resources.

Further information: Mr. J. Geuens, Director, VDAB, St. Maartenstraat 5, B-3000 Leuven, Tel: (32-16) 29 86 00, Fax: (32-16) 22 91 97

Sources: Financieel Economische Tijd/De Standaard/De Morgen/VDAB

Denmark

"Quicker into work and education" - special programmes for young people a success

In Denmark it is not only a right but also an obligation for young people without work to accept either an offer of education or training from mainstream education or from the newly developed special training programmes or a subsidised job in a company.

If these offers are refused, young people do not get their unemployment benefits. The results of this change in policy, introduced a couple of years ago, have now been evaluated. The effects have been very clear. A recent evaluation (*) shows that a lot of young people have been able to find a job, while a large part of the target group is now attending various training programmes.

The UJF (education and job qualifying courses) programme is offered by the vocational schools and the AMU (adult training) centres. Courses normally run for 18 months and are predominantly based on practical training, often combined with periods in companies.

In September 1997, approx. 4,000 young unemployed had taken part in

a UJF programme. After having completed the course 1,065 went directly into ordinary education, predominantly VET programmes. This is not surprising as UJF elements are formally acknowledged within the ordinary VET programmes. More than 1,500 participants found a job, whereas 250 were in various other education programmes, e.g. day high schools. Of the residual 1,000 participants 3 out of 5 were on parental leave or were (long-term) ill, while only 2 out of 5 (10% of the total cohort) were still unemployed.

This high success rate has come as a surprise, even given the present positive employment market situation. One extra bonus of the UJF scheme is pointed out by the evaluation. The tailor-made UJF courses contain very innovative pedagogical

initiatives and elements, which are transferable to ordinary VET programmes.

The new programmes were established as a follow up to the December 1995 law package "Quicker into Job and Education", through which the government supplemented the programme "Education for All" with a social and labour market policy dimension. The aim of the package was to eliminate long-term unemployment for young people under 25.

(*) Undervisningsministeriet, Erhvervsskoleafdelingen: Smag for virkeligheden - resultater af ungeindsatsen. Temahæfte Nr. 4, 1998, can be ordered from: Undervisningsministeriets forlag, Frederiksholms Kanal 25F, DK 1220 Copenhagen K. Tel.: (45-3392) 5220; Fax: (45-3392) 5219

Source: DEL

Germany

Modernisation of vocational training continues its long-running success

Around 100 new training regulations since 1996 / 30 more new regulation projects planned

Considerable progress has been made in the modernisation of vocational training in 1998. In August 11 new training occupations and 18 updated ones were added, bringing the number of training regulations issued since 1996 to around 100, including 26 brand-new training occupations. The latter focus on the media, various service sectors and the information and telecommunications sector.

The Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB - Federal Institute for Vocational Training) conducted a survey to find out where the companies stand on the issue of the modernisation of skilled occupations. A total of 52% of the 784 companies that took part in the survey attached great

importance to a permanent updating and development of occupations in the dual system.

Hit list of requested changes

The changes requested focused on 77 of the 356 currently recognised training occupations. Among the ten occupations most frequently mentioned were three which had only been restructured in February 1998: Hotel manager; chef and restaurant manager; and the occupation of industrial clerk for which a new training profile is currently being prepared. The companies also named industrial mechanic, office communications clerk, energy electronics engineer, car mechanic, office clerk

Continued on page 12

Continued from page 11
Modernisation of vocational training continues its long-running success

and electrical fitter, as training occupations still requiring attention.

A total of 16% were in favour of completely new training occupations. The feedback from the companies makes it clear that they are far more concerned with solving current problems than with future issues. The description of new occupations is often a combination of existing ones. The work of a 'construction clerk', for instance, combines the qualifications of a draughtsperson with those of a clerk.

A new phase of reform is pre-programmed

The modernisation of training occupations will continue in 1999. A total of 30 new regulation projects are currently being prepared. This includes the updating of occupations in the building industry and new training profiles for health care, automatic vending and animal sanctuary care. Employers and unions are presently discussing a further 20 regulation projects. These include new training occupations for out-patient care, waste disposal and recycling.

The current 'Catalogue of recognised training occupations 1997' in German is available for ECU 25 from Verlag W. Bertelsmann GmbH&Co. KG, Postfach 100633, D-33506 Bielefeld, Tel.: +49-521 911 01 0, Fax +49-521 911 01 79. The book covers all the recognised training occupations issued since 30 September 1997. Brief descriptions of training occupations developed and modernised after 30 September 1997, but for which training has been taking place since August 1998, are available from the BIBB, Press and Public Relations Dept., Fehrbelliner Platz 3, D-10707 Berlin, Tel. (49-30) 864 32 280, Fax (49-30) 864 26 06.

Source: BIBB/Kuratorium der Deutschen Wirtschaft für Berufsbildung/CEDEFOP/SK

Continued from page 1
In January, satellite 'training' television

in this respect to networked computers, on the other, the guarantee of reaching a larger group, since television is widespread and more and more people have satellite antennas (or cable). However, although they can be accessed by the public at large, the programmes will be oriented towards large public and private companies and bodies and small and medium-sized enterprises. The people in charge of the project indicated that this scheme 'could constitute a solution in respect of the training needs of a certain number of professionals in the public sector (firemen, policemen, healthcare staff, haulage contractors, etc.) who are spread over the entire region but who require local training as a consequence of the difficulty of absenting themselves from their workplaces'.

In a first phase the production centres of the different partners will be used: the television studio and the 'electronic campus' of the CNED at the Futuroscope in Poitiers, and the facilities of AFPA and the IGS group in Paris.

TFS draws on the Canadian experience with CANAL (consortium of Quebec universities who share a television channel available to the public at large) and North American experience with NTU (new technologies university). It is also based on the experience of the CNED which already broadcasts between 150 and 200 hours of television by satellite every year.

Source: Centre INFFO, Paris

Italy Training for conscripts

An agreement signed in May 1998 between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Labour launched a vocational training plan addressed to 170,000 conscripts entitled 'Eurotraining'.

The project is divided into two areas of action, both starting in autumn 1998. The first initiative is addressed to 60,000 conscripts and envisages courses lasting 80 hours in computer science and English, which will run alongside normal military training. Agreements have been made involving some large companies, such as Telecom and Microsoft, involving a total of 150 training centres. The second initiative, which will be available during off-duty hours, is addressed to young conscripts wishing

to learn or specialise in crafts such as electrician, plumber, carpenter, blacksmith, mechanic.

Young people from the south (who account for 60% of conscripts) will be given preferential treatment, and half of the programmes will be located in the Mezzogiorno. The courses will be organised in training modules, each lasting 80 hours and aimed at occupational profiles already operating in the logistics of the Defence sector.

The initiative is aimed at 'relaunching' the institution of military service, which has been somewhat over-shadowed by the extension of non-military opportunities for conscientious objectors.

Young people who have completed training courses will be able to obtain vocational certificates recognised by the Regional Authorities, even though, according to a note issued by Confindustria (the Italian Employer's Federation), the duration of the course appears insufficient

The initiatives have been allocated 115.5 milliard lire (59.2 million ECU)

for two years, of which 70 billion lire (35.9 million ECU) come from the European Structural Funds and 45.5 billion lire (23.3 million ECU) from the Ministry of Defence.

