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Apprenticeships in the Netherlands

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I - INTRODUCTION

The apprenticeship system in the Netherlands was relatively late in developing, dating back to the years before, and more especially immediately after, the Second World War. Of course, a form of learning during work in accordance with certain directives had emerged much earlier, notably in the heyday of the guilds. However, when the guilds were abolished during the Napoleonic domination (at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries) a serious gap arose in the training of young craftsmen. In an effort to fill this gap to some extent, there were set up throughout the country, what were termed 'evening drawing schools' where young people could receive some theoretical grounding in their chosen occupation. These provisions, however, proved inadequate, and about 1860 the first 'Ambachtsschool' (trades school), which provided a two-year practical and theoretical full-time schooling in various crafts and trades, was set up by private initiative and at the expense of employers. This type of school was designed for boys who had completed elementary school (at the age of 12 to 14). Gradually the number of trades schools expanded, together with a similar type of school for girls - household schools - and the same period also saw the development of a system of subsidies, provided by the central, provincial and local authorities.

The 1919 Technical Education Law

Legislation to regulate the system was urgently needed, and after lengthy preparation it was introduced in 1919. The first section of the law regulated the curriculum, organization, equipment and financing (100% subsidy) of the technical schools for girls and boys. In view of the manner in which schools of this type came into being, from a legal point of view the great majority were and still are associations or foundations governed by boards originally composed of employers' representatives, and nowadays also including employees' representatives and experts. These schools are therefore autonomous in their organization and curriculum, although they have to meet the fairly stringent conditions imposed by the Government in the matter of subsidies.

The original two-year course was extended to three years, but in the crisis years roundabout 1930 the course was temporarily cut to two years again for reasons of economy.

After the war the course was again raised to three years, partly in view of the growing conviction that these young people also have a right to more general education. For some occupations the course was subsequently extended to four years, and since 1975 this has been the statutory length of all courses at schools for lower vocational education. The first two years, known as 'bridging years', are entirely devoted to general education, and the original intention was that they should have the same educational content as secondary education proper in order to facilitate transition from one type of school to another. Unfortunately the content of these bridging years in fact differs to some extent from the content of the general secondary course, so that the opportunities for transferring in the event of a change in the choice of vocation are restricted.

Apprenticeship system

On the assumption that the number of trades schools and household schools would not be sufficient to provide all young people throughout the country with an opportunity of acquiring the education necessary to fit them for a particular occupation or trade, the Technical Education Law, referred to above, provided in Section II for a form of apprenticeship system as an alternative to attending the technical schools. Since this assumption proved to be mistaken and sufficient technical schools existed or were subsequently set up, little use was at first made of the opportunities provided by the apprenticeship system.

Shortly before the Second World War an apprenticeship system was introduced in the printing and metal industries, and immediately after the war many other sectors followed this example, prompted by the need for rapid industrialization and the consequent marked increase in the demand for skilled labour. The form of apprenticeship system that was now being developed, differed, however, from the system envisaged in the Technical Education Law. The apprenticeship system was no longer presented as an alternative to, but as a continuation of, education at the technical schools (which had meanwhile changed their name to schools for lower vocational education). Fortunately the very wide provisions of the law left room for this fundamentally different approach to the apprenticeship system, and therefore growth was rapid. In the years from 1960 onwards some 70 000 young people served their apprenticeship

in approximately 30 branches of industry.

The 1968 Apprenticeship Law

With this development it was inevitable that the provisions of the law should be violated here and there, and consequently the resolve to introduce new legislation grew. On 31 July 1968 the 'Apprenticeship Law' signed by the Ministers of Education and of Agriculture and Fisheries entered into force. At the same time Section II of the old Apprenticeship Law was rescinded. One day later, on 1 August 1968, the 'Secondary Education Law' entered into force, and this too had the effect of guiding vocational education into new paths. The latter law, which is of particular importance for education in the Netherlands, takes the form of an 'outline' law, which means that it lays down a number of principles and basic considerations, which are subsequently enlarged upon and given concrete shape in a series of Royal and Ministerial Decrees or Orders in Council. One of the basic considerations is the desire to enable apprentices to follow a course of instruction geared to their own wishes and capacities and with as much opportunity as possible, to transfer from course to course and progress through the system. This law led to radical changes in the objectives, course content and organization of existing secondary schools, resulting in many changes of name and also creating opportunities for combining various types of schools to form comprehensive schools.

It need hardly be said that such a radical upheaval in the existing educational structure presented governing bodies, heads of schools and teaching staff with considerable difficulties. Even now, some eight years after the introduction of the law, it cannot yet be said that secondary education conforms entirely to the new legislation. The process of adjustment, in itself difficult, is not facilitated by the different views that still exist about education in general. A recent 'Outline Memorandum' issued by the Minister of Education and Science indicates the direction in which the present Minister considers that education in the Netherlands ought to be moving. It proposes that infant and primary education (now called elementary education) should lead to a single type of school (called 'middle school') for all pupils between the ages of 12 and 14 or 15, but with a syllabus to which each pupil can adjust in accordance with his own personal wishes and aptitudes. Afterwards pupils would be able to opt for schools providing further general education or those offering technical or vocational subjects.

This 'Outline Memorandum' is now being debated within many institutions concerned with education. The next step will be for the Minister, taking into account the comments from these institutions, to reformulate the draft law and present it to Parliament. This subject will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter XIII.

Finally, it should be noted that general and vocational education accompanying the practical training of apprentices does not come under the Apprenticeship Law but Article 75 of the above mentioned 'Secondary Education Law' states : 'Our Minister may make provision for subsidized courses if, in his judgment, there is a need for them.' To have one branch of education (the apprenticeship system) covered by two different laws, is not a satisfactory solution, if only because the final responsibility is not vested in one authority. The fundamental differences between full-time education and training which takes place mainly in industry also argue in favour of regulating the apprenticeship system in a separate law.

The Apprenticeship Law repeatedly uses the term 'bedrijfsleven' (commerce and industry), but nowhere is it defined. The law also speaks of the 'supervisor' again without giving any definition. This somewhat oldfashioned term refers to the responsible head of the firm or institution where the apprentice follows his practical course of training. The firm or institution need not necessarily produce goods, but may also be in the services sector, as, for example, the catering trade, shops, banks or insurance companies, hospitals, old people's homes and even households where the housewife acts as supervisor for the instruction of a young person learning a trade in the services sector or nursing.

To understand the situation properly it should be noted that the sharp distinction that exists in other countries between industry proper and craft trades does not exist as such in the Netherlands, so that employers' and employees' organizations and the apprenticeship bodies based on them generally operate in relation to a whole sector of industry, without any distinction being made between smaller (craft) and regular industrial enterprises.

II - LEGAL BASIS

The Apprenticeship Law (which entered into force on 31 July 1968) defines the apprenticeship system as follows :

'In the apprenticeship system the apprentice receives, on the basis of a mutually agreed apprenticeship contract, both practical training for a particular occupation and general education oriented towards that particular vocation.'

This definition clearly shows that the apprenticeship system is based on the interrelationship between practical and theoretical instruction. In practice this means that the apprentice receives four days training from his employer (or 'master') and on one day a week attends a school for general vocationally oriented education. With regard to the organization of the apprenticeship system, Article 3 of the law states :

'A legal entity whose object is to promote the apprenticeship system without seeking to profit from it and who, having regard to the provisions of this section, acts as an instrument of this law, may in accordance with the provisions of Section III be granted a refund of the costs he has thereby incurred.'

While most of these bodies have the form of a 'foundation', some others have the form of an 'association', and both are legal entities as understood in Dutch law. The legal entities are incorporated by employers' organizations or by organizations of employers and employees together, or by the governing bodies of schools for lower vocational education.

The governing bodies of these legal entities are in general formed by representatives of employers' and employees' organizations in the relevant economic sector, supplemented in accordance with the provisions of the law by representatives of 'the organized vocational training system' (comprising school governing boards together with headmasters and teaching staff in vocational schools) and by the pupils' parents.

The Law lays down certain rules defining the tasks and procedures of these legal entities, specified as national and regional bodies. It also contains provisions concerning apprenticeship contracts, practical training programmes, examinations and diplomas, Government supervision, the staff of the bodies (counsellors) and the State subsidies, all dealt with at length in the following chapters, and also concerning

vocationally oriented schooling.

Although the central Government is gaining increasing influence, by means of legislation, on the organization and content of the apprenticeship system, the traditional principle of the autonomy of the executive bodies is still accepted as basic.

A primary consideration is that the apprenticeship system should be implemented in accordance with the nature and needs of individual economic sectors. That development might be hindered by an unduly centralistic Government policy. Most collective labour agreements, entered into by employers' and employees' organizations in individual sectors of the economy, therefore contain provisions relating to the apprenticeship system, such as the obligation of an employer to allow the apprentice/employee to follow, without loss of pay, vocational education for one day per week, to sit the examinations, and so on. Some collective labour agreements even contain provisions to the effect that all young employees shall take part in the apprenticeship system. Some also state that the employer shall contract with the apprentice/employee that the latter shall not terminate his contract of service until at the most one year after sitting - successfully or not - the apprenticeship diploma examination (the object being to recoup the costs incurred by the employer in the training of the apprentice).

The policy of the executive bodies, if only through the composition of the boards, bears the stamp of the attitudes of the employers' and employees' organizations in the sectors concerned, while the national umbrella organizations of employers and employees are increasingly bringing their influence to bear on the development of the apprenticeship system.

III - SUPERVISION

Under Article 54 et seq. of the Apprenticeship Law System, supervision of the apprenticeship system is exercised on behalf of the Minister for Education and Science and of the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries by the Apprenticeship Inspectorate of both departments. Apart from stating that the provisions of the law and the implementing regulations shall be complied with, the law stipulates that the Inspectorate 'shall endeavour, partly in consultation with the executive bodies, to promote the advancement of the apprenticeship system.' In this connection the Inspectorate may submit to the Minister or Ministers all proposals they consider to be necessary in the interest of the apprenticeship system.

This has proved to be a firm provision, and generally the inspectors cooperate well in carrying out their duties within the area allotted to them. The inspectors are also responsible for looking after the interests of the apprenticeship system at national level in one or more sectors of industry.

IV - PREVIOUS EDUCATION

The previous education of young people entering the apprenticeship system consists normally of lower vocational education, that is lower technical education for boys and domestic science education for girls, lower economic and administrative education, and lower education in commerce or agriculture. Almost inevitably, there are many exceptions to this rule, for example, for some occupations where apprentice training takes place, the lower vocational schools provide no appropriate preparatory work. Since the governing bodies of these schools have the authority to determine the vocational bias of classes, the preparatory instruction is not the same everywhere. Of course, occupations where too few apprentice places are available either locally or nationally, are excluded completely or almost completely from the curricula of these schools. The lower vocational schools provide no training for occupations such as plasterers, paviors, tailors, shoemakers, steel benders, etc. There are special training schools for occupations in the printing industry, catering, the butchery trade, etc., subjects which may not be included in the curriculum of a lower vocational school.

Young people who have been unable to obtain any previous training in their chosen occupation, or who for one reason or another have failed to complete any such course, can nevertheless generally obtain apprenticeships, although as a rule training under these circumstances will take longer. This longer apprenticeship training usually applies to all apprentices who have received their previous education in a school or in a department of a lower vocational school providing individual technical, or domestic science education, specially designed for pupils with learning difficulties, who need an individual approach or a less theoretical syllabus.

Growing numbers of pupils are becoming apprentices after attending general secondary school (MAVO = roughly equivalent to 'O'-levels) and proving after one or two years, to be unsuited to the course or deciding after all to change their choice of occupation.

The 1973 Decree on Secondary Education

In order to provide young people entering a vocational school with a more general education, an endeavour referred to in the Introduction, the Royal Decree on lower vocational education (LBO - LAVO) entered into force on 1 August 1973.

Duration 4 years. The decree laid down that the course in all vocational schools should last four years, the first two to be devoted exclusively to general education. In this way pupils can be observed and guided over a long period, so that they can be advised on the kind of studies which best fits their aptitudes and interests.

Harmonization. The Decree is also regarded as an initial approach to the harmonization of the whole system of lower vocational education. Further study is needed to arrive at more uniform syllabuses. At the present time the subjects and the hours spent on them show fairly considerable disparities. All types of school have, however, introduced a new subject known as 'algemene technieken' (general techniques and skills). As explained in the Government Memorandum, this subject comprises 'formative training in the use of materials and tools with the emphasis on solving general problems by means of understanding and know-how, and the transmission of various skills as part of general education. The subject can also be extended to provide an introduction to certain groups of occupations.'

According to the Memorandum, the 'most important objective of the subject is to develop the capacity to think'. It must also 'clarify the interaction between skills and abstract knowledge, and impart an awareness of the close link between manual and intellectual functions'. At present this subject is still optional so that experiment, study and experience can all combine to produce the desired content.

Concentration. One of the basic considerations of the decree is to reduce the fragmentation within lower vocational education into numerous departments, subjects and occupations. Thus, a technical school (for boys) may have only the following departments : construction engineering, quality control engineering, electrical engineering, printing techniques, plant engineering, mechanical engineering and automobile engineering. A school for lower agricultural education contains perhaps three departments, namely agriculture and horticulture, horticulture under glass and agricultural technology. Lower general secondary education (LAVO) gives those completing the two-year course the opportunity to join the third year of the vocational education course.

The sharp distinction between the education provided for boys and for girls is beginning to blur; slowly but increasingly, girls are to be found at technical schools and boys at domestic science schools. This distinction is already much less sharp in schools for lower administrative education and lower commercial schools. This development helps to promote closer cooperation between various schools in the lower vocational system, sometimes leading to school mergers in which, in some cases, schools providing general intermediate secondary education (MAVO) are included.

Examinations

A comprehensive decree relating to lower vocational education requires also, of course, a single regulation concerning examinations. This was introduced on 23 January 1976. The underlying purpose is to introduce increased cooperation and coordination into the somewhat disparate examination regulations of the various types of lower vocational schools, without depriving these schools of their distinctive character.

Options. As a result of efforts to individualize education, any pupil - given proper information and guidance - may at the beginning of his or her last year at school opt for the subjects in which he or she wishes to take the final examination. This choice is made within the facilities offered by the school and with due regard to various other rules laid down in the decree. Pupils may also choose whether they wish to take this or that final examination according to syllabus A, B or C, or whether they wish to study one or more subjects under syllabus A and B or syllabus B and C.

Levels. Syllabus C is defined as the 'level that a pupil must reach in the relevant subject in order to proceed to the various forms of intermediate vocational education. In most types of school syllabus B relates to the level which a pupil can normally expect to reach in a subject. By comparison syllabus A is, in theory at least, easier than syllabus B, and in any case different from it'.

School examination. The final examination is organized internally by the school in accordance with the views of the school authorities, and is based as regards syllabus B on guidelines issued by the Minister and in the case of syllabus C may also comprise a public written examination, for which a committee, at national level, sets the questions and prescribes the norms for marking the papers. The final examination comprises six subjects with an optional action in a seventh

subject, the results of which do not count towards the final result.

