

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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5 April 1983

DOCUMENT 1-1363/82/ANNEX

OPINION

of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

on the draft Council resolution concerning vocational  
training policies in the European Communities in the  
1980's

(Doc. 1-902/82 - COM(82) 637 final)

Draftsman : Mr BONACCINI



On 24 November 1982, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs appointed Mr BONACCINI draftsman of an opinion.

The committee considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 15/16 March 1983. It adopted the conclusions unanimously on 16 March 1983.

The following took part in the vote: Mr J. Moreau, chairman; Mr Bonaccini, draftsman of the opinion; Mr Beazley, Mr Beumer (deputizing for Mr Collomb), Mr von Bismarck, Mr Caborn, Mr Herman, Mr Leonardi, Mr Prag (deputizing for Miss Forster), Mr Rogalla (deputizing for Mr Walter) and Mr Wagner.

The opinion was tabled on 17 March 1983.

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs,

1. Draws attention to the economic situation in the European Community, marked by the need for large-scale restructuring in the traditional industrial sectors which are vulnerable to increasing competition on the world market. It is of vital importance for Community industry to become highly competitive, notably by developing advanced industrial products, in order to consolidate its position in the industrialized world;
2. The necessary and complex restructuring of whole sectors and of the economy as a whole often involves job losses and extensive innovations in work methods and organization in these sectors. An appropriate vocational training policy is a vital instrument in this restructuring process, because it can ensure a better adjustment of supply to demand on the labour market than is now the case;
3. Welcomes therefore this draft resolution of the Council which answers the calls for action in this area that Parliament has made on several occasions; notes, however, that it is conceived in a framework based entirely on initiatives by public institutions;
4. Urges therefore that no effort should be spared and that the necessary means should be effectively deployed to ensure that training systems are geared to the professional qualifications required by firms, adaptable to technological developments and capable of strengthening and developing the professional skills of workers. For the European economy and employment, this is as vitally important as investment and should be seen as a form of investment in its own right;
5. Believes that, in order to bring vocational training sufficiently into line with the requirements of industry, there should be active participation by industry and smooth cooperation between industry, trade unions and government, and that activities by undertakings in this area should be considered as part of a more general training programme;

6. Considers it necessary that training should be given a permanent character and that governments should encourage undertakings, by means of appropriate incentives, to invest extensively in training; expenditure in this area should be regarded as completely deductible for tax purposes, and, like expenditure on plant or structural renovation, could be very rapidly amortized;
7. Takes note that, apart from the action to be taken by the Commission, the proposal confines itself to laying down a number of non-binding guidelines for the policy to be carried out in the Member States. Regrets this situation but recognizes that, in view of the differences in vocational training between the Member States, this is the only realistic approach in the initial stages. Hopes that this difficulty will be quickly overcome in the future;
8. Is, however, of the opinion that this programme is only a first step, albeit in the right direction, and urges that the Commission should scrupulously pursue the task entrusted to it in IV(a) of the draft resolution, of setting certain common goals or guidelines in order to respond to the need for greater convergence of policies in this field, whilst at the same time recognizing the diversity of training situations in the Member States and the need for flexible Community action;
9. Believes that the resolution creates an adequate framework for carrying out experiments and exchanging information at Community level; agrees with the priority given to young people, the long-term unemployed and women, in view of the present structure of employment;
10. Takes note that mention is also made of the training and retraining needs of other workers, especially those who are most threatened by changes on the labour market; points out in this connection that in the regions that are affected by a high level of unemployment because employment is particularly concentrated in one of the traditional sectors of industry in crisis, it is necessary to have an active investment policy linked to a dynamic and forward-looking training policy. This policy ought to ensure that redeployment takes place in the best circumstances possible and that the investment so greatly needed by these regions does not go elsewhere owing to a lack of suitably skilled manpower in these single-industry regions;

11. Agrees with the Commission that the training programmes must be sufficiently broadly based, combining in-service training with school education, in order to promote the occupational mobility necessary in these times of rapid technological change;

12. Emphasizes the role that craft apprenticeships and small and medium-sized undertakings can play in creating employment and notes with satisfaction that one of the fields of activity mentioned is the extension of training for managers and for launching entrepreneurial initiatives to facilitate the creation of small enterprises and cooperatives;

13. Urges at the same time the need for permanent training of instructors and careers guidance officers to ensure that vocational training keeps abreast with technological progress;

14. Takes note of the series of actions to be carried out by the Commission regarding the priority spheres of common concern listed in point V of the draft resolution and asks the Commission to keep Parliament informed of the progress made in the implementation of these actions.