For further information, contact:
 a) Ministero della Difesa,
 Via XX Settembre 8, I-00187 Roma,
 Tel.: (39-06) 5416, E-mail: levasicilia@imd.it,
 Web-site: <http://www.esercito.difesa.it>

b) CASD, Centro Altri Studi per la Difesa,
 Piazza della Rovere 83, I-00165 Roma,
 Tel.: (39-06) 68806702, Fax: (39-06) 68806702,
 E-mail: casd@starfarm.it,
 Web-site: <http://www.starfarm.it/casd/>

Source: ISFOL

Italy Learning centre: self-learning in the factory

A learning centre is now operating at the Melfi factory (near Potenza) of Fiat Auto. It is an innovative structure created to promote self-learning among employees of the car manufacturer. The first of its kind in Italy, it has thirty-five multimedia computers, two telematic workstations and a room for videoconferences. 100 electronic programmes, CD-ROMs, encyclopaedias and web sites, specialist books and magazines, are also available.

This is a new model of training linked to the needs of the integrated factory. It equips people with the ability to analyse and manage problems and to play an active role in the production process. The learning centre will be open, outside working hours, to everyone working inside the factory premises. Shifts will be organised according to demand. There are 200 places available per day.

The initiative was proposed in 1995 and received the agreement of the trade unions in January 1996.

The centre will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. to reconcile the needs of the three workshifts in which the enterprise is organised at present. Everyone will be able to use the services offered for a maximum of two hours per day. The first contact with the learning centre will take the form of guidance by a number of tutors.

There will be self-managed training paths, but a tutor will always be at hand to guide the user among the instrument available. It will be possible

to study languages, to learn how to use a computer, to link up to the Internet and to follow specialist courses in a multitude of subjects. Under an agreement with the Polytechnic of Turin, twenty people a year will be able to take a short degree course in production logistics engineering.

The cost of the initiative is not high: approximately 4 milliard lire (ca 2 million ECU) for the equipment and 1 milliard per year to manage it. This is not much compared to the sum

which the Turin-based manufacturer spends each year on training: 240 milliard lire (ca 124 million ECU) in the whole of Italy and 120 milliard lire (ca. 62 million ECU) for Melfi alone.

For further information contact:
 Fiat Auto s.p.a., Corso Agnelli 200, I-10135 Torino,
 Tel.: (39-011) 683 1111, Fax: (39-011) 33333363
 Fiat Engineering, Zona Industriale, I-85025 Melfi (PZ),
 Tel.: (39-0972) 78121, E-mail: see Web-site,
 Web-site: <http://www.fiat.com>

Source: ISFOL

The image displays four covers of CEDEFOP 'panorama' reports. Each cover features the CEDEFOP logo and the European Union flag. The titles and descriptions of the reports are as follows:

- Report 5077:** 'Les transformations des compétences du personnel technico-commercial dans une société fondée sur les connaissances'. It includes 'Études de cas en France, au Portugal et en Écosse' and is a 'Rapport final'.
- Report 5079:** 'Conseil et orientation professionnelle tout au long de la vie'. It includes 'Éléments de synthèse des expériences menées dans l'Union européenne'.
- Report 5080:** 'Output-related funding in vocational education and training'. It is a 'A discussion paper and case studies'.
- Report 5083:** 'Exploring the Returns to Continuing Vocational Training in Enterprises: A Review of Research within and outside of the European Union'. It is a 'A review of research within and outside of the European Union'.

At the bottom of the advertisement, the text reads: **CEDEFOP panorama**



Page 13 Quality and certification D: Europass to certify overseas training; D: Early diagnosis system to clarify future qualification requirements; **Page 14 E:** The National Institute for Qualifications; UK: Defining and preventing skill shortages - basic social skills in short supply; FIN: Length of upper secondary vocational training extended; **Page 15 IRL:** Trade unions push for the certification of formal and informal learning; **Training of trainers** D: Reform of trainer qualifications based on occupational competence and ability to perform the job; CEDEFOP publications **Page 16** Selected bibliography.

Quality and certification/ Training of trainers

Quality and certification

Foto: Manfred Vollmer

Germany Europass to certify overseas training

Ministry of Education insists on international orientation in vocational training

Many young people in vocational training are still daunted by the prospect of studying overseas. Just one per cent of German apprentices gain experience abroad during their initial vocational training, and even fewer during continuing vocational training. This should change in the foreseeable future.

The German Federal Ministry of Education wants to strengthen the international orientation of vocational education and training, and double the number of young people who have overseas occupational experience by the year 2002. It sees the multi-lingual Europass, which the European Council of Ministers

for Education and Employment has decided on, as an important tool in its plan. Young people training under the dual system are to have all the courses they have successfully completed in another EU country registered in their Europass. The European Union is to finance all the activities needed to publicise and distribute the 'Vocational Training Europass'.

All types of opportunities to learn abroad

The German Federal Ministry of Education also proposes a series of further possibilities for internationalising vocational education and training.

These include trips overseas to acquire additional specialised qualifications and intercultural skills, as well as work experience immediately after completing training. This transparency of qualifications throughout Europe is supported by tri-lingual occupational profiles for the restructured occupations. The profiles are issued with the final certificates upon completion of training. Also on the list of proposals are fact-funding trips for experts and management personnel, continuing training for multipliers involved in vocational training, and vocational and continuing training opportunities all over the world.

The German Federal Ministry of Education spends ECU 9.6 million a year on vocational qualifications abroad, and the European Union contributes an additional ECU 8.5 million a year to support exchanges for German applicants.

The acceptance of such opportunities depends, however, on reciprocity, the Ministry warns. The economy must contribute to the costs and allow employees leave to avail themselves of offers. Conversely, expert exchange programmes must be based on employers' interests.

Source: BMF/BIBB/Information of the EU exchange organisations in NRW/CEDEFOP/SK

Germany Early diagnosis system to clarify future qualification requirements

BIBB tests procedures and creates a database for regular information service

Which qualifications will be in future in demand? If this can be predicted, vocational training providers can react promptly and adjust their training activities. The Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB - Federal Institute for Vocational Training) is presently testing the usefulness of various 'early diagnosis systems' for determining qualification requirements, and is creating a database for a regular information service.

Four different methods being tested

In the search for durable and efficient early diagnosis methods, BIBB analyses:

- job advertisements in national daily, weekly and specialist publications;
- information from interviews with experts in particularly innovative enterprises;
- the demand on training providers for continuing training courses;
- the demand on full-time vocational schools and vocational academies for training courses.

Taking the area of health and social welfare as an example, the Institute is also exploring how the various analysis tools can be combined.

Job advertisements are the best indicators

The analysis of job advertisements is proving to be a particularly suitable instrument for the early diagnosis of qualification requirements. An evaluation of 4000 job advertisements revealed that today providers demand much more than just specialist qualifications. A total of 72 percent of the advertisements examined placed particular emphasis on the social competence of applicants and formulated special expectations in

respect of the personality of new colleagues. Heading the list of priorities with 31 percent each were team skills and the ability to cope with stress, and the ability to work independently and determination. These were followed by flexibility, communication skills, a sense of responsibility and willingness to learn. Only 4.5 percent of those placing advertisements were looking for mobility in applicants.