Compulsory subjects. The decree also lays down the subject groups, i.e. general or vocational subjects, from which one or more subjects must be chosen at each type of school. Thus, the Dutch language is always compulsory, except for foreign pupils. Practical work in the chosen occupation is not made compulsory, since this subject is not considered necessary for moving on to the many forms of intermediate education.

Progress through the apprenticeship system.

The reason for going into some detail on recent developments in lower vocational education is the importance of the links between this form of education and the apprenticeship system.

Before a young person becomes an apprentice two factors are of paramount importance, namely the final level of his previous education (in most cases lower vocational school) and the extent to which the employers are able and willing to give apprentices on - the - job training in the rudiments of their occupation. The more the emphasis in lower vocational schools is shifted towards general subjects, at the expense of vocational subjects (and this is undoubtedly the trend), the heavier the task of training which devolves on employers. Now that practical training in the chosen occupation is no longer one of the compulsory subjects in the final examinations at lower vocational schools, the basis of the apprenticeship system is being undermined. Various executive bodies in the apprenticeship system have therefore approached the lower vocational schools with a recommendation concerning the examinations which they consider to be the minimum required in order to complete successfully a course of apprenticeship. The fact that practical work in the chosen occupation comes high in the assessment will not be surprising. Being convinced that business and industry may reasonably expect the pupils they take into their apprenticeship system to have already acquired at least some manual skills and theoretical grounding in their vocation, some of these executive bodies are considering interposing a transitional programme between lower vocational school and entry into the apprenticeship system. This will of course be introduced in consultation with the organizations of the vocational schools, which are also represented in these bodies.

Vademecum. The umbrella organizations concerned have meanwhile drawn up a 'vademecum', which has been sent by the State Secretary for Education to all lower, intermediate and vocational schools in a circular dated 23 June 1976. The circular urges that the following steps be taken :

1. Upon entering a vocational school a pupil should be interviewed to determine possible shortcomings and problems that need to be solved in order to determine the proper objective for the pupil. Where necessary the appropriate national body may be called in.
2. On the basis of the information thus acquired, the school should determine the assistance that should be provided in the form of one or more transitional programmes.
3. School curricula should be developed with different input and output levels and/or different durations.

The vademecum also contains guidelines drawn up by a number of national bodies for the occupation for which they are responsible relating to the admission of pupils to apprenticeship training, to the selection of examination subjects and to the level at which pupils can successfully follow an apprenticeship course.

Intake. Although many changes have taken place in the courses offered by lower vocational schools, it must be noted that as a result of increased access to other forms of schooling and the fall in the prestige of manual labour, the intake of pupils to lower vocational schools has changed. There has been a marked decrease both in intellectual capacities and in the motivation of pupils at these schools today.

V - ORGANIZATION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM

Article 4 (1) of the Apprenticeship Law reads : 'A distinction shall be made between national and regional bodies.'

A. National (training) bodies

The above mentioned article legalizes the situation existing at the time the law entered into force (1968). National bodies had already been set up in most economic sectors by employers' and employees' organizations. The composition of the governing boards of these bodies had in most cases, however, to be adapted to the requirement that they should 'reflect the influence of organized business and industry, of parents and of the organized school system' (art. 3 (2)).

Management board. The employers' and employees' organizations in the relevant sector are represented on an equal basis, on the board of the majority of national bodies, and there are also one or more expert representatives of the Stichting Georganiseerd Schoolwezen Beroepsonderwijs (GSB) - Foundation for Schools and Establishments of Vocational Training - with experience in the relevant sector. The representation of the unorganized group of pupils' parents presents difficulties, especially since the pupils are enrolled in the apprenticeship system for only a few years and therefore the representative parents are continually changing.

Area of activity. The law indicates only briefly the area of activity and tasks of the national bodies.

Article 4 (2) lays down :

'Only one national body shall be responsible for training for occupations which, by their nature and context, belong to one and the same category.'

If one considers the list of national bodies appended to this report, and the occupations for which each of these bodies is competent, the conclusion must be that this regulation is not always complied with. Again, the reasons for this lie in the past, being due to developments before this legislation was introduced. For example, more than one national body looks after the training of apprentices as metal turners and milling machine setter-operators, carpenters, floor coverers, etc. This regulation is therefore applied flexibly. There is undoubtedly a trend, partly to improve efficiency in the national bodies themselves, towards greater concentration of the working areas than at present. This, in its turn, is based on a certain traditional fragmentation. In the metal trade and industries, for example, an advanced form of cooperation already exists between the Bemetal and Smecoma Foundations and the Philips Association. This trend can also be observed in the building industry (painters and decorators, plasterers, builders and woodworkers). Nevertheless it will take some considerable time before radical concentrations become effective.

Tasks. The tasks of the national bodies are briefly defined in article 5 (2) of the law.

'The national bodies shall be responsible in particular for preparing practical programmes and examinations, as referred to in Article 19; they shall act as intermediaries in the drawing

up of apprenticeship contracts and shall supervise compliance therewith.'

This definition seems rather simple, but it will be evident that the performance of these tasks is far from straightforward. The drawing up of practical programmes is preceded by thorough research within undertakings with a view to establishing the desiderata and possibilities on which proper occupational analyses can be based. The possibility of relating work to the apprentice's previous education and any follow-up courses also plays a role in the drafting of the programmes, leading to the production of text books, set of exercises and other instruction material.

Setting and holding examinations also involves a great deal of administrative work in finding suitable examination rooms, examiners, invigilators, etc.; in drafting and trying out the practical tests and theoretical questions on which pupils are examined; in drafting and reproducing the examination papers; in providing for diplomas and testimonials, and so on. Keeping records of, and administering, the many changes that take place in the apprenticeship contracts also entail a considerable amount of work.

Finally, the supervision of compliance with the terms of the apprenticeship contracts makes it necessary to appoint outside officials, called 'counsellors', whose number increases with the growing number of pupils or apprentices. Superintending, informing and instructing these counsellors is a considerable task. Skilled personnel are also required for the financial administration, bookkeeping and preparation of accounts for the Government department providing the subsidies.

Each of these tasks will be dealt with at greater length below. This brief enumeration will serve, however, to show that the number of people engaged in the national bodies, especially in the larger sectors of industry, is in some cases comparable to the work force of a medium-sized undertaking.

Furthermore, the words 'in particular' contained in the first sentence of the legal definition of the tasks are not there without good reason. The legislator evidently realizes that the definition is not exhaustive. An attempt to review the activities of the national bodies soon makes it clear that this is in fact the case. Many duties - whether or not falling within the Government subsidy context - have been and are undertaken by the national bodies, which in general state

as their object in their articles of association the promotion of vocational training in the sector of industry concerned. Their activities are therefore not confined to the apprenticeship system but also comprise the training of junior and senior management and also of business executives. The organization of advanced or specialist courses also belongs to the working area of some national bodies.

The foregoing by no means exhausts the list. With regard to the transparency of their financial accounting, several national bodies have assigned their non-subsidized activities to a separate legal entity, which in general has virtually the same board of management and which, at least in part, has the same personnel.

Within the apprenticeship system, too, the performance of their tasks sometimes involves the national bodies in activities which, owing to the strict subsidy conditions, are not entirely covered from public funds. Some have their own printing-shop, some a public relations officer or department, some issue one or more periodical (as a means of contact with apprentices), and there may be support bases in the country in the form of local or regional training committees, etc. All these activities as well, not forgetting responsibility for the continued training of unemployed apprentices, possible retraining of unemployed adults, etc., call for a great deal of attention and effort from the national bodies.

The national bodies cooperate in a coordinating organization called the 'Stichting Centraal Orgaan van de Landelijke Opleidingsorganen' (COLO) - Central Organization of the National Training Bodies in Business and Industry - which represents their joint interests vis-à-vis the Government and other institutions. Periodic meetings of representatives of all the bodies examine or sanction the policy of the board of management (appointed by the bodies themselves) and issue guidelines concerning the policy to be pursued. The COLO has a small staff, which is financed by contributions from the national bodies and by a subsidy from the Ministry of Education.

B. Regional bodies

Working area. The working area of a regional body is defined in Article 4 (3) of the Law as a Province or a part thereof. Three of the largest or most densely populated of the eleven Provinces now have two regional bodies, so that there are at present 14 regional bodies in operation.

Tasks. Article 5 (3) reads:

'It shall be the task of the regional body in particular to provide information; it shall maintain contacts with parents, pupils, schools and institutions for vocational guidance and provision of work (labour exchanges) and cooperate in the drawing up of apprenticeship contracts; it shall ensure that the apprentices regularly attend classes in general vocationally oriented subjects.'

The following may be said concerning the performance of these tasks, for which bodies, too, employ counsellors.

Guidance - apart from individual guidance - is confined to standard information on the possibilities and prospects of apprenticeship training in general. This is usually done in specially convened meetings of pupils from the final years of the lower vocational schools, in some cases MAVO's as well, together with their parents, in the spring of each year. The documentary information sent to vocational guidance counsellors in schools ('schooldecanen') is increasing in volume now that more and more teachers (usually staff responsible for guiding pupils' studies or choice of vocation) are being appointed to such posts in lower vocational schools as well. The main task of the regional bodies is to maintain contacts with parents and pupils. Visits to pupils' homes provide the opportunity to discuss parents' and pupils' questions and problems with regard to further education and training, compulsory part-time school attendance, social legislation, and so on. The starting point for this socio-pedagogic guidance provided by the counsellors of the regional bodies is the pupil's personal and social situation, in which connection the counsellors are in a position to build up a relationship of trust. This is based on the independent position of these counsellors (they are, after all, not 'on the payroll' of the schools or the employers, etc.) and also on their knowledge of the regional situation. This knowledge is promoted by contacts with persons and/or institutions engaged in the areas of education, vocational choice or guidance, provision of work, medical, social and spiritual help and guidance.

Through their contacts with lower vocational schools the regional bodies generally have lists of school-leavers who may wish to become apprentices. They inform these pupils of the apprenticeship facilities in the occupation of their choice and draw up draft apprenticeship contracts. The regional bodies can also obtain lists of absentees from general and vocational schools, which gives them the opportunity to

discuss the reasons for frequent absenteeism with the pupils or their parents and to improve the situation.

In practice, the activities of the regional bodies, like those of the national bodies, are wider in scope than indicated by the strict wording of the Law.

They concern themselves, for example, with premature school-leavers ('drop-outs'), more especially from lower vocational schools, and, where possible, also with unemployed young people. Furthermore, their independent position in their working areas often enables the regional bodies to play a mediatory and initiatory role in the development of regional vocational schools ('streekscholen') and cooperation between vocational education and youth training schemes.

The statistics compiled and classified by the regional bodies concerning the pupils or apprentices in their area in many cases provide an insight into the educational situation of a region.

For all these activities the regional bodies have a modest administrative staff, e.g. for keeping records and registering the apprentices, and for financial accounting vis-a-vis the Government department that subsidizes them. The counsellors who work for them also require guidance, information and support.

CORO The regional bodies also cooperate within a coordinating organization called the 'Stichting Centraal Orgaan der Regionale Organen'. (CORO) (Headquarters of the regional bodies), which represents the common interests of the regional bodies in relations with the Government and other institutions and organizations.

The statistics published annually by the CORO have provided a useful basis for investigating, for example, the problems of youth unemployment.

Cooperation between national and regional bodies

Broadly speaking the national bodies look after the technical counselling of all apprentices in their sector of industry, in close contact with the firms providing the training. The regional bodies are more concerned with the socio-pedagogic guidance of all pupils or apprentices in the various sectors of industry within their working area, in close contact with parents, schools etc.

Of course, the fact that the guidance provided by both bodies is given to the same young people necessitates close cooperation. This is formally based on Article 5 (1) of the law, which reads:

'The national and regional bodies shall be obliged, as good organizations in mutual cooperation and in cooperation with the school managements, to promote the development of the apprenticeship system. In so doing they shall take account of the reasonable interests of employer and apprentice in the drafting and implementation of the apprenticeship contract.'

The law also lays down that this cooperation shall be recorded in writing and communicated to the Minister (Art. 6 (1)). This regulation is set out in an agreement which each of the national bodies enters into with each of the regional bodies. The standard form of this agreement is drawn up in consultation between the two coordinating organizations, the COLO and the CORO, which regularly consult with each other on other matters as well.

Most bodies have accepted these standard agreements, though in some cases with supplements arising from the special nature of the relevant economic sector or the relevant region. What is more important, however, is the individual cooperation between the counsellors working for the national bodies and those working for the regional bodies with regard to their pupils or apprentices. In spite of difficulties at the beginning, it can now be said that this cooperation is making satisfactory progress, the interests of the young people being given pride of place. The connection between the national and regional bodies is also apparent from the provisions (Art. 6 (2) and (3)) of the law that if there is no regional body operating in a particular region (which is no longer the case) the tasks shall be taken over by the national bodies, while if there should be no national body for a particular occupation (which may happen here and there for minority occupations) the regional body shall then act as the national body.

C. Counsellors

As noted in the foregoing, both the national bodies and the regional bodies have the services of counsellors. Their work is so important in the apprenticeship system that special attention must be paid to it. In view of the distinction between the tasks of the two bodies, it is evident that the tasks of their counsellors also differ.

Under the heading 'Staff' the law lays down rules in Article 21 et seq. concerning the counsellors (consulenten) and the other employees in general. Rules governing salary (wholly paid by the State), holidays, sickness, accidents, unemployment pay etc., are laid down in a Decree implementing the law, known as the Legal Status Decree.

Concerning the task of the counsellors, the law stipulates merely that 'it shall be their particular duty to ensure that the apprenticeship contracts are complied with and to promote the apprenticeship system'. It is further laid down that counsellors shall only be appointed (by the bodies) if they possess a 'certificate of good conduct' and a 'certificate of competence', in accordance with rules to be specified by the Crown. Finally, the counsellors, like the other staff of the bodies, cannot be members of the governing boards of the bodies for which they work.

National counsellors. In the legislation which preceded the present Law, these officials were called 'controleurs' (inspectors). The present rules concerning supervision of compliance with the apprenticeship contracts are still reminiscent of that function. This function, which of course still exists, has now developed into one that is better rendered by the current term 'consulent' (counsellor).

First and foremost, he acts as the pupils' counsellor, visiting them as a rule once every four to six weeks at their work and/or at school with a view to encouraging their progress by means of observations and constructive criticism, and above all by encouragement and personal influence. He also acts as a counsellor to the firms where the apprentice receives his training, advising on the manner in which the training can best fit into the training programme, establishing contact with the person supervising the apprentice in his daily work, with the management of the firm concerning the jobs assigned to the apprentice and any difficulties that may arise with regard to the apprentice and his training.

The counsellor is an intermediary between the body on the one hand and the apprentice and the firm he works for on the other. He enjoys the confidence of both parties, while at the same time he keeps in touch with the employers' and employees' organizations and with the regional and other schools within his area. It is particularly important that the counsellor, through his frequent contacts with apprentices at their places of work, is kept informed of the practical possibilities and difficulties involved in the training. He can then pass these on to the national body which, on the basis of this information gained from experience in the field, can adjust its policy accordingly.