Every second advertisement required a formal, recognised vocational qualification, and almost as many required proof of on-the-job experience. In this context it was found that the higher the vocational qualifications required for the position, the more frequent was the demand for proof of work experience.

Only one in five prospective employers demanded foreign language skills, and in 90 percent of these cases English was the required language.

Source: BIBB/CEDEFOP/SK

The National Institute for Qualifications

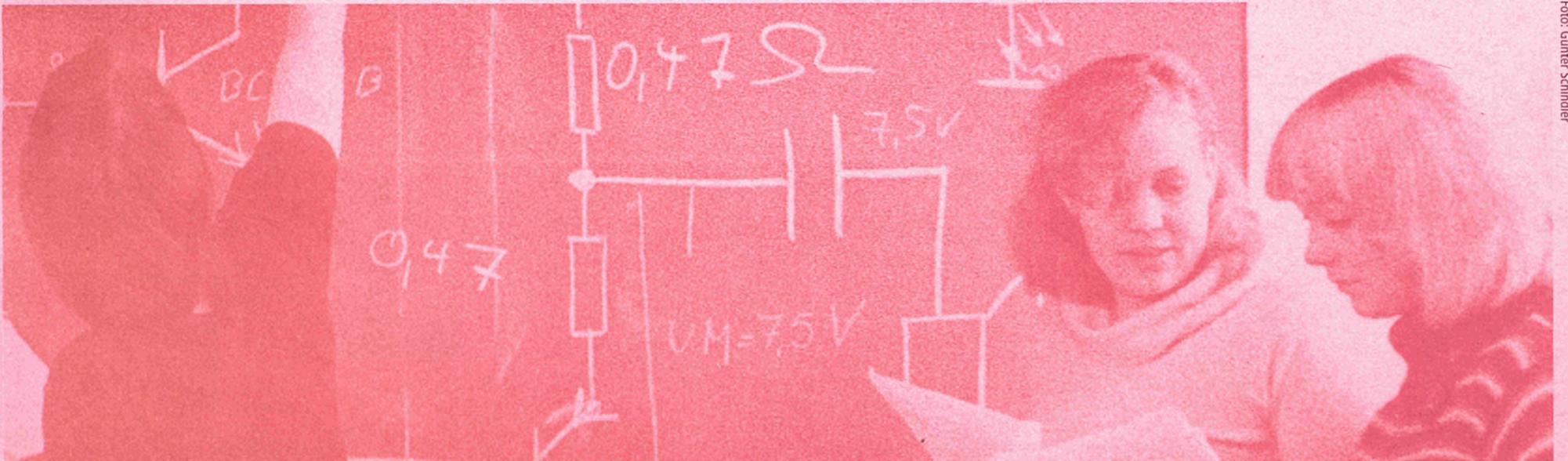
One of the most innovative features of the New National Vocational Training Programme is the establishment of a National Institute for Qualifications

In conjunction with the General Council for Vocational Training, its functions will be:

1. to propose the establishment and management of a national system of vocational qualifications,
2. to draw up criteria which will define the requirements and characteristics of vocational qualifications for incorporation in the national system of vocational qualifications,
3. to design a basic methodology to identify professional competences and to define the model which a vocational qualification must follow in order to be incorporated in the national system,
4. to propose a system for the accreditation and recognition of vocational qualifications,
5. to establish criteria which will regulate the basic methods to be applied for the assessment of competences and the procedure to be followed for the granting of accreditation by the competent authorities,
6. to establish the procedure which will enable the agencies or institutes of qualifications set up by the Autonomous Communities and the social partners to share responsibility for the definition of the Catalogue of vocational qualifications and the updating of sectoral requests,
7. to propose procedures for the accreditation of occupational skills in the national system and its updating,
8. to develop - in its capacity as a basic instrument in the service of the General Council for Vocational Training - the essentially technical activities associated with vocational training both at national and Community level, such as
 - studies
 - reports
 - comparative analyses
 - collection of documentation
 - compilation of bibliography
 - scientific seminars,
9. to facilitate functional interrelations between the training activities of the three different vocational training sub-systems, and the titles and certificates in the systems of occupational classification resulting from collective bargaining,
10. to carry out the tasks required to establish a reference framework for the general programming of all the sub-systems and to support legislative and regulatory action for vocational training.

Source: INEM

Foto: Günter Schindler



United Kingdom

Defining and preventing skill shortages - basic social skills in short supply

In CEDEFOP Info (2/98 page 15), we reported on the skills shortages in the buoyant UK economy. According to a report by the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) there are more deep-rooted reasons for the shortages.

A BCC task force led by the personnel director of Siemens Microelectronics found that although some skills shortages were attributable to cyclical factors, the most serious problem facing business is the lack of basic social skills, often referred to as employability skills, such as motivation, commitment, reliability, willingness to learn and work together, as well as basic literacy and numeracy.

The report¹ says that the education system needs to place as much emphasis on employability as on other areas of education. Schools should introduce personal and social skill development as early as possible in the primary level.

Three specific skills areas where shortages need to be addressed were also highlighted: foreign languages, information technology and technical skills, particularly engineering. A way in which the deficiencies in employability skills could be addressed, according to the report, is to improve education-business relationships by employers being involved in the development and accreditation of pupils' key skills through structured work placements.

On a more general level, the report welcomes the proposal for a national framework for credit ("Learn-

ing Works - Widening Participation in Further Education")² that will allow unit based accreditation so that qualifications can be achieved in bite-sized chunks.

A number of actions by different bodies illustrated that the skills of the population are important for the UK's international competitiveness. The government has set up a working group following the UK's poor performance in the International Adult Literacy Survey in 1997 which showed that one in five adults in the UK has poor basic skills. The new group will consider the effectiveness of different kinds of skills provision, how to achieve coherence in delivery and funding and ways to increase the volume, quality and effectiveness of literacy and numeracy teaching.

The London Development Partnership³ has been set up to raise the skill levels of Londoners. A prime aim of the partnership is to reduce the stark differences between areas of London which has eight of the ten most deprived communities in the UK.

The engineering industry has launched its first skills survey. The aim of the survey according to the Engineering and Marine Training Authority⁴ is to establish the skills profile of the engineering sector and the actual investment made in train-

ing, and to provide benchmarks to measure improvements.

The government has announced the successful bids to establish and run centres of excellence to tackle skill shortages in the information and communication technologies. The new centres, which will share UK£60

million (ca. 85 MECU), will form part of the University of Industry infrastructure.