The number of counsellors which a national body may have in its service depends on the number of apprentices undergoing training. Since the appointment of a new counsellor has to be approved by the Ministry of Education, the general rule is one counsellor to every 175 apprentices. The rule is not rigidly applied, however, due account being taken of, for example, the distribution of the apprentices, the nature of the sector of business or industry, the larger concentrations in the manufacturing industry compared with one or a few apprentices in small firms or shops dealing with many customers, and so on.

The larger national bodies, some of which have dozens of counsellors in their service, may also appoint one or more chief counsellors (roughly one to every 1 000 apprentices), who lead a team of counsellors and, in addition, may undertake special work such as research, development, organization of exams, etc., - duties which may also be delegated to counsellors. In general, the national counsellors are recruited from skilled craftsmen or executive staff with wide experience of industry, who also possess teaching ability, as well as organizational and administrative capacities. In view of the widening scope of counsellors' work, even higher standards set in some sectors of industry and intermediate or even higher vocational education are required.

The counsellors must reside in the area/alloted to them and travel as a rule by car, although they may also travel by public transport, their travelling and accommodation expenses being paid by the national body on the basis of Government rules.

Regional counsellors. Although the function of the counsellors working for the regional bodies is comparable with that of those working for the national bodies, their specific duties impose different requirements. In their case, social and teaching skills and experience carry more weight than technical skills.

Although the aim is that the regional counsellors should also give personal guidance to all apprentices, the 'ratio' applied by the Ministry of Education (1 regional counsellor for about every 800 apprentices) does not make this a practical proposition, because of the time which the regional counsellors have to spend on contacts with parents, with schools (special vocational schools in particular), with employment offices and with regional boards, within which they help to promote the apprenticeship system.

The regional bodies may also appoint a chief counsellor who as a rule - under the supervision of the board - is in charge of the daily management of the body.

Training. There is no particular training for the job of counsellor. Some national and regional bodies do, however, organize occasional courses or give instruction on certain aspects of their work, related, for example, to the development of the educational system, contacts with modern youth, or help for young people in expressing themselves, and so on.

In recent years, however, efforts have been made to introduce 'in-service training', and some courses are now being conducted by way of experiment. These courses comprise subjects which are of importance to all counsellors (national and regional) and are divided into two parts, given in two consecutive years.

In the first part, after an introduction lasting three days, dealing with the goals and procedures of the course, etc., development work is dealt with (3 days), then aspects of apprentice counselling (3 days), followed by business structure and organization (3 days).

The second part covers the educational aspects of the counsellor's work (6 days), social and educational legislation (3 days) and the counsellor's role as an official in the education system (2 days).

Tuition in all subjects is by correspondence and selected texts concerned with these subjects may or may not be recommended. This training is organized by the two coordinating organizations of the national and regional bodies, COLO and CORO, together with the counsellors' organizations which is a distinct group forming part of the national associations of vocational school management and staff.

The responsibility for designing and implementing the experiment was entrusted to the PCBB, a specialist educational institution with the special task of developing the apprenticeship system.

An experimental course started in 1974 with two groups of 16 participants composed of national and regional counsellors of different ages, sex, previous education etc. Whether, and in what form, a regular course will be introduced, and what its content should be, will depend on the results of the evaluation of the experiment. A difficulty already apparent is that attending the courses loses the usually very busy participants a great deal of time, for which the Ministry of Education has not, as yet, made any provision.

D. General education and vocationally oriented education

The legal definition of the apprenticeship system (Article 2, see Chapter II) places emphasis on the 'mutual connection' between practical training and general or vocationally oriented education (the latter generally known as BBC or schooling accompanying vocational training). The latter form of education should be given at a school defined in the Law as 'a school subsidized by public monies for the provision of vocational education or a vocational school regarded by our Minister as equivalent thereto for the purposes of this Law'.

Evening classes. The Law lays down no special rules regarding the form, content and duration of education received at evening classes. Under the earlier legislation (before 1968), which contained corresponding provisions, the tradition arose that this form of schooling should be given at evening classes on four evenings a week, but only from October to May. In the years after 1950 a gradual change took place in views about evening school in general, especially in the context of the apprenticeship system. It was argued that it was too much to expect of young apprentices (between the ages of 15 and 17) to spend several hours at evening classes after completing a day's work. It was considered that the schooling in these circumstances would be less effective and would encourage absenteeism. In any case, the schooling could better be spread over the whole year.

Part-time schooling. The employers also proved receptive to these arguments, and in the course of the years the BBO (vocational schooling during apprenticeship) was moved partly or completely from the evenings to the working day. At first, as a transitional measure, the schooling was organized for half a day followed by evening classes, but, although this is still the practice for some occupations, in most cases the BBO lessons now take up one full working day each week.

As a rule, the employer continues to pay the apprentice's wage during these school days, whether or not he is obliged to do so under the collective labour agreement.

BBO evening classes have not, however, completely disappeared from the scene and are still held not only for special courses but also in the apprenticeship system generally, more particularly for older apprentices taking part in advanced apprenticeship schemes which in many occupations follow the primary training that usually lasts two years. Although there is a trend to shift these classes from the evenings to a working day for

these apprentices as well, the higher pay they receive makes it difficult for employers to release them for one day per week and continue to pay them although they are not engaged in productive activity. For the same reason courses are also occasionally organized on Saturdays when the apprentices are not working.

Regional vocational schools ('streekscholen'). Up to a few years ago vocational schooling during apprenticeship was given either entirely in the evenings or partly in the daytime at schools of lower vocational education, the lessons being given by the teachers at these schools.

In 1967 a report was submitted to the Minister of Education in which attention was drawn to the disadvantages of this situation, It was pointed out that two entirely different categories of pupils were involved, namely school children (aged from 12 to 15 or 16) who, after basic elementary education, continued to receive full-time education at the lower vocational schools, and on the other hand young people nearing adulthood (ages 16 to 18 and older) who work during the day and are paid for it and who attend school only one day in the week for vocational education. These young people no longer fit into a school with a fairly strict system of discipline, and require a different approach than the teachers at the lower vocational schools are able or prepared to adopt towards them.

The report therefore recommended that these supplementary BBO courses should be concentrated in separate schools with their own teaching staff, using a different teaching system, etc. The Government adopted this recommendation and decided on the gradual introduction of these separate schools, which were called 'streekscholen' (or regional schools). A committee was formed to draw up a distribution plan, which envisaged some thirty schools throughout the country, based on the distribution of the pupils or apprentices in the various occupations. This implied that such schools would be located in the more densely populated areas, which meant longer travelling times for young people living and working in the country. Nevertheless, it was considered that these objections did not outweigh the advantages of concentration.

Other difficulties arose with this new system. As already indicated, most lower vocational schools are governed by legal entities under private law, which in many cases have a denominational character (Protestant or Roman Catholic). Many parents who wanted their children to be educated at a denominational school were opposed to the concentration of BBO courses at schools which are naturally more generally based. As far as possible

efforts were made to get around this difficulty by providing religious instruction at these schools, and lessons in 'social matters', for example, were also adapted to the pupils' denominational background. Another practical difficulty was that no buildings or teaching staff were available at short notice for these courses. Pending more suitable accommodation, a start was made by concentrating part-time education within a lower vocational school or within a number of such schools in a municipality. A school building or part of a school was then made available for these classes, and received from the Government the special subsidy facilities provided for the 'streekscholen'.

Gradually the network of these special schools is now spreading all over the country, and in some towns entirely new schools, completely geared to BBO courses, have already been built. There are still a few exceptions to this rule, for example where the very costly equipment for a particular occupation, such as for the catering industry, the bakery trade, the printing trade etc., are located in a lower trade or technical school or in a special vocational school, use is then made of their facilities for the purposes of BBO courses.

Travelling expenses. Since 1 August 1974 apprentices attending day schools may receive from the State an allowance to meet the expenses of travel to and from the school where the lessons are given. The maximum allowance is fixed by Ministerial Order, and is adjusted from time to time.

Those eligible for the travel allowance are apprentices who have not yet reached the age of 18 when the course starts (1 August). Article 14 (2) of the law further states:

'If the general and vocationally oriented education cannot be followed at a school, the inspectorate may, at the request of the national or regional body, allow the education to be followed in some other way.'

The situation may arise when, for example, the schools after no courses in the relevant occupation or where the number of apprentices in a particular occupation is too small for classes to be formed at the schools. The courses may then be given through special training centres in the form of correspondence courses, etc.

Technical specialists. A correspondence course is the sole form of BBO course available to those young people who, during a short-service contract (minimum 4 years), are being trained in the Dutch Armed Forces for various trades of military importance. By incorporating them into the apprenticeship system these people can take the examinations set for civilians under the guidance of counsellors belonging to the national training body.

VI - THE APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACT

The apprenticeship contract can be regarded as the basis of the apprenticeship system.

Legal basis. The Apprenticeship Law states in Article 7:

'The apprenticeship contract shall, in the presence of the national body, be concluded between the employer and the apprentice or, if he is a minor, his legal representative.'

Further:

'The apprenticeship contract shall be drawn up in writing and jointly signed by the national body and the regional body.'
(This assumes that a cooperative agreement exists between these two bodies, which is usually the case).

Role of the national body. The national body plays an important part in this contract. Without in fact being a 'party' to the contract, the national body must nevertheless act as an 'intermediary' in the drawing up of the contract, which it may only do subject to conditions expressly stipulated in the law (which amount to the fact that it must be reasonably convinced that the parties are able and willing to meet their mutual obligations). The role of the national body goes so far that, under certain circumstances to be touched on presently, it may terminate the apprenticeship contract.

Contents. The apprenticeship contract contains the following minimum information (Article 10 of the law):

1. Name and address of the employer and the place where the apprentice will be put to work.
2. Full name, address and date of birth of the apprentice, and particulars of his previous education.

3. If the apprentice is a minor, corresponding particulars of his legal representative.
4. Name etc. of the national and regional bodies.
5. The occupation for which the apprentice will be trained, with particulars of the practical programme.
6. Duration of the contract (as a rule two years' initial training; a new contract is drawn up for continued training).
7. Duration of the probationary period (not exceeding three months; little use is made of this possibility of terminating the contract 'at any time' during the probationary period).
8. The school which the apprentice is obliged to attend for general and vocationally oriented education.
9. If the apprentice lives in with the employer, particulars of the apprentice's moral, religious and bodily care (seldom occurs).
10. The circumstances in which the contract will be terminated.
11. The manner in which compliance with the apprenticeship contract will be supervised.

Although in some sectors of industry certain provisions are occasionally added to the legal minimum of provisions relating to the particular industry or trade, a form of standard contract has been adopted for the apprenticeship system as a whole.

In connection with the signing of the contract by all concerned, and the mutual exchange of contracts and the physical administration involved, an arrangement has been made between the collective regional bodies (which of course establish the first contact between the parties) to minimise the administrative work involved.

Employment contract. The legislator is aware that the apprenticeship contract in general coincides with a employment contract, and Article 9 of the Law lays down that the legal provisions concerning the latter shall not be applicable in so far as they conflict with the provisions of the Apprenticeship Law.

The employer's obligations. Article 12 of the Apprenticeship Law states that the main obligation of the employer shall be:

'As a good employer to train the apprentice, in accordance with the practical programme, in the practice of the occupation specified in the apprenticeship contract, under such conditions that the apprentice shall be reasonably protected against both moral and physical dangers.'

The employer is also required to ensure that the apprentice conscientiously keeps his apprenticeship record book up to date (the value of this book as an aid in practical training will be dealt with in Chapter VIII). The employer must also give the apprentice the opportunity to follow courses in general and vocationally oriented education, and ensure that he attends such courses regularly, and also give the apprentice the opportunity to take the examination. There are various other provisions, which mainly relate to apprentices who live in.

Obligations of the apprentice. Article 13 of the law obliges the apprentice:

'to behave like a good apprentice in accordance with the directives given by the employer',

and further,

'regularly to attend general and vocationally oriented classes',

and also,

'to keep his apprenticeship record book up to date and fulfil the tasks allotted to him'.

Employer's remuneration. Article 15 of the law lays down:

'the national body, having regard to rules to be made by our Minister, shall pay the employer an amount in remuneration not exceeding HFL 200 for the duration of the apprenticeship contract'.

This employer's remuneration thus comes under the subsidy granted by the Ministry of Education. The remarkable thing about this provision is not so much the fact that the employer receives a payment in consideration of the expenses he incurs as a result of the training, as rather the amount of the payment. A similar amount was already granted under the 1919 legislation, and in spite of many efforts it has never been raised. It therefore bears no relation whatever to the employer's real training expenses. For this reason most employers are prepared to make this amount available to the national body, to enable it to form a fund to finance expenses which, under the strict subsidy conditions, are not eligible for Government financing.

Termination of the apprenticeship contract. Article 16 of the law exhaustively enumerates the circumstances under which the apprenticeship contract can be terminated. These include a number of circumstances which in fact apply to any contract such as mutual agreement on termination due to dissolution or loss of legal status of the parties, expiry of the period of the contract, and so on.

In addition, the apprenticeship contract ends when the apprentice has taken the examination or has reached the age of 27. The inspectorate may, however, at the request of the national body, permit an apprenticeship contract to be extended after the apprentice has reached the age of 27 to enable him to complete his training.

The apprenticeship contract is also terminated:

'by written notice given by the national body to the parties and to the regional body, stipulating the date of termination, when the national or regional body is satisfied that:

- the employer or apprentice is failing to comply with his obligations under the law or the apprenticeship contract;
- the apprentice lacks or no longer possesses the aptitude for his chosen occupation;
- the employer is not providing sufficient training or offers no adequate guarantee against bad influences on the moral or physical development of the apprentice;
- circumstances arise such that the employer or the apprentice cannot be reasonably expected to continue the apprenticeship contract.'

This latter provision in particular gives the national body its influence, already referred to, on the continuation of the apprenticeship contract. The national body's responsibility towards the apprentice and the employer in this respect means that it can make use of this power only after carefully weighing the interests of both parties and making repeated attempts to improve the situation, in which process the counsellors, of course, have an important role to play.

As regards the duration of the contract the law offers the possibility of extending the duration until the next examination if the apprentice has not passed the first one.

As mentioned above, the law takes into account the parallel application of an apprenticeship contract and an employment contract. Although this combination is thus not prescribed, it exists in most cases. Precisely in

the present period of economic recession many apprentices are unable to find employment or have their contracts of service terminated, consequently they are either unable to obtain training, or their training is interrupted. More and more voices are being raised in favour of giving the apprenticeship contract an independent existence, and this possibility is being studied. In the opinion of many it is preferable for a young person to be an apprentice in a firm simply in order to receive training rather than to have the status of apprentice/employee, involving participation in the production process to the possible detriment of his training. However, no satisfactory solution to this problem has yet been found.

VII - PROGRAMMES

As mentioned above, the national bodies are responsible (under Article 5 (2) of the law for preparing the practical programmes. Article 18 of the law lays down certain provisions relating to the division of the practical training into basic and further practical training.

Duration. The basic training lasts for at least two years, unless 'in special cases' the Minister consents to a duration of at least one year. In a few cases use is made of this exception clause. It is the general opinion in business and industry, however, that this provision is not desirable since it excludes apprenticeship training in 'simpler occupations', for which some schooling is nevertheless required. A minimum of one year is laid down for the duration of further training.

Adoption of the programmes. It is further laid down that the Minister, on a proposal from the national body, shall adopt the programmes of practical training and publish them in the Netherlands Official Gazette. Article 18 (5) stipulates that the practical programme shall state at least the requirements for admission (the apprentice must have at least a lower vocational school certificate or must have followed general secondary schooling up to the same standard), as well as the duration of the practical training and the requirements to be met by the apprentice for the practical part of the examination.

Planning of programmes. As regards the planning, form and content of these programmes the Minister of Education has issued circulars giving additional guidelines. First of all the national body is required to have preliminary consultation with experts of the Foundation for Organized Vocational Schooling (GSB organization of governing boards,

heads and teaching staff of vocational schools), which must jointly sign the draft programmes before they are submitted to the Minister.

Overall programmes. Later (1971) the Minister laid down in a circular that efforts should be made to draw up a single overall programme for the separate training schemes in the apprenticeship system, which would comprise both the practical training programme and the programme for general and vocationally oriented education (guideline curriculum). 'In order to give effect to the mutual harmonization, envisaged by the legislator, between the requirements for the practical and the theoretical parts of the examination, I recommend that the overall programme should comprise (in addition to the practical programme distinctly recognizable as such) the theoretical part of the examination as well' (circ. 21/4/71).

In this way, then, 'education' (via the GSB) influences the practical programmes, while at the same time business and industry (the national bodies) influence the school programmes. In practice, working groups of experts from education and industry are usually formed to draw up these overall programmes (the costs including allowances for attendance at meetings are subsidized by the Ministry).

Content. The programmes are drawn up on the basis of occupational analyses, made with the aid of data gained from experience in business and industry and in the schools, and also in some cases with data from scientific institutes. In addition to the above mentioned prescribed data, they contain indications (which differ according to the occupation concerned) of the level, the safety regulations and a more or less detailed enumeration of the job operations, processes and procedures. As far as the curriculum is concerned (theory), particulars are also given concerning admission, the duration of the training (as a rule equal to the practical training), the school year and holidays, a syllabus divided into lessons totalling nine hours (being one full day) per week, and finally the subject matter giving a description of the course content for each occupation or trade.

Through the counsellors the national bodies are kept informed of the wishes of trade and industry with regard to the training, of changes that may take place in the nature and content of occupations, and of skilled jobs that cease to exist, or come into existence, as a consequence of technical developments. This knowledge can continually be raised in the relevant working groups and can lead to the establishment of new programmes or to the regular adjustment of existing ones.

VIII - PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF TRAINING

The responsibility for the apprentice's training in the firm rests with the supervisor/employer, who is required by law to 'train the apprentice in accordance with the practical programme in the practice of the occupation (trade or craft) specified in the apprenticeship contract'.

Straightforward though this sounds, it is not so easily put into effect. In the first place the employer should be aware of this responsibility - or made aware of it - this will be the case only if he fully understands that the training is useful and necessary for his business or for the sector of trade or industry.

Even then, however, he has to realize that a young employee cannot be engaged - as he used to be - simply for cleaning up and doing odd jobs, but for doing for the most part those jobs from which he will learn something as an apprentice. In putting the apprentice to work the employer must also take into account the requirements of the practical programme, which implies that the apprentice must not be given only one kind of work - even though experience in it will make him more productive - but regularly given jobs involving other skills so as to broaden his professional knowledge.

Apprentice supervisor - practical instructor.

In most firms the employer - although formally the supervisor - will not himself be able to perform the duties imposed by the apprenticeship contract. He will therefore have to delegate these duties to others, e.g. plant managers, workshop foremen, personnel managers etc. Some national bodies endeavour to have one suitably qualified person in a firm made responsible for the employer's duties in this respect, to whom they give the name of 'mentor' or 'training coordinator'.

In particular the apprentice's immediate superior is not (or not always) responsible for recruiting and dismissing them. An official in a more central position in the firm is usually better able to determine how and where an apprentice can properly be trained, and can also see to the very necessary - though unfortunately not yet generally practised - process of induction, that is to say introducing the apprentice to the persons he will have to deal with, informing him about the organization, nature and volume of the products, working conditions, etc. Further, this official can see where the training might need to be corrected, especially if the management gives him the appropriate authority. However, by no means all firms and sectors of trade and industry operate such a system.

The apprentice is nearly always placed under an employee who takes him in direct charge, explains the jobs he has to do, shows him how to do them, lets the apprentice increasingly do the jobs himself and corrects him where necessary. This employee is referred to as the practical instructor or apprentice supervisor, and constitutes one of the important links in the process of on-the-job training.

Apart from having a thorough knowledge of his trade, the apprentice supervisor is required to be able to communicate that knowledge in an understandable way, to be patient with the apprentice and - usually belonging to an older generation - to understand the mentality of modern youth, etc.

Of course, not every employee is suitable for the job, or he lacks one or more of the qualities required for training young people. On the other hand, nearly every apprentice is placed under one such craftsman - it is only in the larger manufacturing industries that several apprentices can be placed under one apprentice supervisor in a part of the works set aside for training purposes, while in accordance with the practical programme the apprentice also has to learn other skills under a different apprentice supervisor conversant with them.

Clearly, then, a very large number of apprentice supervisors has to be available in the various sectors of trade and industry for the many thousands of apprentices. They are in fact available, since all apprentices receive on-the-job training, but by no means all supervisors possess the capacities needed for giving thorough and efficient training.

Training the supervisors. As it became clearer that the apprentice supervisors play an important integrating role in the training of apprentices, the question of their own training obviously arose. The problem is a very difficult one owing to the large numbers of persons requiring such training and because of the considerable disparities in the level of general education of the apprentice supervisors in the different sectors of trade and industry and also within the same sector.

Application. Nevertheless the COLO (Central Organ of the National Bodies), with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Education, took the initiative and since 1966 has been organizing training courses for works apprentice supervisors, working as such. These courses, given by two qualified employees on the permanent staff, last seven days, divided into groups of four and three days (internal) or seven separate days, depending on the wishes of the particular trade or industry. Each course

has no more than twelve participants, taken as far as possible from the same sector.

The subjects dealt with are mainly the following:

1. Task of the apprentice supervisor and its performance in practice.
 - (a) Task of the apprentice supervisor.
 - (b) Job requirements.
 - (c) Apprentice supervisor's position within the works.
 - (d) Problems in the performance of his tasks.

2. Teaching aspects.
 - (a) Training and development within the firm.
 - (b) Development of the individual.
 - (c) Learning and the learning situation.
 - (d) Teaching and teaching methods.
 - (e) Motivation.
 - (f) Performance assessment.

3. Instruction.
 - (a) Analysis.
 - (b) Working method.
 - (c) Job analysis; practical instruction.
 - (d) Gathering and communicating experience.
 - (e) Instruction in theory.
 - (f) Preparation of instruction.
 - (g) Performance of test instruction by trainees.

The extent and range of the instruction given is such as to give the apprentice supervisors a better foundation for performing their task and function.

Interest in the courses has been keen; in 1974/1975, for example, 31 courses were held for a total of 375 participants. By way of follow-up, the course instructors visit their former trainees at their work, which makes them better able to adjust the content of the course in accordance with requirements.

In addition to this supplementary training, however, a basic course was also considered necessary for those who wished to qualify as works apprentice supervisors or practical instructors. For this purpose the afore mentioned PCBB (Teaching Centre for Industrial Vocational Education) has developed a course which has been given in experimental form since the end of 1972. This is a two-year course, during which the

participants (mixed groups of 12 to 16 persons) meet six times for four days each time. The scheme also includes one evening or Saturday morning every week for 'assimilation'. By way of preparation, each participant receives a correspondence lesson with a particular subject for study.

The training is built up from five 'modules' comprising the following subjects:

1. Psychology.
2. Educational theory.
3. Business and industry and labour relations.
4. Education and labour legislation.
5. The teaching process.

To be eligible for the course, it is necessary to be an all-round craftsman or craftswoman, to have had many years of wide experience in the particular occupation and to have had a secondary intermediate vocational education or the equivalent. The latter requirement excludes many people from becoming works apprentice supervisors or practical instructors in this way.

Large and small firms. The places where young people with an apprenticeship contract receive their training vary from households to large old peoples' homes, from a craftsman's workshop to a highly automated manufacturing plant, from a small shop to a big bank. It is therefore difficult to lay down where the apprentice can best be trained, since it depends to a great extent on the employer's speciality. Statistics show that in the manufacturing sector most apprentices are in the smaller firms, where more direct contact with the employer is possible and where the situation encourages more personal influence on the apprentice. To an increasing extent the large firms, too, are attracting apprentices and here, of course, the apprentice is in a better position to become skilled in many aspects of his trade. It has been calculated that there is an average of 1.8 apprentices in each firm or institution.

Training centres. Owing to the growing specialization in nearly all areas, it is becoming increasingly difficult to train the apprentice in all aspects of the practical programme in one firm or institution. Moving the apprentice to another firm where the missing sections of the programme can be learnt may give rise to practical, psychological or labour-law difficulties.

For this reason some national bodies have set up training centres where the apprentice, in a concentrated course varying in duration from one day to one week, receives supplementary training in those sections of the programme in which he cannot become skilled with his employer.

The centres concerned are in some cases very large and costly institutions, possessing extensive machinery and equipment, and in some cases providing boarding facilities. They are financed (at present) by the private sector, that is to say by the employers whose apprentices receive supplementary training there or by the firms in the sector on a collective basis.

Consultations are in progress with the Ministry of Education to determine whether and to what extent the State may subsidize these activities. (See also examination centres, Chapter X.)

Apprenticeship record book.

The only aid to practical training mentioned in the law is the record book, which is required to be kept up to date 'conscientiously' by the apprentice and the employer. The book is handed to the apprentice at the beginning of the apprenticeship contract, and he is required at the end of every week to fill in the activities he has performed, usually grouped under headings corresponding to the practical programme, indicating the hours spent on each task. The employer, who receives the book regularly for approval and signature, is thus able to follow the actual work done by the apprentice against the background of the practical programme. The work book is therefore an important document for the counsellor of the national body. With its aid he is able to consult with the apprentice and the employer on the tasks carried out, if necessary advise changes, and, in short, keep track of the progress of the training. Accordingly he also signs the record book when making periodic calls on the apprentice. In many cases the parents also receive the record book for their signature, with a view to stimulating their interest, which is of such paramount importance for the training.

Of course, the form, content and handling of the record books differ from one sector of industry to another, and even within individual occupations, and from time to time they are brought into line with changing developments in work situations. Some national bodies use the record book to list certain assignments which the apprentice has to carry out in the course of his practical training. Other bodies record these assignments in separate task books, illustrated with explanatory photographs or drawings.

Other bodies again carry out a quarterly evaluation or some other form of appraisal of the record books, or include in the work-books, in addition to the pages for recording the hours, pages on which the apprentice has to specify precisely what he has done during the day. A few bodies include quality tests in the record book, and others include test questions, while yet another body has issued a drawingbook. Many bodies supplement their record books with general information about the sector of industry or the occupation, including terms of employment, social provisions, security regulations, etc.

Many training bodies also provide lesson material for the general (BBO) courses followed at the same time as vocational training, such as textbooks (usually in cooperation with a publishing company), overhead projector slides, filmstrips, etc.

IX - GENERAL AND VOCATIONALLY ORIENTED EDUCATION

As mentioned above, this 'off-the-job' instruction - referred to briefly in the Netherlands as BBO ('beroepsbegeleidend onderwijs') - is mainly given at special schools set up for the purpose, called 'streekscholen'. This concentration of courses attended at the same time as apprenticeship training has the added advantage of enabling homogeneous classes to be formed, i.e. classes in which - having regard to the minimum numbers required under Government regulations - instruction is given to apprentices who are all being trained in the same occupation.

Syllabus.

In Chapter VII (Programmes) it was mentioned that, in addition to the practical programme, an outline syllabus for theoretical training is included in the overall programme drawn up by the National Organization for Organized Schooling (GSB) together with the relevant national training body.

On the basis of this outline syllabus, each autonomous school can draw up its own syllabus which, under Article 24 (4) of the Secondary Education Law, requires ministerial approval. In a circular (dated 2 September 1969) the Minister made it known, however, that he would in principle give his approval provided the syllabus had been drawn up in accordance with the outline syllabus.

Content. The content of the outline syllabuses differs widely since they are geared to the requirements of different occupations. In all cases, however, the syllabuses are divided into two sections: vocational instruction and general education.

As a rule, six hours of the one day per week spent at school are devoted to the first section and two or three hours to the general section. For some occupations, as for example the retail trade, four hours are devoted to each section because, owing to the nature of the occupation, the two tend to overlap.

Subjects included in the vocationally oriented section of the syllabuses include occupational theory and techniques, multiple skills, supplementary skills, drawing or draftsmanship and the interpretation of drawings and technical sketches, materials theory, information concerning tools and/or machines, workshop layout, business economics, and also subjects such as first aid and health care, safety, etc. For some occupations the syllabus includes mathematics, physics and mechanics in the vocationally oriented section, for others they are included under general education. In nearly every general course Dutch is taught, sometimes as part of classes on social affairs, which are sometimes called social survey courses, as are arithmetic and physical education (if accommodation is available). The syllabus may also contain sections concerned with specific occupations such as, for nursing and related occupations, handicrafts and music or drawing, and creative manual skills for occupations in the retail trade.

This is an arbitrary choice from the hundreds of outline syllabuses and is far from complete. It does show a growing trend to comprise all the requirements for theoretical instruction in large groups, with an effort to achieve uniform nomenclature.

Practical work. Formerly, BBO courses also included practical work, for example the apprentice had to complete a specific piece of work on his own. When the special schools were set up however, the Government took the view that skills of this kind should be learned as part of practical training under the supervisor. For this reason the new apprentice training schools do not contain fully equipped workshops, but simply classrooms for practical lessons based on the principle that the available equipment should be appropriate for purposes of integrating vocational training and supplementary subjects to provide practical dexterity rather than technical skills themselves.

Theory and practice.

As explained above, apprenticeship training consists of a theoretical section (BBO courses) and a practical section, i.e. on-the-job training with the employer. It can sometimes be difficult to present these two parts in parallel, particularly as regards time, so that the apprentice will understand the relationship between theory and practice. This promotes his practical insight into his work, that is to say the apprentice learns that he can only perform his practical tasks well by using the theoretical background knowledge he has acquired.

Practical training depends to a great extent on the tasks which the employer sets his apprentice or apprentices. Organizing the practical work to be done by apprentices is therefore very difficult, just as it is also difficult to make it coincide with the BBO courses which operate according to a fixed syllabus. Nevertheless, some training bodies, with the cooperation of employers, are experimenting with a division of the practical training into a number of groups of occupational activities, which are performed in succession, with the BBO classes determining the sequence of the tasks to be performed.