1) "Skills for competitiveness" British Chambers of Commerce, Manning House, 22 Carlisle Place, London SW1P1JA, Tel.: (44-171) 565 2000, Fax: (44-171) 565 2049, Price UK£ 25

2) Published by the Further Education Funding Council (free of charge), Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, UK-Coventry CV1 2WT. Contact: Louise Hazell, Tel.: (44-1203) 863000, Fax: (44-1203) 863055

3) London Development Partnership 26 Old Queen Street, London SW1H9JF, Tel.: (44-171) 248 5555, Fax: (44-171) 248 8877

4) Engineering and Marine Training Authority, Clarendon Road, Watford, Herts, Tel.: (44-192) 323 8441, Fax: (44-192) 325 6086

Further information from: Employment, Lifelong Learning and International Directorate, Department for Education and Employment, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, Westminster London SW1P3BT, Tel.: (44-171) 925 5000 or Derek Grover (Moorfoot, Sheffield), Tel.: (44-114) 259 3969, Fax: (44-114) 259 4724

Source: Employment, Lifelong Learning and International Directorate/IPD

Finland

Length of upper secondary vocational training extended

The government's development plan for 1995 - 2000, published in 1995, decided in principle that the duration of courses for all qualifications in upper secondary level vocational education would be extended to three years. This broadens the contents of the courses and increases the value of qualification in working life.

In June 1998, the Ministry of Education specified the principles and timetable for the realization of this reform which will be carried out gradually between 1999 and 2001. All the new courses will be of three years duration. In some areas three year courses already exist - e.g. Business and Administration, Marine Skills and Laboratory Technology which will be reformed this year.

The new qualifications will be designed to provide extensive basic

skills to carry out different tasks in the field concerned, as well as special professional skills and expertise in one specific area. All the qualifications will include six months on-the-job training.

Skills tests will be included in all courses and students have to demonstrate that they have acquired the occupational skills required. These tests will be planned and carried out in cooperation with the social partners.

The Ministry of Education has also made decisions concerning new qualifications in Construction Technology, Heating and Ventilation Technology, Land Survey Technology and in the Health and Social Services Sector. These reformed courses will be on offer from the beginning of August 1999.

More detailed information is available from Ms Kirsi Kangaspunta (Counsellor of Education), Ministry of Education, Tel.: (358-9) 1341 7259 Fax: (358-9) 1341 7006 E-mail: kirsi.kangaspunta@minedu.fi

Source: NBE

Trade unions push for the certification of formal and informal learning

The issue of certification, of both formal and informal learning, is very much to the fore in Ireland at present (see also CEDEFOP 2/98 page 14) with the formation of a national qualifications authority expected shortly.

A Leonardo da Vinci programme seminar on the topic of certification of informal learning* in February which attracted participants from all over Europe and an initiative on work based learning driven by the trade unions and certified by the National Council for Vocational Awards (NCVA) provide examples of developments in this area.

The delivery of education and training in the workplace is increasingly being seen as one way of coping with ongoing change. For workers, it can facilitate career progression and

provide a form of insurance against unemployment. For employers, work based training can enhance competitiveness. It can take a number of forms:

- employers providing in-house courses,
- employees participating in courses provided in mainstream education,
- companies providing on-site "learning centres" and self-directed learning.

The trade unions have taken an initiative to provide workplace learn-

ing for their members. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) has come together with the major technological unions to establish a training company, Education and Training Services Trust (ETS)**, which acts not only as a training provider, but also as a broker of training services for members. Founded in 1992, ETS specialises in safety, technical and organisational training. The provision of workplace learning has thrown up a number of issues which, ETS states, need to be addressed, e.g. the length of time since many workers have attended an educa-

tional institution or received training, the need to support distance learning initiatives and the issue of certification.

Certification is recognised by training providers as a fundamental issue in workplace learning and is one of the main demands of union members undertaking courses. Together with the National Council for Vocational Awards, the ETS worked to devise and implement certification for in-company courses which ETS delivers, in subject disciplines such as pneumatics, hydraulics and elec-

tronics, and core skills such as teamworking and problem solving. The courses are modular in form and, although optional, most course participants opt to take tests leading to certification. In terms of progression, these courses can secure part exemption for training leading to technician qualifications.

*New ways of accrediting the skills and competences acquired through informal learning. Seminar in Dublin Castle 19-20 February 1998. Seminar papers available free of charge from Leargas - The Exchange Bureau, 189 Parnell Street, IRL - Dublin 1. Tel.: (353-1) 873 1411 - Fax: (353-1) 873 1316 (contact Mr Patrick Halley), E-mail: phalley@leargas.ie
** Contact Mr. Peter Rigney, Education and Training Services, ICTU, 6 Gardiner Row, IRL - Dublin 1, Tel.: (353-1) 878 0988 - Fax: (353-1) 878 0990, E-mail: edutrain@iol.ie

Source: FÁS

Training of trainers

Germany

Reform of trainer qualifications based on occupational competence and ability to perform the job

BIBB and social partners submit reform plans for training trainers

Training of trainers must not lag behind the modernisation of in-company vocational training. The Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB - Federal Institute for Vocational Training) and the social partners were of the opinion that an adaptation of the more than 25-year-old 'Training the Trainers' con-

cept to current requirements was long overdue. They got together to lay down new standards for training trainers. BIBB's board summarised these standards in a framework curriculum which sets the course for in-company vocational training for the future.

The prime goal is to improve future trainers' competence and ability to perform the job. The new, modular course trains them to teach interdisciplinary skills and to integrate tasks, instead of just teaching a single subject in isolation.

The 120-hour course builds up trainers' skills in teaching students to plan, implement and check their

own work. Trainers also learn a wide repertoire of training methods and see how they can utilise modern training techniques in a professional context.

They must subsequently prove in a written and oral examination that they can plan, implement and monitor the success of training courses on their own, and that they can

independently master tasks and problems typical of their field.

The reform proposals for the training of trainers are based on the new trainer suitability regulations and the new specimen examination to prove occupational and educational knowledge and skills, which both came into effect on 1 November 1998.

Source: BIBB/CEDEFOP/SK

Application of ISO 9000 standards to education and training
Interpretation and guidelines in a European perspective
1998, 96 p.
Languages: EN, ES, FR
Price: ECU 8.50
Cat. No.: HX-12-98-053-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Indicators in perspective
The use of quality indicators in vocational education and training
1998, 72 p.
Languages: DE, EN
Price: ECU 8.50
Cat. No.: HX-12-98-069-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

New qualifications and training needs in environment-related sectors
Synthesis of studies carried out in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Greece, Italy and the United Kingdom
1998, 60 p.
Languages: EN, FR
Price: ECU 8.50
Cat. No.: HX-16-98-077-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Mobility and migration of labour in the European Union and their specific implications for young people
CEDEFOP Document
1998, 126 p.
Languages: DE, EN, ES, FR
Price: ECU 8.50
Cat. No.: HX-16-98-053-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Certificates, skills and job markets in Europe
A summary report of a comparative study conducted in: Germany, Spain, France, Italy, The Netherlands, United Kingdom
CEDEFOP Document
1998, 32 p.
Languages: EN, FR
Price: ECU 6
Cat. No.: HX-13-98-653-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Training for a changing society
A report on current vocational education and training research in Europe 1998
Luxembourg: EUR-OP
1998, 294 p.
Language: EN
Price: ECU 19
Cat. No.: HX-09-97-018-EN-C
ISBN 92-828-3488-3
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

Quality debate in initial vocational education
School-based quality measures at intermediate level: a Danish-Dutch comparison
1998, 58 p.
Language: EN
Price: ECU 8.50
Cat. No.: HX-12-98-061-EN-C
May be obtained from the EU sales offices

CEDEFOP publications

Some recent publications in the field of VET, especially at European level, are selected below by CEDEFOP's Library and Documentation Service.
Prepared by Maite Santos, CEDEFOP



Current situation regarding vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean.
European Commission - DG XXII
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1997, 78 p.
(Studies, 9)
ISBN 92-827-4569-4, en
ISBN 92-827-4567-8, es
Cat. no.: C2-98-96-970-EN-C
EN ES

Proposal for a Council Decision establishing the second phase of the Community vocational training action programme "Leonardo da Vinci": presented by the Commission.