Of course, this system requires very close cooperation between the national bodies (counsellors) and the vocational schools. Such cooperation is in any case necessary throughout apprenticeship training and is generally achieved. The teaching staff at the vocational schools usually take note of the record books and/or task-books of the apprentices so as to harmonize their instruction as far and as satisfactorily as possible.

This harmonization improves the motivation of the apprentices, some of whom, because of their attitude or age, are no longer so keen on having to spend a day 'at school'. One of the most frequent reasons for the premature termination of apprenticeship contracts is that the apprentices stop going to the vocational school or no longer wish to attend the BBO classes.

Participatory education. In the light of the development of the participatory approach in the teaching of young workers, dealt with in Chapter XIII, efforts are now being made to integrate BBO courses and education directed towards personal development (developmental training).

Developmental training.

This is defined in the Royal Decree of 7 July 1970 (after several amendments) as follows:

'Developmental training comprises a coherent group of social and instructional activities for young people at a training institute carried out in groups under qualified leadership, using methods and programmes adapted to the living and working circumstances of the young people which are directed at their personal development and integration in the various sectors of society, undertaken with the support of a national organization.'

Developmental training developed at the beginning of the fifties. Originally meant for somewhat older girls, it was soon extended to young people in general entering business or industry after completing full-time schooling.

The relevant Royal Decree is based on Articles 61 - 63 of the Secondary Education Law (Wet op de Voortgezet Onderwijs, WVO) and provides a legal framework for developmental training already subsidized by the State under a Government regulation of 1964.

Developmental training institutes. These institutes are set up by private initiative or maintained by a municipality. The municipal council entrusts the daily management to a director, who is assisted by a group leader, the group consisting for the first year of 15 persons and later of 12 persons. The developmental training of young people (generally between the ages of 14 and 18) takes place almost exclusively during the day and lasts for at least one year. It is directed at young people who, after leaving primary education, have had no more than a few years of secondary education. The training differs distinctly from secondary education as defined in the Secondary Education Law, which aims mainly at imparting knowledge and intellectual skills. Developmental training is aimed at developing general personal qualities and helping young people to understand, and cope with, all aspects of their daily lives.

Programme. To a certain extent the developmental training programme corresponds to the syllabus at secondary schools. In character, however, it is entirely different. A developmental training programme comprises a range of activities geared to the situation and learning requirements of the participants. The programmes for girls, for example, include subjects such as mankind and society, communication, physical education,

housekeeping and dress. For the boys it includes current affairs, introduction to the new living environment, handicrafts, cultural affairs, sport, etc., all of which are geared to the requirements of each group.

Developmental training plays an important part in measures taken in recent years by the Government to improve the educational situation of young workers.

Raising of school leaving age. With effect from 1 August 1975 the 1969 Compulsory Education Law extended the period of compulsory school attendance to a tenth year. This means that, as a rule, 15-year olds are now required to attend school full time. The same amendment extended compulsory part-time schooling for young people no longer required to attend full time (16-year olds and above) to two days a week.

Compulsory part-time schooling of two days.

This obligation can be met by enrolling at one of the schools designated by the Minister in an Implementing Order. Broadly these are the developmental training institutes, the vocational schools ('streek-scholen') and other schools where BBO courses are given, and various other institutions explicitly specified by the Minister such as works training schemes. A special committee has published a number of reports setting forth basic considerations and suggestions for two-day programmes. From the point of view of labour law a consequence of this obligation to attend school two days a week is that the young people can do no work on those days and thus earn no pay. Thus, 16-year-olds are not allowed to be employed for more than three days a week, which makes employers less willing to employ such young people and thus jeopardizes their chance of finding employment.

Incentive premium. For this reason the Minister of Social Affairs decided to grant an incentive premium to employers for every employee required by law to attend school two days a week. For each full week that such an employee is in his service, the employer receives HFL. 45.-.1) A condition is that the employee must be enrolled for a total of two days a week at one or more (recognized) educational institutions and/or works training courses.

1) Since increased to HFL 50.-

Consequences for the apprenticeship system. As a result of the raising of the school leaving age, 15-year-olds are now no longer allowed to become apprentices. This has meant a decrease in the number of apprentices in certain trades and industries. As a consequence of the obligation for 16-year-olds to attend school for two days a week, these apprentices can receive practical training for only three days a week. It is not yet clear to what extent this will mean extending the duration of the apprentice training period.

A situation has now been created whereby 16-year-old apprentices, apart from the practical period, are required by law to attend vocationally oriented classes one day a week at a (vocational) school, and also to attend classes at another institution for general education.

Integration of BBO courses and developmental training. With this in mind - and also taking into account the growing trend towards participatory education - the Minister of Education is urging integration of BBO courses with developmental training to which end he is proposing a number of financing aids. This would encourage apprentices to regard their two-day schooling as more of a unit and increase their motivation to attend the classes. The differences in the basic principles underlying BBO courses and developmental training, the divergence between the procedures and teaching methods and the resulting differences of approach and attitude between these institutions, make this integration a very difficult process, and the results have not yet come up to expectations. Nevertheless, here and there in the country there are some encouraging examples of close coordination, leading to jointly planned and implemented programmes, which open the way to complete integration of the educational and developmental elements.

Block-release courses.

In some occupations (for example, where the small number of apprentices necessitates even greater concentration at one or two places in the country) there is a need for block release BBO courses. Following the example of practice abroad, the lessons otherwise given for one day a week are grouped together in a single course lasting 40 days, or in two courses of 20 days each, during the training year.

Although the Ministry of Education is not disinclined to recognize the need for further concentration of this kind, it is not prepared (or at least not yet) to accept the higher financial consequences arising, for example, from the provision of boarding accommodation. The system is at present in use for apprentice crane drivers for instance (partly because

of the very costly machines involved and the scarcity of qualified instructors) and also for steel benders and firers, but in both cases the additional costs are borne by the employers.

X - EXAMINATIONS

Article 19 of the Apprenticeship Law lays down:

'At the end of the practical training the national body shall give apprentices the opportunity to take an examination'

(Article 19 (1)),

'Those persons who have regularly attended classes of general and vocationally oriented education may be allowed to enter for the examination' (Article 19 (2)),

'The examination shall comprise an assessment of the apprentice's understanding and skills on the basis of and taking into account the practical programme and the part of the syllabus containing the vocationally oriented education' (Article 19 (3)).

(Apprentices are thus not examined on the general part of the syllabus.)

The law also lays down that the examination shall be set by an examination board to be appointed by the Minister on the proposal of the national body. This board will be discussed below.

Apprentices who pass the examination receive the apprenticeship diploma. Those who pass only the practical part of the examination may receive a certificate of practical proficiency. The Law also specifies implementing rules, which were set out in the Apprenticeship Examination Decree of 5 January 1972.

External candidates

The Decree states that non-apprentices may also enter for the examination, provided they have been admitted by the central examination board and provided 'they have worked in the relevant occupation for at least one year longer than the normal duration of the apprenticeship training that would have applied in their case'.

These external candidates pay an examination entry fee, the amount of which is to be approved by the Minister.

Adult vocational training centres. In some sectors of trade and industry, persons who have successfully completed a course of training at adult vocational training centres are allowed to take the examinations. These centres were set up and are maintained by the Ministry of Social Affairs to provide retraining and refresher courses in various occupations under the aegis of the employment offices. In the explanatory notes to the Examination Decree it is stated that for this category a special exemption is given from the ruling that external candidates should possess a basic apprentice training diploma in order to enter for the examination for the further training diploma.

Preliminary examinations. The Examination Decree also lays down that although the examination should in principle be taken at one sitting, it may be taken in one or more parts in the form of preliminary examinations. This ruling was made with a special view to agricultural training, since certain parts of the examination are very closely bound up with seasonal activities (sowing, harvesting, etc.) and have to be examined at different times of the year. The notes go on to say that such preliminary examinations may be worth considering for other types of training. In fact, increasing use is being made of this possibility in occupations other than agriculture.

Examination programme. The Minister adopts an examination programme which is drawn up by the national body in consultation with the GSB and which is published in the 'Netherlands Official Gazette'.

Examination board

The Minister, again on the recommendation of the national body in consultation with the GSB, appoints a central examination board for every examination. In view of the multiplicity of occupations for which the central board has to set examinations in some sectors of business and industry, and of the qualifications required of the members, the Minister may also appoint subcommittees under the central examination board.

The fact that the examination boards are appointed by the Minister might create the impression that the examinations are State examinations. However, this is not the case. The Law states that the examinations shall be set by the national training body, which is ultimately responsible for their preparation and implementation and which (usually through a counsellor) fulfils the function of the non-voting secretary of the board.

Government influence is mainly confined to ensuring that the legal provisions have been complied with in the composition of the board. These state that the boards shall consist of members drawn from business and industry and members drawn from the BBO system, that the chairman must be drawn from business and industry and that the members must have the necessary qualifications. Supervision is also exercised to ensure that the number of members receiving travelling and accommodation expenses and an attendance allowance from public funds does not become too large.

With the approval of the Minister, the examination boards may coopt examiners and invigilators to whom they may delegate some of their powers, such as assessing parts of examination exercises, checking the application of techniques or working methods and marking the written papers.

Powers of the (central) examination board. The central examination board draws up the papers, and also fixes the assessment and marking procedures for the whole or parts of the examination. The central examination board, on the recommendation of the national body, also decides from which parts of the examination a candidate is exempted by virtue of his previous education.

Simple though these rules in Article 7 of the Examination Decree may seem, it is obvious that they involve a great deal of preparatory work for the national body every year. A vital part of this work concerns the drafting of papers and the standards for training as a whole.

Results. The (central) examination board also determines the results. It awards apprenticeship diplomas and decides whether a certificate of practical proficiency may be awarded to a candidate who has not passed the whole examination. This certificate of practical proficiency presents some difficulties. Some national bodies take the view that the ability to make a test piece of reasonable quality, for example, is no guarantee of craftsmanship if the maker has not acquired the necessary theoretical background knowledge. In such cases a certificate of practical proficiency might lead employers to suspect that the candidate lacks sufficient professional knowledge, and for this reason the certificate is not issued. A candidate who, according to the norms, has neither passed the whole examination nor failed completely may be allowed by the examination board to resit the examination in one paper or part of paper. This should be done if possible within three months following the publication of the results of the earlier examination.

The examination board may also grant a rejected candidate an exemption - valid for two years - from one or more parts of the examination.

Examination rules. The Examination Decree obliges the national body to draw up a set of examination rules in consultation with the GSB and subject to the approval of the Minister. These should cover all matters concerning the examinations, such as the responsibilities and powers of the committees, marking standards, etc., and the way in which the rules are brought to the notice of the candidates. Some national bodies do this by issuing candidates with a booklet containing the rules, together with some examples of examination papers and questions from previous years for their guidance. The Examination Decree further lays down what is to be done in the event of cheating in examinations, rules concerning reports on the candidates' performance and various provisions governing pupils' progress.

Practical implementation

The somewhat detailed provisions of the Examination Decree reflect the importance attached to the final examination in the training of apprentices.

The practical aspects of examining thousands of young people every year in so many occupations vary so widely from one occupation to another that a description is beyond the scope of this study. It may simply be noted that the teacher members of the examination board are as a rule recruited from among graduate staff of vocational schools. The members from business and industry are recruited from among qualified employers and employees (as far as possible on an equal basis).

In the larger national training bodies the examinations are usually decentralized so that the candidates do not have to spend a lot of time travelling. For this purpose it was the practice until recently to use the facilities of the lower vocational schools, which - unlike most 'streekscholen' - had sufficient machinery and equipment to allow large numbers of candidates to be examined in practical work at the same time.

Other training bodies allow the practical examinations to be taken in a firm, and the practical work done there is brought together from all over the country to one centre, where it is assessed and marked. As a rule the examinations are taken in the months of May or June (at the end of the course year); the theoretical examinations are in some cases held separately from the practical examinations, and are more centralized.

In addition to a written examination, the candidate may also be required to undergo an oral examination.

Future outlook

The custom of organizing many practical examinations in lower vocational schools is encountering growing resistance from the governing bodies and heads of these schools. The objection is that they interrupt the normal teaching at these schools, since the rooms used for practical work are sometimes taken up by examinations for several days. Objections are also made to the extra attention, trouble, time and risks inevitably involved in the examination of candidates who are no longer 'their' pupils, now that the BBO courses have been transferred to the special vocational schools. Since the vocational schools are shifting the emphasis of vocational education towards more general technical objectives, some training bodies are also opposed to holding examinations at these schools, since some of them no longer have sufficiently up-to-date equipment.

Examination centres. For these reasons the national training bodies are tending increasingly to set up their own examination centres which they can equip entirely in accordance with their own requirements and can use whenever it suits their annual programme. Another advantage is that this also enables the apprentices to complete their training more at their own pace. Several such examination centres are already in use, established in disused schools or other accommodation, and in some cases used jointly by a number of training bodies.

A start is soon to be made on the construction of the first building specifically designed as an examination centre (for the metal industry). Government support for this new trend is evident from the fact that this new examination centre is being financed by the State. The creation of examination centres, available to the national training bodies throughout the year, could contribute to the realization of another aim, namely the staggering of examination activities over the year. They could also be combined with training centres (see Chapter VIII).

Tests. In this context, use can be made of the provision already referred to making it possible to hold tests (preliminary examinations) instead of holding the final examination at one time or in one or more parts. Arguments in favour of this arise from didactic considerations (luck factor, indisposition and nervousness of candidates, etc.) and also from organizational considerations, such as high costs, the accumulation of work involving the danger of making mistakes, etc. The trend would

seem to be in this direction, to the benefit of the candidates and the national bodies.

XI - FINANCING OF SCHEME

A. Government

Beginning. A national or regional body may qualify for refunding of its expenditure by submitting a specified application to the Minister which shows that the body meets the regulations concerning its structure, that there is sufficient need for it and that it may reasonably be assumed that it will properly fulfil its legal task (Article 28, Apprenticeship Law).

Termination. The refunding of expenditure may be terminated 'if facts or circumstances arise which, had they been present at the time when a decision was taken under Article 8 with regard to the application for refunding, would have led to its rejection' (Article 52, Apprenticeship Law).

Particulars of the refunding of expenditure are given in Articles 27 - 53 of the law, supplemented with many implementing provisions.

The basis for the refunding of expenditure is given in Article 34: 'The expenditure of the bodies referred to in the first paragraph 1 of Chapter II shall be refunded by the State.'

Paragraph 1 of Chapter II of the Law defines the task of the national and regional bodies. The law provides for a full refund of expenditure - for which reason it does not use the term subsidy. Further particulars are given in Article 35, as follows:

(a) Salaries. Salaries include the cost of salaries with supplements and other statutory benefits and allowances, pension contributions including contributions to widows, and orphans, pensions, and the statutory premiums payable for them. The staff of the bodies are not civil servants, but are treated as such for purposes of the State Pension Fund from which they may receive a pension indexed to the cost of living.