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 57 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 330 final)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-36950-0, en
Cat. no.: CB-CO-98-364-EN-C
EN FR DE DA ES EL FI IT NL PT SV

Proposal for a European Parliament and Council Decision establishing the second phase of Community action programme "Socrates": presented by the Commission.

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 55 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 329 final)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-36939-X, en
Cat. no.: CB-CO-98-365-EN-C
EN FR DE ES DA ES EL FI IT NL
PT SV

Proposal for a European and Council Decision establishing the Community action programme for youth: presented by the Commission.

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 52 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 331 final)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-36961-6, en
Cat. no.: CB-CO-98-365-EN-C
EN FR DE ES DA ES EL FI IT NL
PT SV

Developing a European service in favour of mobility and employment: report on Eures activities 1996-97 in accordance with Regulation (EEC) no. 1612/68, Article 19(3) (presented by the Commission).

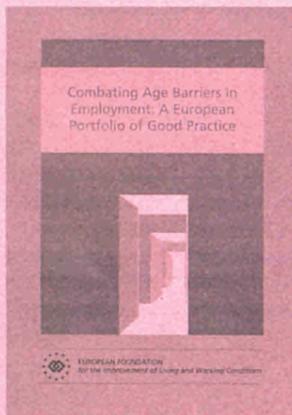
European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 22 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 413 final)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-37591-8, en
EN FR DE DA ES EL FI IT NL PT SV

Commission Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on the follow-up to the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on the Free Movement of Persons: communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament.

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 14 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 403 final)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-37899-2, en
Cat. no.: CB-CO-98-433-EN-C
EN FR DE DA ES EL FI IT NL PT SV

From guidelines to action: the national action plans for employment: communication from the Commission.

European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 14 p.
(Documents COM, (98) 316)
ISSN 0254-1475, en
ISBN 92-78-36319-7, en
EN FR DE DA ES EL FI IT NL PT SV
URL: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg05/emplesf/napsnaps.htm>

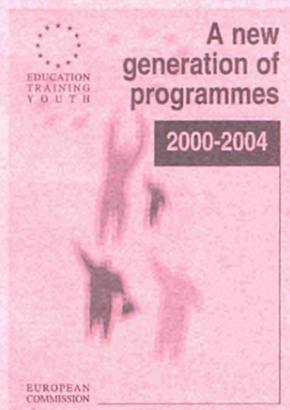


Combating age barriers in employment: a European portfolio of good practice.
WALKER A; TAYLOR P (eds.)
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 220 p.
ISBN 92-828-0412-7, en
Cat. no.: SX-05-97-454-EN-C
EN

The documents mentioned above may be obtained from EU national sales offices or the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities (EUR-OP):
2, rue Mercier,
L-2985 Luxembourg,
info.info@opoce.cec.be
Tel. 352+2929-1
Fax 352+49 57 19

Leonardo da Vinci 1997 call for proposals: analyses and results.

European Commission - DG XXII
Brussels: Leonardo da Vinci - Technical Assistance Office, TAO,
1998, 48 p.
Leonardo da Vinci - TAO,
9 rue de l'Astronomie,
B - 1210 Bruxelles,
Fax: 32-2-227.0101,
101363.461@compuserve.com
EN FR DE

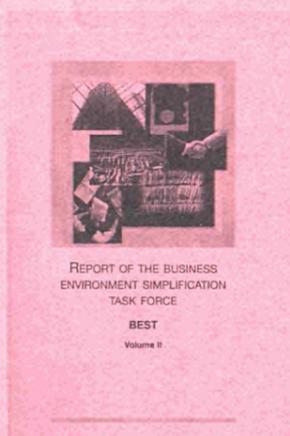


A new generation of programmes 2000-2004.

European Commission - DG XXII
Brussels: European Commission - DG XXII, 1998, 8 p.
DG XXII B7-0/31
European Commission,
Rue de la Loi 200,
B-1049 Brussels,
Fax: 32-2-296.4259
EN FR DE

Youth for Europe: Compendium 1995.

European Commission - DG XXII
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 191 p.
ISBN 92-827-9429-6, en
DG XXII B7-0/31
European Commission,
Rue de la Loi 200,
B-1049 Brussels,
Fax: 32-2-296.4259
Cat. no.: C2-98-96-437-EN-C
EN FR



Report of the Business Environment Simplification Task Force, BEST: volume 1; volume 2.

BEST Task Force;
European Commission
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 25 p.
(v.1); 73 p. (v.2)
ISBN 92-828-3418-2 (v. 1), en
ISBN 92-828-3431-X (v. 2), en
DG XXIII/A/1;
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels,
Fax: +32 2 295 9784;
seija.gross@dg23.cec.be
Cat. no.: CT-79-98-002-EN-C
EN FR DE IT NL DA
URL: <http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg23/smepol/best1en.pdf>

Measures taken in the Member States of the European Union to assist young people who have left the education system without qualifications.

The Information Network on Education in Europe, EURYDICE
Brussels: EURYDICE, 1997, 89 p.
ISBN 2-87116-273-5, en
Unité Européenne d'Eurydice, rue d'Arlon 15, B-1040 Bruxelles,
EURYDICE.UEE@euronet.be
EN DE FR
URL: <http://www.eurydice.org/documents/young/encovjsqen.htm>

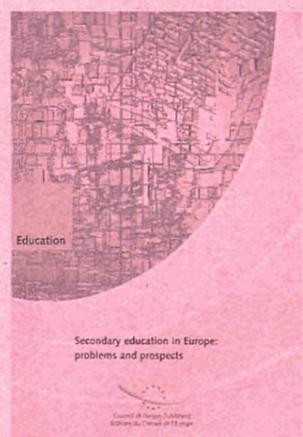
Integration of work and learning: proceedings of the 2nd workshop on curriculum innovation (September 1997, Bled/Slovenia).

European Training Foundation, ETF
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 192 p.
ISBN 92-828-3440-9, en
ETF
Villa Gualino,
Viale Settimio Severo 65,
I-10133 Torino.
info@etf.it
Cat. no.: AF-13-98-572-EN-C
EN
URL: <http://www.etf.eu.int/etfweb.nsf>, Note: electronic text address



Key indicators: vocational education and training in Central and Eastern Europe.

European Training Foundation, ETF
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 1998, 88 p.
ISBN 92-9157-162-8, en
ETF, Villa Gualino, Viale Settimio Severo 65, I-10133 Torino,
info@etf.it
Cat. no.: AF-12-98-085-EN-C
EN
URL: <http://www.etf.eu.int/etfweb.nsf>



Secondary education in Europe: problems and prospects.