The Consultation Department organizes meetings of Government representatives and representatives of the staff and the formal employers, i.e. the managements of the bodies to negotiate on such matters as salaries, legal status, etc.

Some national bodies have made arrangements with the Ministry under which the staff (with the exception of the (senior) counsellors, who invariably come under the State system) are in the service of another related legal entity, or whereby the work as whole is subcontracted to third parties. The State then refunds the expenditure in the form of an agreed annual lump sum, or a fixed amount per enrolled apprentice. This is done in order to have greater latitude in the fixing of salaries, in the structure of the staff and the allocation of posts, which would otherwise be fixed in accordance with the strict regulations of the Civil Service.

(b) Foundation costs. Some bodies have their own buildings, in which case the purchase price or building costs are refunded in accordance with standard scales.

(c) Rents. Other bodies lease their buildings, in which case the rents are refundable by the State.

(d) Equipment costs. The costs of purchasing furniture and equipment for buildings or rooms also qualify for refund.

(e) Running costs. These include the costs of maintenance, cleaning, heating and lighting the buildings, and also the maintenance and replacement of furniture and equipment.

The law also specifies the following as eligible for refund:

- the costs of developing teaching aids, including, for example, work books and practical books;
- the costs of medically examining the apprentices for their suitability to practise their chosen occupation (not all apprentices are at present given a medical);
- the costs of general and vocationally oriented education (if this is not given at a State-subsidized school but, with the consent of the Inspectorate, 'is received in some other way');
- the costs of the 'payment to the employer';
- examination costs (including the renting of rooms, the expenses of examination boards, materials used, candidates' travelling expenses, etc.);
- the costs of exhibiting the apprentices' work (exhibitions are more the exception than the rule);

- other material expenses relating to the management and administration of the body;
- other expenditure to ensure the proper conduct of operations.

B. Private sector.

The above enumeration might give the impression that the total cost of training in the apprenticeship system is borne by the State. It should be kept in mind, however, that most of the actual cost of training is borne by the firms and institutions where the apprentices receive their training, and where the token State payment to employers is of course of no account. The expenditure differs from one sector to another and also between occupations, and it is therefore impossible to give even a rough estimate of the total amount involved. However, the amount paid out of the Government budget for the training of apprentices is certainly only a fraction of the sum allocated for full-time day schools providing secondary vocational education.

Government budget 1976. The Government budget for 1976 earmarked just over HFL 78 000 000 for the apprenticeship system. Divided among some 70 000 apprentices, this represents just over HFL 1 100 per apprentice.

For technical education (for boys) the budget get aside more than HFL 1 000 million, which, divided among some 150 000 pupils, gives over HFL 6 500 per pupil. It is dangerous to draw conclusions from this regarding the proportion in the costs borne by the private sector; however, its share is considerable. One problem here is that these costs are borne entirely by the firms and institutions that are able and willing to accept the apprentices for training.

Considering that the training is of importance not only to the individual firm but also to the whole sector of trade or industry concerned, since the national bodies are aiming as far as possible at a national level of skill, this division of costs is unjust. Hence the effort being made in the construction sector to find a solution by forming a fund in cooperation with the relevant organizations of employers and employees. Under a provision in the collective labour agreement - which is legally binding on the whole sector - each employer is required to pay a small percentage of his wage bill into the Training and Development Fund for the Building Industry, which was set up in 1968. The Fund is managed by an executive committee composed equally of employers' and employees' representatives, together with an observer from the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Fund pays a sum agreed in advance to the national training body for the construction and road building industries, to be used for

the training of apprentices. The money is spent mainly on reimbursing employers for part of the cost of training each apprentice.

The resources of the Fund are also used to cover many other expenses incurred in encouraging and improving the training of apprentices. This example has already been followed in several related sectors, and has aroused so much interest in the private sector in general that others are also thinking of following suit, although no positive results have yet been noted.

This does not mean that other branches of trade and industry provide no financial help at all. The statutory payment to employers, periodic and incidental donations and subsidies, etc. provide the national bodies with funds for promoting the apprenticeship system. For, although Government financing may appear to cover all aspects, a great deal of money is still needed in addition to the funds received under the strict terms of the State subsidy, if the interests of apprentices are to be furthered, both directly and indirectly.

XII - EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

In the Netherlands, as elsewhere, unemployment in recent years has assumed serious proportions. Obviously this has also affected the young people who have entered into, or wish to enter into, an apprenticeship and employment contract. The national bodies are being confronted to an increasing extent with apprentices who, owing to the loss of their jobs, have had to discontinue their training or have been unable to start it.

These young people evidently see their chances of development diminishing and their future consequently jeopardized. When all newspapers express the fear that in 1976 150 000 schoolleavers will have no jobs to go to and will therefore join the 59 000 or so people under the age of 25 who are already unemployed, young people are discouraged from even starting to look for work, while according to other experts, they could certainly find it. These experts doubt the above figure and consider that this sort of reporting in the press is irresponsible.

However, this may be, the employment situation for young apprentices is a problem that calls for a solution, even though the immediate prospects seem rather more promising.

Intensive discussions with the Ministry of Social Affairs have led to a number of temporary measures, which have been included in or replaced by a Ministry Circular of 22 August 1975, introducing the '1975 Regulation on incentives for the vocational training of young people'. This regulation takes the view that 'trade and industry on the whole show no slackening of interest in vocational training and are willing to continue to be responsible for it'.

Contribution

To stimulate this interest the Ministry of Social Affairs pays the employer for every apprentice taken on under this regulation a contribution towards the training costs, amounting to HFL 65.- for each week in which the apprentice has worked. For apprentices required by law to attend school for two days a week, the contribution amounts to HFL 45.- a week, but their employers are also eligible for the 'incentive premium' referred to in Chapter IX.

The conditions are that the apprentices, or school-leavers should have been registered as unemployed for at least two weeks and that both an employment contract and an apprenticeship contract should be concluded with the young person.

The contribution terminates at the end of the apprenticeship contract.

'Apprentices' building sites'. The regulation also applies to what are termed 'apprentice's building sites', i.e. 'a defined part of a construction site exclusively reserved for the work of apprentices under the supervision of one or more apprentice supervisors', subject to the approval of the national training body. The national body for the construction industry has organized and encouraged this form of training for many years, since it enables the apprentices to be trained under qualified supervision in all aspects of building, from the beginning to the completion of a building project under virtually normal conditions (the construction work being carried out by a contractor).

'Pseudo-Jobs'. The regulation also provides for a contribution of HFL 80.- per apprentice per week, payable to undertakings and training bodies which, in accordance with the aims of this regulation, train young people in pseudo-jobs.

By this the regulation understands: 'an agreement whereby an unemployed apprentice is given practical training in order to enable him to follow a particular course of training under the terms of the Apprenticeship Law, without thereby taking part in the production process'.

The practical training must be given at least two days a week, and the trainee must be given an opportunity to take general and vocationally oriented courses.

A trainee is placed in a 'pseudo-job' in cooperation with the apprenticeship training bodies. The trainees must have been registered as unemployed for at least two weeks and remain so registered during such training, so that they are able at any time to enter into an employment contract with an employer. As a rule they continue to receive their statutory unemployment pay and the associated social benefits. The Government contribution is only to provide instructors, training premises, equipment, etc. The regulation applied up to 2 July 1976, with provision for an extension to 31 December 1976 to allow for the continued training of those already benefiting from the regulation.

Although no figures are yet available on the results of this scheme, it can be assumed - so the Minister of Social Affairs has informed Parliament - that the Government will adopt measures along the same lines when the present regulation runs out.

Training and employment

There is no direct connection between the number of apprentices in the various occupations at vocational schools and the available employment in those occupations. Of course, a certain relation exists between the occupations in which courses are offered in certain vocational schools and the local employment situation.

Regarding the apprenticeship system, when new apprentices enrol with the training bodies, no account is taken of the employment situation in the relevant occupations. The scope for placing apprentices with employers acts as an automatic inhibiting factor, but does not always mean that the numbers of newly trained apprentices correspond to the requirements of a particular sector.

It is also very difficult to obtain reliable figures concerning the numbers of young craftsmen needed. Many factors are involved here, such as the age structure in an occupation, anticipated developments, technological developments (automation), and the economic situation in the occupation or in the private sector as a whole. All these factors

make it difficult to arrive at any reliable long-term forecasts.

In some economic sectors (such as the metal and construction industries) there has been a substantial decline in the number of apprentices in recent years. In the services sector, on the other hand, the number has been increasing, a trend probably resulting from the growth in this area, but which may cause a shortage of craftsmen in certain occupations, as has happened time and again in the past.

XIII - FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Criticism. The apprenticeship system in the Netherlands has been subjected to a great deal of criticism in recent years. Young workers, in particular, have called for the abolition of the apprenticeship system. Although this criticism appears to have passed its peak, it has still not ceased altogether.

Not long ago this criticism was summarized by a policy-making official of the Ministry of Education as follows: training is too closely tied to firms; there is too little connection between practical training and school courses; the attitude towards the human qualities to be developed is too one-sided; and the failure rate is too high.

In this connection, however, it is interesting to note a recent comment made by the director of the Ministry of Education department concerned with the Young Workers' Educational and Training Scheme (OVWJ).

In a report on a recent meeting of counsellors in the apprenticeship system, the director said it would be a disaster if apprentice training were to disappear. His arguments were roughly as follows: the characteristic feature of the apprenticeship system is the practical training given in the trade or industry. This is where the training primarily takes place. The BBO courses play a supplementary role here. The speaker also considered that a young could be both apprentice and employee at the same time.

In another public statement this official referred to the 'unique organizational form' in which schools and industry worked together at sector level via the executive committees of the apprentice training bodies, which are made of representatives of employers, employees, schools and parents, in other words all those concerned.

Future task. In his Memorandum entitled 'Towards participatory education', the Minister of Education states: 'The national bodies should be made

primarily responsible for guaranteeing the functional role of vocational training with a view to the possibility of practising the occupation in this country and abroad. For purposes of defining this responsibility career profiles on the basis of job analyses play a major role. Closely connected with this, basic programmes must be designed defining the minimum requirements for practising an occupation in accordance with national and international standards, defined in terms of practicable training goals.'

Restructuring. For this purpose the national apprenticeship bodies will have to be restructured, first of all to meet the objections, already referred to and further to allow the new tasks to be effectively tackled. Government statements do not indicate what form this restructuring will take (other than changes in the composition of the executive boards). The COLO (the coordinating organization of the national bodies) has issued several memoranda giving more practical suggestions as to the way in which the content and range of apprenticeship training could be improved and even extended to cover 'simpler' occupations, lower and possibly middle management, as well as retraining and refresher courses.

Both together and individually the national bodies have taken steps to counter the objections raised, rightly or wrongly, against the apprenticeship system. One criticism still heard is that apprenticeship is a 'dead-end', in other words once apprentices have gained their diploma, there are no facilities for further study. Although this has never been entirely true, the criticism has been further refuted by improved opportunities for going on to management and executive training, which some training bodies organize themselves. Some national bodies are also thinking of introducing training at different levels, following the example of vocational training in the schools. As regards the problems which arise when training is interrupted by unemployment, etc., some training organs are studying the possibility - and one or two are already experimenting with it in practice - of taking apprentices into their own service (assuming the responsibility for their pay, social security contributions, etc.) and then as their training progresses or the employment situation makes it necessary, 'lending' them out to employers on condition that they pay the costs. The future will show whether such an apprentices' 'pool' is a practical proposition.

As regards integrating the general educational studies in the training as a whole a more modern approach is being adopted, in particular by the national bodies that have been formed in recent years, such as those for the retail trade and for economic and administrative occupations. This approach also plays an important role in nursing and similar occupations.

For the older, more technical occupations this development is not yet so far advanced, nor is the need for it always so strongly felt.

The CULO also takes the view that the national bodies could cooperate in the preparation, introduction and maintenance of 'participatory' education.

Here again, the development of the apprenticeship system is seen against the background of the Government's intention to reorganize the entire educational system in the Netherlands. A start has been made with what has been termed 'participatory education', which is now in its first phase of implementation.

The particulars given here of the contents of the Memorandum entitled 'Towards participatory education' and of the subsequent Memorandum entitled 'Outlines of a future educational system', both by the present Minister of Education, are taken from the 'Handboek Werkende Jongeren' (Manual for Young Workers), published by Samson Uitgeverij, Alphen aan de Rijn.

Participatory education

The Government Memorandum entitled 'Towards participatory education', published in 1975, notes that a certain disparity has arisen between the vision and the reality, and also concerning the extent to which employment conditions are in line with the developments in training and education. The development of measures required to realize the above-mentioned conditions will be the subject of a separate Memorandum from the Ministers of Social Affairs and of Education (which has not yet appeared).

The Memorandum suggests that the concept of participatory education should be more closely defined and clarified. Rather than defining the concept too hastily, clearly formulated policy considerations should indicate the direction in which participatory education should be developed.

In the 'List of definitions of the principal concepts used in the Memorandum' participatory education is defined as follows:

Definition. 'A new type of education to be developed primarily for the present generation of young workers. The characteristic feature of this type of education is that the personal and social situation of the participant is chosen as the starting point for the organization and institution of the educational process. Participatory education to be

developed at a later stage to provide educational facilities for all 16 to 18-years-olds, will include both general and vocational elements.'

This new form of education will result from the combining - by gradual stages - of existing general and BBO courses for apprentices. This will develop into a form of full-time schooling after a transitional stage of part-time classes, the participants in which have full apprentice status.

This new teaching approach - both in its part-time and in its full-time form - should fulfil three functions:

It should act as a transitional stage with close contacts and easy access to other forms of education and should also provide an opportunity for 're-motivating' and re-directing apprentices who have chosen the wrong occupation or made their choice too soon. Finally, completely new courses should be devised spanning both general and vocational education, without undue emphasis on one or the other.

In the Minister's opinion, it could be useful when drawing up the courses, to embody the underlying concepts of the various types of programmes, i.e. motivational, general, vocational, optional, transitional or practical courses in techniques of study could later be added to these.

Content. Participatory education will include both traditional teaching and social training. Within the teaching programme a further distinction is made - in so far as vocational training courses form part of participatory education - between the educational aspects and the practical (training) aspects. The teaching is concerned with establishing within schools (either via courses or by other means) patterns of education which put the subjects taught to apprentices into an overall systematic context.

The practical aspect involves 'establishing educational facilities at the place of work which will put the apprentice's practical experience gained during vocational training into a similar overall systematic context'.

As regards the form of organization required, it is considered to be most important 'that those involved in planning section (i.e. vocational training) of participatory education should allocate duties in such a way that responsibility for the education of young people is vested in a single authority. By those involved I refer in particular to the educational establishments (schools) and the national and regional bodies of the apprenticeship system.'

Concerning the latter, the Memorandum refers to a restructured

apprenticeship system whose objectives are still 'excessively oriented towards practising an occupation and in general too little concerned with the general education of the individual'.

As far as the social aspect of participatory education is concerned, there is no need to create educational situations, since it simply involves young people gaining experience within the community by participating in various social activities.

Organization. Participatory education will be provided by institutions whose tasks and responsibilities are coordinated within the framework of a regional cooperative system.

A distinction will be made here between the central services centre (possibly to be called 'streekcentrum') and education and training institutions. (The name is arbitrary and is considered by the Minister to be of minor significance.)

Education and training institutions. Those wishing to take part in participatory education programmes may enrol at the education and training institutions set up by integrating the developmental training courses and the BBO courses. The task of these institutions will be to offer a varied range of educational and developmental (training) facilities, including a standard basic course supplemented by modules based on the specific requirements of apprentices in the region. Society's demand for skilled labour in certain occupations may also play a part.

Such institutions will be autonomous educational establishments with a separate legal status and their own management. The religious beliefs of the potential pupils and their parents may be important when the statutes are being drawn up. This autonomy will be limited by the fact that the institutions will have to cooperate with each other and with the regional or service centre.

Service centres. The regional service centres will, as far as possible, be developed with and around the special regional schools. Those training facilities which, by virtue of their specialized character, require larger numbers, or which involve costly equipment and/or accommodation, will have to be concentrated.

These regional and service centres will also have to fulfil a service function for the institutions of education and training established in the region, and generally promote the development of education in the

relevant region. To do this they may engage the services of specialists in, for example, curriculum development, organization development, occupational analysis, vocational guidance and counselling, etc. The centre may also accommodate special departments as well as a central administration, a central library, a documentation centre, and so on.

To avoid mutual conflict and to underline its service character, the regional centre will draw its management from the education and training institutions. The regional centres must not be attached to any particular church or political group.

In-service training. The Memorandum also deals with the problems of in-service training 'stages', a term widely used to cover various forms of participation by students in social life and in practical training as part of the vocational training courses which is part of participatory education.

Reference may be made to an earlier Memorandum in which the Minister of Education stated that the public authorities were in principle prepared to share in financing the costs incurred in the creation of teaching and learning facilities in firms and institutions during the experimental stage of participatory education. These aspects will be dealt with more in detail in the forthcoming memorandum jointly drawn up with the Minister of Social Affairs.

The Memorandum deals at length with the integration of developmental training and BBO courses, policy as regards facilities, provision of staff, the retraining and refresher training of teachers and instructors, the problem of vocational counselling and guidance, the compulsory part-time school attendance already discussed and the publicity that will be needed to explain such radical changes.

Although this Memorandum was submitted direct to Parliament, the Minister stated in his accompanying letter that he had at the same time submitted it to various official bodies for their opinion. Many bodies and organizations concerned with this subject will also submit their comments to the Lower House, so that it is possible that the policy decided upon may have to be amended.

'Last resort' education. There will in particular be a debate on the mean at the Ministers' disposal for preventing participatory education from degenerating into a kind of 'last resort' instead of becoming the pattern for all forms of education as the Minister expressly wishes and as he argued forcibly on 16 October 1975.

This could be of particular importance in the assessment of another important Memorandum, published in July 1975, entitled 'Outlines of a Future Educational System'. This differs in two respects from the Memorandum discussed above. In the first place, it was announced as a memorandum for discussion, to which reactions were expected before 1 August 1976, so that it could be amended in line with comments and resubmitted for debate.

Outline Memorandum

In the second place this 'Outline Memorandum' - as the name suggests - lays down the outlines of an entirely new educational system for the next 25 years as envisaged by the Minister and the two State Secretaries for Education and Science, taking into account the imperfections of the present educational system and the changed and still changing views of society in this context.

The authors of the Memorandum argue that education is continually changing, and that three trends have emerged in the course of the years:

- (a) a development from education for the few to education for the many;
- (b) a development away from education that specifically prepares young people for an occupation, towards education that also prepares pupils for other activities besides working life alone;
- (c) a development away from education aimed mainly at conveying acquired knowledge to new generations, towards education that is directed more at the individual potential of pupils to develop themselves further on the basis of acquired knowledge.

Having shown with examples that educational opportunities differ for young people from different environments and for boys and girls, the Memorandum proposes the following basic premises for a new educational strategy:

- (a) everyone should be given a genuine and completely equal opportunity to prepare himself for life (compulsory school attendance up to the age of 18);
- (b) the pupil's motivation, particularly during the closing stages of compulsory schooling, should be positively influenced by establishing above all a strong link with the realities of a society (participatory learning);
- (c) there should also be a system of 'life-long education', with emphasis

on systematic alternation between working and learning, as well as on the pupil's independence and individual responsibility (the right to learn).

This calls for individually oriented education within certain practical limits, in which pupils no longer have to repeat a whole class, but can take the separate subjects at their own pace up to different levels of attainment.

The pupils' performance will, as far as possible, be assessed objectively, the assessment possibly being supplemented with 'diagnostic' tests. At the end of the basic education, a development profile will be drawn up for each pupil, showing the level of knowledge, understanding and aptitude the pupil has attained in each subject.

Assessment will give way to selection when the assessment of a pupil's performance leads to his or her rejection or transfer, with the result that the pupil changes from one educational programme or component thereof to another programme or component, or from a course of training to an occupation.

Entry requirements are unavoidable for the practice of an occupation or profession or for further study. At the end of the programmes final tests will be held, comparable with today's final examinations, and these will lead to the diploma.

The limited nature of available teaching facilities, shortage of manpower and resources, and also social needs, may have the effect of limiting the number of places available on a particular course, as a consequence of which a selection will have to be made within the group of candidates. Extensive public discussion will have to take place concerning the method of selection, drawing lots, allocation of places on the basis of numerical strength, motivation tests, etc.).

The Memorandum also suggests that provisions will have to be introduced giving the right to special leave for training purposes, perhaps via collective labour agreements.

Structure. The broad lines of the new educational structure might be as follows:

1. Basic Course. The basic school under the new system will consist of the elementary school, in which infant and primary classes are taught today, together with the middle school. All children will receive this compulsory full-time schooling. There will be no special schools for

special groups and no distinction made between general education and vocational education. In addition to general education, however, all pupils will be given some vocational orientation.

As far as possible the system whereby each pupil learns a subject up to the same level as the rest of the class during the same school year will be abolished. The basic approach will be the formation of heterogeneous groups of children of the same age, not divided according to cognitive intelligence levels.

Apart from a number of compulsory subjects, a wider choice of subjects or groups of subjects will be offered. Each subject or group of subjects can be tested at different levels. At the end of the basic course the pupil will have to have attained a specified minimum level in a number of compulsory subjects and subject areas. The pupil then receives a diploma or certificate listing the subjects studied and the level reached. On the basis of this certificate the pupil is counselled on the further course of his education 'final profile'.

2. Middle school. At the middle school pupils of different ages will be organized in different groups for different activities and levels of study (homogeneous groups) and will be able to acquire knowledge in accordance with their aptitudes and interests.

The main features of the middle school are:

- (a) early and unfair selection are avoided as far as possible;
- (b) the point a pupil must finally choose his course of career is postponed as far as possible until he reaches the age of 16;
- (c) equality of opportunity, i.e. giving all pupils the same opportunity for self-development, is given pride of place;
- (d) emphasis is also placed on creative and artistic qualities and organizational and social talents;
- (e) the learning processes are as far as possible attuned to the individual pupils.

The authors of the Memorandum realize that the ideal of differentiation within courses will present difficulties, but believe that it can be achieved after many and varied experiments.

It will be necessary to examine whether a three-year course would not be better than a four-year course for some pupils, and whether the

transition from elementary to middle school should take place not at 12 years but at some other age.

Upper school. The middle school will be followed by the upper school. The course here is divided into main subject areas, for example:

- social services;
- natural sciences and technology;
- commerce, economics and management;
- agriculture;
- communication;
- art.

These upper schools will contain three streams or departments within each subject area viz.:

- a stream which devotes two years of the course to more theoretical studies, preparing pupils, among other things, for higher education;
- an intermediate stream devoting three or four years to intermediate studies;
- a short stream devoting two or three years to lower level studies.

The advice given on the basis of the 'final profile' - issued at the end of the middle school - concerning the pupils' choice of further education course is binding in one case, namely where anyone advised to opt for the short vocationally oriented stream is not permitted to enter the theoretically based stream. Otherwise pupils have a wide freedom of choice, and moreover there are opportunities for transfer to more advanced or parallel courses.

The upper schools are to be organized on the same pattern as participatory education courses, i.e. each region will have a number of independent upper schools for one or more sectors with at least two streams, within regional system based on a regional service centre.

This centre will at the same time be the information centre for apprentices, and here student traineeships will be arranged with trade and industry, for example, and information visits will be organized in connection with 'participatory learning'. The service centre will also accommodate the costly equipment for general use.

The Outline Memorandum also pays considerable attention, of course, to the various forms of higher education and to 'life-long education' ('education permanente'), which is currently the subject of study by a Government committee on 'open schools'.

The Memoranda before Parliament. The publication of the Memoranda produced a flood of comments. The reaction to the Memorandum 'Towards participatory education', which was submitted direct to Parliament in the form of a policy white paper, went straight to the Second Chamber (Lower House) of the States General. The Lower House meanwhile organized a 'hearing' for its education committee in order to receive verbal objections from the relevant organizations, and it dealt with the Memorandum in the spring of 1976.

The result was that the Lower House adopted the white paper, at the same time passing a motion to the effect that, in addition to efforts to integrate developmental training and BBO courses 'by means of experiments and the gradual introduction of new courses and options, opportunities should also be offered for trials with participatory learning, without requiring the strict integration of developmental training and BBO courses, and also for cooperation with other suitable forms of education'. The motion also pressed for more clarity on such matters as the in-service training of apprentices 'stages'

Comments

It is impossible here to give anything like a complete review of the great deal of reaction to the Memorandum 'Towards participatory education', in other Memoranda, articles in the specialist and general press, and so on.

It was not only employers that pointed out that the success or failure of participatory education depends on whether or not employers cooperate. For of course the latter must be willing and able to take young people into their firms (as apprentices), not only for training (which is not at present always so easy in the apprenticeship system), but also for vocationally oriented and motivational programmes.

The experience gained from various experiments organized in the Netherlands does not offer much comfort. Added to this is the question of who refunds the employer's costs. Proposals have already been made for a fund for this purpose, but since this is a purely educational matter it is expected that it should be financed primarily by the Government, which has not yet committed itself in any way.

Minimum wage. The fact that the pupil in participatory education is not employed and will therefore not be eligible for the minimum young person's wage is particularly unacceptable to the workers' organizations. It is, after all, not so long ago (1974) that they acquired the right to

a minimum wage for young people, and they see the new system as a partial loss of this right.

One of the training bodies, i.e. for the nursing profession (nursing assistants in hospitals and similar institutions) had already made plans for apprenticeship status, and the problem of the minimum young person's wage had been solved provisionally by means of a compromise whereby the young people concerned were to be regarded as 50% apprentices and 50% employees, the employer's share to be paid by the Government.

Among employers there is still some opposition to the level of the minimum wage, which is adjusted for inflation. This factor further endangers the employment of young people. Some larger employers already plan at this stage to give their young workers apprentice status and this encounters opposition from the workers' organizations.

These problems - as appears from most comments on the Memorandum - only emphasize the need for the promised white paper on the problem of in-service apprentice training, which is expected to clarify these points and correct misunderstanding.

Responsibility. The lack of clarity in the Memorandum concerning who is to be ultimately responsible for this new form of education has come in for a great deal of criticism. The Memorandum refers to co-responsibility, divided responsibility, final responsibility, etc., without providing any definite answer to the above question.

'Last resort education'. Much of the reaction, particularly from the workers' organizations, reflect the fear that participatory education will degenerate into 'last resort education', that is to say education for a group that cannot be accommodated elsewhere. In spite of the repeated assurances from the Minister that he will take steps to avoid this happening, it must be noted that the Memorandum constantly assumes that this form of education is directed at the most vulnerable group of young people, that is to say young workers who are still in service.

The views of the workers' organizations on participatory education are summarized in their paper as follows:

- the participatory approach should be developed as a basic educational principle and should be applied in the long term of the whole of education for 16 to 18-years-olds;
- a form of education should be developed combining vocational instruction, personal development and general education. This might be

done initially in a new system of part-time schooling, and ultimately in combination with the existing lower vocational education and the apprenticeship system as a component of one of the upper school streams.

Apprenticeship system. Various commentators criticize the lack of clarity in the Memorandum concerning the changed position and role of the apprenticeship system. Much will depend on the discussion of this question to be held with all those concerned.

It is remarkable that the apprenticeship system has not been given any defined place in the structure of the future educational system as described in the 'Outline Memorandum'. The Memorandum scarcely mentions the words apprenticeship system.

Comments on the Outline Memorandum. Commentators assume that the apprenticeship system will be fitted into the upper school sector. This means that pupils will not become apprentices until the age of 18 at least, if the Minister's plan to raise the school leaving age to 17 is put into effect.

School leaving age of 18. The opposition that this proposal will encounter is already clear from the comments published by the Council of Netherlands Employers rejecting the school leaving age of 18 and calling for improved opportunities to using the right to learn (which in fact already exists) and suggesting the introduction of a variable form of compulsory schooling.

A large organization of governing bodies of vocational schools has conducted an inquiry among its members, the results of which show that the overwhelming majority are also opposed to a school leaving age of 18. Their arguments may be summarized as follows:

Right to learn. 'They (the pupils) must be able to choose, on reaching the age of 16, whether they wish to follow full-time further education, in participatory schooling or part-time schooling. From the age of 16 therefore they should have the right to learn with full opportunities for education and training for the rest of their lives, without being "condemned" to spend too long in full-time schooling.'

Since the 'Outline Memorandum' is meant as a discussion document and the date by which comments are to be submitted has been extended to November 1976, the 'official' standpoints of the bodies concerned are not yet known.

Middle school. Nevertheless, it is already clear that the idea of the middle school for all young people between the ages of 12 and 16 is becoming accepted, except in schools that prepare pupils for higher education (gymnasium, atheneum), which have taken a highly critical attitude.

The idea of a form of education which creates equal opportunities for everyone has been well received by both employers' and workers' organizations. It is felt that there is still too little access to higher forms of education at all levels of society. It has been estimated that 60% of the intake to preparatory courses for higher education comes from the 'upper and middle classes', 12% from the skilled working classes and 7% from the unskilled working class.

It should be noted in this connection that the Minister has emphatically refuted the criticism of a 'passion for levelling' by rejecting the concept of a 'uniform' school. 'Every pupil must have the best opportunity to develop his personality according to his aptitudes, capacities and interests. This must apply to the able as well as to the less able pupils in different fields. Equality of opportunity certainly does not exclude inequality of results'.

Some commentators fear that this Socialist Minister aims at securing too much Government control over education. Although the Minister denies this, one still hears questions such as 'what is to happen to the autonomy of school boards?', or 'is the aim, by means of (indoctrination in) education, to change society instead of bringing education into line with the development of society?'.

Reference is generally made to the difficulties of preparing teaching staff, through training and application (on which a great deal is already being done) for their changed role.