L'enseignement secondaire en Europe: problème et perspectives.
Council of Europe
Council of Europe Publishing:
Strasbourg, 1997, 232 p.
ISBN 92-871-3220-8, en
ISBN 92-871-3219-4, fr
Council of Europe Publishing,
B.P. 431 R6,
F-67006 Strasbourg Cedex,
publishing@coe.fr
EN FR

European Youth Trends 1998.

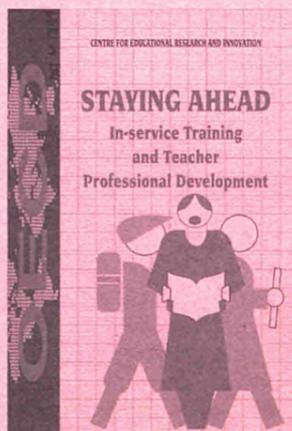
Council of Europe
Council of Europe: Strasbourg,
1997, 41 p.
(CEJ/RECHERCHE (98)2, 97/3)
Council of Europe Publishing,
B.P. 431 R6,
F-67006 Strasbourg Cedex
EN

What secondary education for a changing Europe? Trends, challenges and prospects.

LUISONI P
Council of Europe
Council of Europe Publishing:
Strasbourg, 1997, 132 p.
ISBN 92-871-3414-6, en
Council of Europe Publishing,
B.P. 431 R6,
F-67006 Strasbourg Cedex,
publishing@coe.fr
EN FR

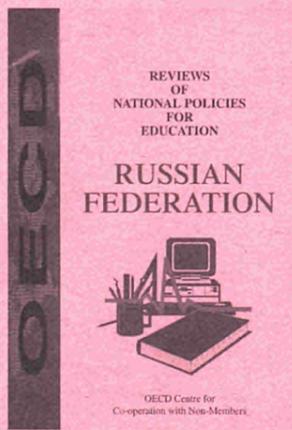
Co-ordinating services for children and youth at risk: a world view.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD
Paris: OECD, 1998, 433 p.
ISBN 92-64-16038-8, en
OECD,
2 rue André-Pascal,
F-75775 Paris Cedex 16,
oe.cd@oe.cd.org
EN FR



Staying ahead: In-service training and teacher professional development.

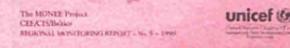
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD
Paris: OECD, 1998, 176 p.
ISBN 92-64-16076-0, en
OECD,
2 rue André-Pascal,
F-75775 Paris Cedex 16,
oe.cd@oe.cd.org
EN FR



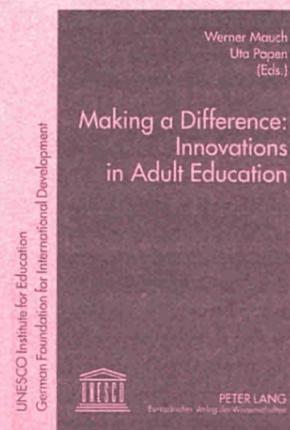
Reviews of national policies for education Russian federation.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD
Paris: OECD, 1998, 173 p.
ISBN 92-64-16058-2, en
OECD Publications,
2 rue Andre Pascal,
F-75775 Paris Cedex 16,
Fax: 33-1-4910.4276,
e-mail: sales@oecd.org
EN FR

Education for All?



Education for all?
UNICEF - International Child Development Centre, ICDC
Florence: UNICEF - ICDC, 1998, 135 p.
(MONEE project regional monitoring report, 5)
ISSN 1020-6728
ISBN 88-85401-38-4
UNICEF - ICDC,
Piazza Santissima Annunziata 12,
I-50122 Florence,
Tel.: 39-55-234.5258,
Fax: 39-55-2448.17,
e-mail: ciusco@unicef-icdc.it
EN



Making a difference: Innovations in adult education.
MAUCH W; PAPAN U (eds.)
UNESCO - Institute for Education, UIE; Deutsche Stiftung für internationale Entwicklung [The German Foundation for International Development], DSE Frankfurt/Main [etc.]: Lang, 1997, 215 p.
ISBN 92-820-1073-2
UIE,
Feldbrunnenstr. 58,
D-20148 Hamburg,
Tel. 49-40-44804101,
Fax: 49-40-4107723,
uie@unesco.org
EN

The new educational pact: education, competitiveness and citizenship in modern society.

TEDESCO J C
UNESCO - International Bureau of Education, IBE
Paris: UNESCO, 1997, 115 p.
(Studies in Comparative Education)
ISBN 92-3-185006-7, en
UNESCO publishing,
7 place de Foenoy,
F-75352 Paris 07 SP,
Tel.: 33-1-4568.4300,
Fax: 33-1-4568.5741
EN ES

Strategies for achieving parity of esteem in European upper secondary education.

LASONEN J; YOUNG M (ed.)
European Commission
Jyväskylä: Institute for Educational Research, Jyväskylä University, 1998, 290 p.
ISBN 951-39-0108-4
Institute for Educational Research,
University of Jyväskylä,
POB 35,
FIN-40351 Jyväskylä, Finland
EN



Virtual VET village

If we allow ourselves to travel back in time just a very short while, we can more easily see the impact of modern technical methods of communication on our life and our work.