Others urge that vocational orientation should not be neglected at the middle school, and that perhaps the opportunity should be introduced at this stage for some training to prepare pupils for working life.

Questions are also being asked about the financial feasibility of the new forms of education, which will undoubtedly involve substantially greater expenditure at a time when considerable cuts are having to be made in education spending.

Of course, within the foreseeable future a clearer picture will emerge of the reactions to the Outline Memorandum and of the manner in which the Government takes account of these reactions in an amended white

paper to be submitted to Parliament.

It certainly looks as if the future holds radical changes for the educational system in the Netherlands and hence also for the apprenticeship system.

XIV - SOME FIGURES

Every year the Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (Central Statistical Office) compiles data on the number of apprentices being trained under each national body, together with a running total over eight years (see appendix).

Numbers of apprentices. The situation as at 31 December 1974 has been chosen, the figures for which were published by the Educational Committee of the Socio-Economic Council.

The figures for 1975 were not yet available. In any case, the figures for that year are not comparable because, as mentioned above, preliminary training at lower vocational schools was extended by one year in 1975, as a result of which the number of apprentices in some sectors declined drastically.

The annual total figures show a considerable decline in the number of apprentices in the major technical sectors, such as the building metal industries. In some smaller sectors, such as plumbing and central heating firms, an initial rise is now being followed by a fall, and the same trend appears in the automobile industry. A marked increase has been apparent in the electrical industry, although it has tended to level out in recent years.

Only in the services sector (catering, nursing, hairdressing, etc.) has there been a particularly marked increase.

The number of apprentices in the administrative occupations and in the retail trade also shows a marked increase, but this is due to the fact that apprenticeship in these areas have only recently been introduced and the increase is thus in response to the 'backlog' situation.

The Central Organization of the Regional Training Bodies (CORO) also compiles statistics, which are more detailed and are published annually.

Premature termination of apprenticeship contract. The figures show that of the total number of apprentices in the apprenticeship system in the

normal year of 1974 some 25% ended their apprenticeship contract prematurely. The main reasons (investigated as far as possible) in the case of basic apprentice training (two or three years) were failure to attend the compulsory BBO courses (approx. 35%) and the choice of a different occupation in the course of the apprenticeship (approx. 20%).

As regards apprentices in further training, i.e. the older and somewhat better motivated apprentices, the figures are 30% failed to attend school, 10% chose a different occupation and 20% went for military service.

Previous education. The CORO figures for 1974 show that out of a total of more than 50 000 apprentices - whether or not with final diplomas - who received preparatory training as part of the secondary school courses, 3 000 (6%) had attended general secondary school courses (MAVO). The great majority (83%), however, came from the lower vocational schools, and approximately 95% of them had attended technical schools for boys.

Day-release courses. As regards the BBO courses, the CORO figures show that in 1974 only 0.5% of the apprentices on the basic course attended evening classes. For apprentices on the secondary course this percentage was 31.5%, but it was substantially below the figure for 1973 (37%). Partial day-release courses (one afternoon and one evening per week) showed a figure of 1.5% for apprentices on the basic course and 26.4% for the secondary course.

The majority of apprentices on the basic course attended their BBO classes during a working day (97.4%), whereas the figure was 42.1% for apprentices on the secondary course (40.6% in 1973).

It is evident that these figures, which are averages in each case, do not clearly reflect the situation in each national training body, since the circumstances differ considerably from one sector to another and even within the same occupation.

Examination figures. This certainly applies to the following figures relating to examinations. No national statistics are kept in this case, but the number of apprentices who have passed their examinations can be derived from the numbers of apprentices ending their contracts as a result of passing their exams. In 1974, the number was 15 700 apprentices on the basic course (not far below the figure of 14 467 who left for other reasons!). Assuming that the basic course lasts just over two years, this means about 55% successful apprentices.

In 1974, some 4 000 apprentices passed their examinations for the secondary course. Taking the total of registered apprentices at about 12 500, and considering that the average duration of the course is shorter than for the basic course, the proportion of successful candidates can be put at about 60%.

Results. It would seem dangerous to take these figures as a basis for assessing the effectiveness of the apprenticeship system. An examination in itself is not a particularly reliable yardstick, owing to the element of luck involved and to the particular situation in which the candidate finds himself. There is no doubt that many young people who completed their apprenticeship training without gaining the desired diploma (in some sectors the diploma means extra pay) are capable, with practice, of developing into good craftsmen. Nor is there any doubt that many apprentices who are technically or psychologically weak when they enter their occupation, are encouraged, by guidance and help from many sides, to continue in that occupation and in the training for it. These and other factors cannot be measured.

Of course, training in the apprenticeship system is still capable of improvement. National and regional training bodies are making every effort towards this end, in cooperation with the Inspectorate and with Ministerial departments. All in all, it can be said that the apprenticeship system in the Netherlands produces reasonably good results.

I. National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (1)

Name Office Address Telephone no.	Trade	Duration of training in years	Number of apprenti- ceship contracts in 1974	Number of diplomas awarded in 1974
Ver. Beroepsoplei- dingen Grafische Industrie J. Luykenstr. 92 Amsterdam Tel. 730222	intaglio press printers compositors letter press printing chemigraphy, paper processing	2-3-4	1866	1233
Stichting Vakop- leiding Bouwbedrijf Binckhorslaan 149	carpentry brik- laying/joinery concrete frame carpentry reinforced concrete metal weaving tilesetting masonry crane driving	2-3	7395(2)	2391
Stichting Lande- lijke Vakopleiding Schildersbedrijf Pr. Maruitsplein 29 's-Gravenhage Tel. 546403	painting and decorating	2-3	2872(2)	965
Stichting Vakop- leiding Stukadoors- en Terrazzo-werkers Pr. Maruitsplein 29 's-Gravenhage Tel. 546403	plastering terrazzo working	2-3	184	49
Stichting "Hout" Vondelstraat 154 Amsterdam Tel. 163987	furniture making carpentry ship panelling soft-furnishing carriage (coach- work) woodwork miscellaneous	2-3	2716	874
Stichting Bevorde- ring Wegenbouw Carel v. Bylandt- laan 4 's-Gravenhage Tel. 644810	roadmaking	1-3	932	420
Stichting Beroeps- opleiding v.d. Automobiel-, Motor- rijwielen aanver- wante Bedrijven (BEVAM) Papelaan 85 Voorschoten Tel. 4141	motor vehicle repair elec. install. of motor vehicles tractors coachwork	2-3	5906	1988

Name Office Address Telephone no.	Trade	Duration of training in years	Number of apprenti- ceship contracts in 1974	Number of diplomas awarded in 1974
Stichting Opleiding Gawalo Tapijtweg 2 's-Gravenhage Tel. 512741	Gas, water fitter plumbing	2-3	2126(1)	768
Stichting Bedrijf- opl. Metaalen Elektro-techn. Ind. "Bemetel" Van Stolkweg 34 's-Gravenhage Tel. 512391	turning etc. sheet & plate working lathe operator tool making shipbuilding trades precision machining miscellaneous		8636(4)	2986
Stichting Beroeps- opl. coma Amsterdamsestr. weg 40 Baarn, Postbus 76 Tel. 5051	turning, milling, honing & general machinery, tool making agricultural machinery drawing tools repair & main- tenance miscellaneous	2-3	3229	740
Ver. tot Bev. v. Elektrotechn. Vakonderwijs in Nederland Herengracht 252 Amsterdam-C Tel. 222525	telecomm.-techn. electro-techn. instr. maker electrician fitter winder	2-3	6641	1921
St. Ned. Vakopl. voor Opticiëns Honthorstraat 12 Amsterdam Tel. 720189	optician	3	307(25)	47
St. Vakopl. en Examens i.h. Brood/ Banketbakkersbedrijf Eisenhowerlaan 124 's-Gravenhage Tel. 546800	baker/pastrycook	2	1266(3)	610
Ver. tot Bev. van opl. i.h. Banket- bakkersbedrijf (V.B.O.B.) Brediusweg 25 Bussum Tel. 02159-17141	pastrycook confectioner sugar and chocolate processing	2	1082	388

Name Office Address Telephone no.	Trade	Duration of training in years	Number of apprenti- ceship contracts in 1974	Number of diplomas awarded in 1974
Ver. tot Bev. van Slagersvakonderwijs Pompelaan 8 Utrecht Tel. 717121	butcher meat products business	3	2083(18)	674
St. Vakopl. Schoen- industrie (V.A.S.) Reitseplein 1 Tilburg Tel. 678///	shoemaking leather stitching	1-2-3	46(33)	7
erlingstelsel van de St. Vakopl. en Vakexamens voor de Schoenmakerij Eindhovensestraat 14 Venlo Tel. 15372	shoemaking	2-3	33	5
St. v.h. Maatkled. bedr. Bezuidenhoutseweg 173 Den Haag Tel. 855636	tailoring	2	30(12)	6(22)
St. Leerlingwezen Horecabedrijven, Instellingen en aanverwante bedrij- ven Joh. de Wittlaan 8 Den Haag Tel. 652810	waiter cook	2	2750(127)	928(22)
.Opl. Verzorg. en Dienstverl. Beroepen Wilhelminapark 25 Utrecht Tel. 513818	household help nursing assistant	1-2	1633(1624)	800(800)
St. Kon. Onderwijs- fonds voor de Scheepvaart N.Z. Voorburgwal 120-126 Amsterdam Tel. 240941	seaman's training/ deckhand dredging industry	2-3	487(2)	99
St. t.opl.v. Monteur i.e. Centr. Verw. bedr. Koninginnegracht 26 's-Gravenhage Tel. 469227	fitter	2	2436	1139

Name Office Address Telephone no.	Trade	Duration of training in years	Number of apprenti- ceship contracts in 1974	Number of diplomas awarded in 1974
St. Bevordering v.d. Beroepsopl.i.d. Textielindustrie Reitseplein 1 Tilburg Tel. 013-67800	Textile working seamstress stichting and darning	1-3	138(20)	16(9)
St. Vakopl. Confec- tieindustrie Keurenplein 9 Amsterdam Tel. 198888	dressmaking- seamstress	1-2	941(922)	699(675)
Leerlingstelsel der Stichting V.O.C. Oranje laan 2 Oegstgeest Tel. 54944	coachwork and bodybuilding car body spraying car upholsterer	2-3	608	205
St. Vakopl. Prooes- industrie Javastraat 2 's-Gravenhage Tel. 183560	serviceman processing industrie laboratory worker	2-3 2	779(45)	172(11)
St. t. bev. v. leerl. st. i. h. Havenbedr. in Ned. Pieter de Hoochweg 110 Rotterdam Tel. 760600	dock worker	3(2)	541(82)	113(16)
Sticht. Vakopl. i. h. Kappersbedrijf Pr. Hendriklaan 103 Utrecht Tel. 515444	barber- hairdresser	2	5393(5209)	1671(1590)
St. Econ. administr. beroepen (Ecabo) Zeekant 58 Scheveningen Tel. 555006		2-4	2014(1735)	382(321)
St. Opl. en Vorming Detailh. Mauritsstraat 106 Utrecht Tel. 517447	retail trade	2-3	1629(1278)	369(294)
St. Bev. instandh. v. e. leerl. st. i. h. goed.-en pers. verv. over de weg Huis te Landelaan 492 Rijswijk Tel. 994241	vehicle driving metal working electrical engi- neering	2-3	21	3

Name Office Address Telephone no.	Trade	Duration of training in years	Number of apprenti- ceship contracts in 1974	Number of diplomas awarded in 1974
Landel. St. Leer- lingwezen landbouw Mautitsstraat 101 Utrecht Tel. 030-515188	arable farming, cattle farming, pasture farming horticulture & nursery gardening, flower arrang- ing, garden layout, trade in nursery gar- den produce	2-3	1719(24)	521(44)
Landel. St. Beroeps- opl. Levensmiddelen- industrie Kruizemuntstraat 28 Apeldoorn Tel. 055-264022	skilled pro- duction worker gairy specialist	1	626	200
Landel. Orgaan v.h. Leerlingwezen Bosbouw Koningsweg 35 e Arnhem Tel. 085-455628	forestry landscaping open-air recreation	2-3	68	32

II. Employer's apprenticeship system

Philips Ver. v. Onderw. Kastanjelaan 1 Eindhoven Tel. 733238	machinist, metal worker metalturning lathe operator Pipe install. & fitter Electrical fitter (power eng.) general fine metal work electronic assembly chemical technician	2	1293	482
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 (1) The figures between brackets relate to the number of female apprentices.

Number of apprentices under training with national training bodies

No. Trade	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
1. Typography	2706	2409	2121	2766	2818	2538	2226	1866
2. Bookbinding	486	467	322	291	261	281		
3. Lithography	436	474	548					
4. Building & Construction	11477	11367	11322	10735	9874	9218	8905	7395
5. Painting & Decorating	4169	4224	4025	3850	3612	3422	3232	2872
6. Plastering	220	150	146	147	166	189	198	184
7. Woodworking	3671	3681	3426	3296	3201	3182	3054	2716
8. Roadbuilding	876	828	903	950	968	1021	1044	932
9. Automobile industry	5340	6135	6548	6699	6612	7013	6729	5906
10. Bicycle industry	284	266	222	212	208	205		
11. Plumbing, gas & water fitters etc.	2051	2163	2119	2032	2207	2444	2454	2126
12. Metal & electrical ind.	9525	9716	9789	10665	10461	9091	8449	8636
13. Smecoma (smiths, construction & machine workers)	4244	4085	4088	4159	3965	3533	3485	3229
14. Electr. Engineering	4687	4688	4947	5677	6262	6547	6723	6641
15. Opticians	178	185	199	276	303	301	324	307
16. Bakery & Confectionary	2168	2129	1976	1785	1727	1549	1428	1266
17. Pastrycooks	1686	1696	1567	1399	1212	1185	1122	1082
18. Butchers	1714	1945	1933	1783	1616	1821	1948	2083
19. Shoe industry	215	166	110	100	24	55	39	46
20. Shoemaking	87	58	39	35	34	36	36	33
21. Tailoring	124	113	76	61	32	29	40	30
22. Catering industry	1627	1795	1904	2066	1913	2189	2486	2750
23. Nursing & care	1000	1053	964	926	1418	1633	1666	1633
24. Shipping	401	444	459	432	479	525	481	487
25. Central heating	1616	1618	2040	2667	3010	3085	3095	2436
26. Textile industry	619	488	380	360	186	146	97	138
27. Ready-made clothing	1479	1385	1386	1309	469	793	983	941
28. Coachwork	714	706	730	783	868	817	750	608
29. Processing industry	558	555	598	632	619	609	667	779
30. Dock work	431	427	415	370	504	530	543	541
31. Hairdressing	1278	2205	2943	3973	4237	4988	5122	5393
32. Econ.admin.(clerical)						374	1104	2014
33. Retail trade						371	1103	1629
34. Agriculture							1613	1719
35. Food industry							623	626
36. Forestry							82	68
	66077	67622	68245	70436	69266	69720	71851	69112

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