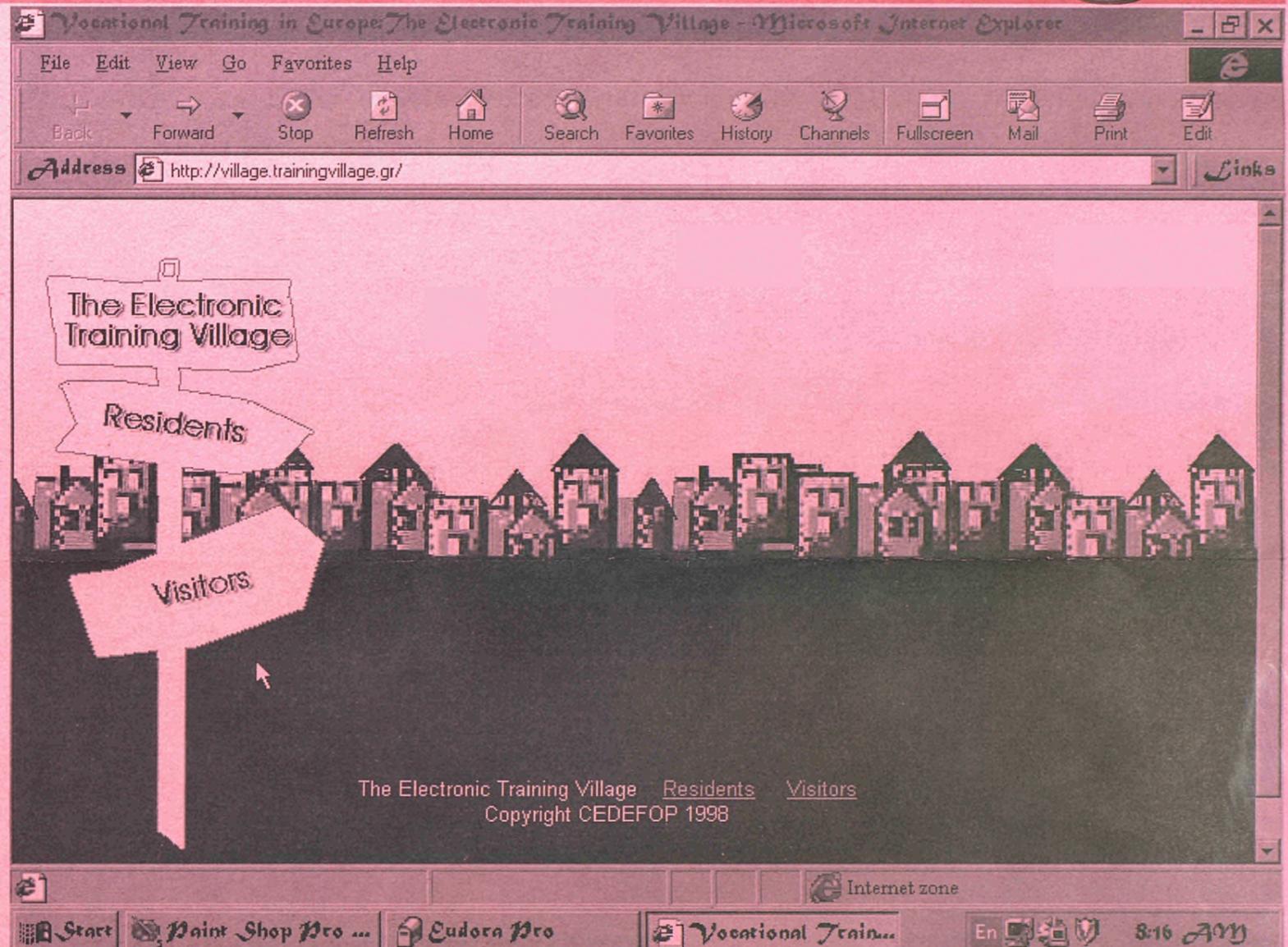
It's nineteen hundred and something and you need to know what types of certificates are issued for various vocational occupations in another EU member state. Perhaps if you have a secretary, he or she can take over some of the tedious research, but if not, here is what your task looks like:

1. Find the names and addresses of the organisations in the target member state that might have the information you need. (Does anyone remember how we did things like this before the Internet?)
2. See if you can determine which department of which organisation might have this information. If you're really lucky, you'll find the name of the contact person.
3. Write a "Dear Sir or Madam" letter requesting the information.
4. Wait several weeks (I'm being optimistic here) for a reply, only to find out that you wrote to the wrong person.
5. Try again...repeat steps 2-5 until you get what you want or run out of time and patience.

If you find this description as wearisome as I do, then you'll be happy to jump forward to 1998, the year of the inauguration of the Electronic Training Village, a focal point for the dissemination of VET information and research results.

Let's do that same search again. Here are the new steps:

1. Point your browser to www.trainingvillage.gr
2. Since you're already a resident (we assume), you can go directly to the **library** and look through *Certification in the EU Member States: a documentary dossier*.
3. If you don't find what you need there, you can look through the



Journal Archives and the **Bookshop**. If all else fails, you can go to the **Speakers' Corner** and post a message stating what you need and requesting help.

Does that seem a bit less onerous? Then you're a candidate for residency in the ETV.

There is a revolution going on in the world of information gathering, sharing and dissemination. CEDEFOP, with the inauguration of the ETV, is positioning itself at the forefront of that revolution. Director, Johan van Rens had a vision of a virtual community of VET professionals, meeting, discussing, sharing and receiving information on the World Wide Web. There are many methods of using the ETV to bring this about.

Already there is a demand for the **ETV Conference Centre**. In September, the VET stream of the ECER Conference in Ljubljana was followed-up by a virtual conference in the ETV. Participants were able to

read keynote documents on line or download them for reading at leisure. A resource centre for related documents was set up and lively discussions of pertinent topics were held. Professionals from a wide range of countries participated. More similar conferences are envisioned for the near future.

Another central feature of the site is the **Who's Who in VET**. Registrants are asked to participate by listing themselves and their professional interests so that they can be contacted by colleagues in other member states to share ideas, discuss research or ask questions. Since registration is limited to professionals in the field of VET, participants can be fairly sure that the list will not be used for undesired solicitations.

Another interactive feature of the ETV is the **listservers**. The listservers are one of the oldest (doesn't make them all that old) features of the Internet. Academics

sharing information was the earliest use of the internet and that need is still with us. Listservers provide an easy way for professionals to receive information related to a specific topic. At the moment, there are three listservers active in the ETV: *Mobility, Transparency of Qualifications* and *Financing of VET*. The lists are currently moderated by VET experts in-house at CEDEFOP and material is sent regularly to ETV registrants who have requested it. It's one of the best ways of keeping right up to date with your field of interest.

The ETV is making use of some of the latest features of web design to bring you *active* content and a gold mine of information. You have the opportunity to go directly into a variety of databases available in the **Library of the ETV**: Bibliographical Database, Bookmarks of VET related web site addresses, The European Research Directory, The Glossarium, the Acronyms Database. What's more, it's all available in one

place. More databases are planned. The Training Institutions Database listing over 7000 training-related institutions, should be on-line later this year.

Visit the village at: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr>
You can register in a few minutes and immediately begin looking around. It's simple, it's free and it's for you, the VET professional.

Colin McCullough

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Thessaloniki, Greece 55102
e-mail: cmc@cedefop.gr
Telephone: 30-31-490-111
WWW Address: <http://www.trainingvillage.gr>

The latest VET news

Download publications

On-line publications

Network

Contribute Attend a virtual conference

Connect Meet a colleague

Write an opinion

Management Boardroom

The Management Boardroom offers a brief description of the structure and purpose of the management board of CEDEFOP. It also allows the board a members-only area to facilitate their work.

The ETV Library

There are many different services and publications available in the ETV Library. Here, you can either retrieve information from the **databases**, search the general contents of the library (by subject, title, terminology), view a list of **recent acquisitions**, or access electronic on-line products for viewing, printing or downloading. This includes information about forthcoming conferences.

Of particular interest to VET experts, will be the Electronic Bookmarks. You can find the web addresses and links to hundreds of VET-related web sites, categorized by topic, conveniently arranged alphabetically.

Newsagent's

Read the latest news in the field of VET. Find out what's new on the site and what conferences or discussion groups are scheduled.

Chat Pub

Everyone knows that pubs are places to meet and talk. The ETV's chat pub is no different (well, a little different since it doesn't even have *virtual beer*). Scheduled chats will take place here with the opportunity for professionals to meet and share ideas. You can find out what is planned by visiting the **Newsagent's** or the **Chat Pub**.

The Village Bookshop

The Village Bookshop offers a direct link to on-line publications. As time passes, we expect more and more publications to be available on line. There is no easier way to get the publications you want. You can also find a directory of local sales agents if you wish to purchase hard copies of any of the publications.

The Village Hall

The Village Hall is the first stop for many entrants to the village. Here you can find a welcome message from the Director of CEDEFOP, Johan van Rens, and the inaugural address by Mrs. Cresson, (delivered in June 1998 in Vienna). Information to help you understand and navigate the village is also contained here.

Software House

Here you will find the necessary software for participating in village activities. For example, if you want to join a chat group but don't have the software program to do so, you can download it here. Naturally, each item will come with exact instructions for downloading, installing and using the software.

The Editorial Committee for the European Journal for Vocational Training

The Editorial Committee examines all the articles submitted to the Journal and decides which ones to publish. It comprises experts in vocational education and training from Europe. From the Editorial committee room in the ETV there are entries to a members-only section for reading and editing articles for the Journal, and an entry, for village residents, to an archive of Journal articles, all available for reading or downloading.

The Community Centre

The main function of the community centre is to bring people in the field of vocational training together. You can participate by adding your name and your areas of interest to a **Who's Who in Vocational Training** or by looking for someone who is already listed. You can then contact this person via e-mail. Who knows what sort of productive relationship will ensue.

Speakers' Corner

Here you can voice your opinions and read the opinions of others. You should check this page regularly to see what topic is under discussion and add your thoughts. You will also be able to contact some of the other participants directly, via e-mail. If you're looking for information on a particular issue, you can post a request and anyone with something to say can contact you or post a reply to the Speakers' Corner. You do not need any special software and it is not necessary to be on-line at any specific time to use this feature. You can read the postings of others and add your own postings at any time that is convenient to you.

TTNET House

This house is projected to be ready by the end of the year and will contain two main features. First and foremost, you will be able to access information on trends and guidelines through a database of archives on the systems and organisation of training for trainers. The second aspect will be a virtual meeting place for researchers and training practitioners in the field of training trainers in which they will be able to participate in on-line working groups and seminars.

Study Visits House

The Study Visits House will contain information on the Study Visits programme giving VET specialists the opportunity to participate in workshops promoting dialogue and exchange on topical VET issues. Participants will have access to documentation relevant to each study visit group, as well as details on applying to the Study Visits programme.

Window on VET Systems

Here you will find a wealth of information on the organisation of VET systems throughout Europe. This house will also provide updates on recent developments at national level.

Listserver Row

One of the most popular and useful features of the Internet, are listservers. Listservers are just what they say they are. They serve information to a list of people. If you sign up on one of our listservers - Mobility, Finance, Transparency - you will receive the latest information available on that topic. Once you have signed up you can submit information to the list to be passed on to other list subscribers. To ensure the integrity of the information being passed through the list, each list is moderated by an expert in the field. The ETV's listservers therefore provide an excellent means of sharing information with colleagues throughout Europe.

The Conference Centre

The ETV's series of conferences and follow-up conferences is just getting underway. The first event is the follow-up conference to the ECEC Conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia. (17 - 20 September, 1998) As with the Ljubljana electronic follow-up conference, the keynote papers are available on line for reading or downloading and participants are using the discussion groups to elaborate on, or ask questions about points brought up during the live conference. If you or your organisation are interested in having a conference hosted in the ETV Conference Centre, contact Colin McCullough at cmc@cedefop.gr

Training Organisations

In the Training Organisations House, you will find links to the sites of many international, European and national organisations concerned with VET. It's a good place to start when you're looking for information on VET.

CEDEFOP Factory

In the factory you can find out all about the latest projects and research taking place in CEDEFOP's work programme. You can also access the CEDEFOP web site.

Research in the village library

Using the Electronic Training Village for research.

The Electronic Training Village (ETV) is designed to make it easy to find information on Vocational Training in Europe and in each of the member states. Its aim is promote dialogue and sharing of information. Access to a great deal of Vocational Education and Training (VET) information is readily available through the village.

The Library

The library offers access to a variety of lists, databases and publications. This information is gathered through the *Documentary Information Network* which comprises a library or documentation centre in each of the EU Member States (plus Iceland and Norway) and CEDEFOP's library, all of which are constantly updating the pool of data in the area of VET, both at European and national level.

The main resource in the library is the *Bibliographical Database*, a catalogue of over 20,000 documents held in the Network libraries. For example, if you want to find all publications by a certain author, or all publications in the area of *training of trainers*, then you simply enter the link in the library and fill in your search criteria in one of the search options offered. It couldn't be simpler. Once you have your initial results, you can ask for more information about the publications – a short abstract in English or French, bibliographical data, or details of where to order the document, etc.

To bring some order into the myriad of web sites available concerning VET, the library is now classifying and indexing them under subject headings in the *Bookmarks* file. If you would like to find the address of the *Department of Education and Science in Ireland*, you would simply follow the *Bookmarks* link in the library. This link would take you to an alphabetical list of VET related subject headings. By clicking on the *Ministry of Education* link you would find the URL's of the major Ministries of Education in Europe, including Ireland.

The *European Research Directory*, which is a database of vocational training research projects, can be accessed through the library as well. Other sources are *The Glossarium*, a compilation of technical terminology in 11 languages and the *Acronyms Database* containing more than 2,700 acronyms related to VET.

Many library products are available on line for reading or downloading. These include the following: Selected EU Documents, a schedule of Forthcoming conferences and Documentary Dossiers. The Documentary Dossiers include descriptions of the Apprenticeship system in the EU Member States; Certification in the EU Member States, tables listing the training certificates issued in the 15 countries (plus Norway) organized by level; and Recent developments in the EU Member States.

The Bookshop

The Village Bookshop offers a direct link to on-line publications. It contains a sample of publications in electronic form on a wide variety of vocational training issues. You are free to browse or download these. Alternatively, the bookshop gives instructions on how you can obtain hard copies of the publications if you'd rather.

If you go directly to the Bookshelves you will find links to publications by topic such as:

- Comparability of vocational training qualifications
- Continuing education and training
- Costs and funding
- Exchange of information and experience
- The training of trainers
- European Journal for Vocational Training

Other Village Resources

Looking for a colleague? Why not look in the *Community Centre*. You can search for a peer by their name, institution, country or keyword. Register yourself as well, so that colleagues can find you. You have the opportunity when registering, to give some professional information about yourself and your areas of interest.

The ETV's *Listserver Row* is an obligatory stop for anyone interested in the *Financing of Vocational Training, Mobility or Transparency of Qualifications*. If you sign up with one or more of the *listservers*, you will receive information and the opportunity to share ideas with others in the same field.

The ETV comes fully equipped with a *search engine* that will search all sections of the village for you. You can access the search feature on every page. If you prefer to browse, then check out the *Table of Contents* where you will find the sections and subsections of the village.

If you simply want to ask a question and don't know who to ask, visit *Speakers' Corner* and voice your opinion or ask your question. It's probably the fastest way to find out what you want or start a lively discussion.

Imagine that you are looking for the web site of the Ministry of Education in Portugal. By using the bookmarks in the ETV library, you would be able to go directly to it.

First, you select **Bookmarks**.

Then, you select **Ministry of Education**.

And when you arrive on the page listing **Education Ministry web sites in Europe**, one click and you're in the site you want without having had to look through 1000 plus listings in the average search engine.

Perhaps you are looking for information on **Costs and Funding**. You decide to check out the **Bookshop** for on-line publications.

When you enter the Bookshop, go directly to the **bookshelves**, via the door at the top of the page.

Look at the list of topics and select the one you're interested in.

You'll find a number of items available for downloading in several languages.

