

INFORMATION

S O C I A L P O L I C Y

VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN COMMUNITY COUNTRIES (1968-70)

29/72

The Commission has issued a note on what has been happening in Community countries about vocational guidance. This is contained in the account given periodically to the Council on these matters. This ranks among the Community's priority tasks and is part of the regular exchanges of information and experience between the member countries on problems relating to guidance given, both to young people and to adults, and the measures taken in this connection. It indicates the most significant elements occurring in the period concerned (1968-70) and gives the necessary commentary on the subject.

I - CHANGES IN LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

The most important reforms were in Belgium (Law of July 6, 1970 on special education, social-psychological centres and school and vocational guidance offices); in Germany (Law of July 1, 1969 on the promotion of employment); and in France (issue in 1970 of three decrees concerning the first stage of the guidance reform).

The ground covered by these reforms is briefly as follows :

- In Belgium, the law on special education makes the psychological-medical-social centres and the school and vocational guidance offices responsible for the admission of pupils to special secondary education and gives them the task of diverting the handicapped into courses which give them the prospect of social and economic independence. The same organisations are also required to examine and take under their care those pupils in the pre-schooling and primary systems who show symptoms of educational inadaptation as a result of physiological troubles which are temporary or curable. In addition, the renewed system of secondary education has been designed to allow for orientation changes to the latest stage possible.

- In Germany, the law on the promotion of employment contains important new departures. The task of vocational guidance consists of giving information and advice on the problem of choosing a career, including changes of trade or profession. The Federal Labour Institute has also been given the task of giving advice in the course of school education in so far as this may be important for purposes of career choice. It is also called upon to cooperate with the organisations dealing with general education and professional training, not only for purposes of information and guidance, but also in making appointments to vocational training posts. Another novelty in the law on promotion of employment, is that it provides for financial aid to vocational education.
- In France, the decrees of March 1970 provide for the appointment in the central administration of the National Education Ministry of a Deputy Director for guidance and continuous training. They set up a national information Office for teaching and careers, known from its French initials as O.N.I.S.E.P., which takes the place of the University Statistics Bureau. Inside the O.N.I.S.E.P. there is set up a qualifications research and investigation centre, the task of which is to analyse the work and skills for different jobs and study the adaptation of training and teaching methods in relation to the requirements noted. A guidance bureau is also set up as part of the Directorate responsible in the ministry for elementary and secondary education. The competence of this bureau extends to questions of guidance facilities at schools and the management, equipment and functioning of the guidance service generally.

There are other facts to be mentioned concerning France. The school year 1970-71 was marked by the taking up of their duties, in the establishment of each of the 23 Academy rectors, of a head of the academic information and guidance department. It should also be recalled that the Law of November 12, 1968 on guidance in higher education is now being progressively brought into force. It provides, inter-alia, that the universities, acting through their education and research units, shall organise orientation courses for newly-enrolled students when it is considered desirable to verify their aptitude for the courses of study they are undertaking.

It should be noted, too, that under a decree of November 8, 1968, a representative of the school guidance and careers centre is an ex officio member of the council of every second degree establishment of public education; and that the guidance officer has become an ex-officio member of the class council. In addition, the reform now in progress in the first cycle of second degree education is aimed to extend the systematic observation of pupils

and research regarding their orientation during the four years of the cycle.

- In Italy, there was no important change in the current arrangements during the period under consideration. The importance of the part played by teachers and class councils in the guidance for young people, has been emphasised in instruction issued by the ministry.
- In Luxembourg, under a decree of December 30, 1969 there was set up a committee of representatives of the National Education Ministry and the National Labour Office. The task assigned to it is to coordinate the work of the school guidance and vocational guidance services and harmonise their methods of work.
- In the Netherlands, there was during 1968-1970 no important change regarding information and career guidance.
- There has been an increase in the budget credits appropriated by the member States to school and vocational guidance. This is illustrated by a number of figures. In Germany, the expenditure on vocational guidance had more than doubled by 1970, with the 1968 figure of DM 5.2 million being followed by DM 7.7 million in 1969 and DM 11.5 million in 1970. In France, the budget of the National Employment Agency, which is in charge of the information and vocational advisory work, rose from FF. 18 million in 1968 to FF. 61 million in the following year and FF 93 million in 1970. In the Netherlands, the budget made available by the Social Affairs and Public Health Ministry to the specialised vocational guidance institutions rose from florins 2.6 million in 1968 to florins 6 million in 1970.

II - DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE WORK

In all the countries there was a gradual intensification of the campaign to reinforce and diversify the information facilities.

Though it is not possible to give an overall view of the work in this sector, it is possible to record various indications of the scale of the work undertaken.

Guidance for young people in the schools

- In Germany, there appeared for the first time a book entitled "the present position in different trades and professions - 1970". This was issued in a pocket edition for boys and girls. It describes 474 occupations which require

training mainly of a practical character. It was distributed in the secondary schools to pupils in the last class but one. Up-to-date versions were prepared of the information documents made available to teachers and pupils in medium-grade second degree education establishments and for holders of the baccalaureat. A renewed distribution was made to parents of a document entitled "Learn more about choosing a career". In 1969/70 the Federal Labour Institute produced seven films containing career information. The number of individual guidance consultations rose from 630,000 in 1968/69 to 675,000 in 1969/70. It was noted that the proportion of young candidates for guidance, who were forthwith accepted for a training course in the firm itself, is tending to decline. The young people are increasingly anxious to proceed to a technical, or training school, or to a higher education establishment.

- In France, the university statistics Bureau and the O.N.I.S.E.P. have prepared and distributed in 1969 and 1970 a national information leaflet for pupils reaching the end of the first cycle of secondary education, telling them of the specific orientation of studies possible after this level has been reached. In the two years concerned 600,000 copies of this leaflet were distributed free of charge. Another national leaflet, entitled "Orientation after the baccalaureat" was distributed to pupils in the final classes, with a distribution of 300,000 in 1969 and 320,000 in 1970. There was an increase in the collective information given by school and careers guidance officers to pupils and their families, the number increasing from 18,000 in 1967/68 to 19,900 in the following year and 23,500 in 1969/70.
- In Italy, in and after 1969, a feature was the provision of more precise information about the position in different localities. The provincial technical instruction associations and the vocational guidance centres have channelled their work on these lines. In the school guidance work, there were fewer collective examinations (182,000 in 1968; 140,000 in 1969; and 138,000 in 1970), but the number of individual examinations increased (40,000 in 1968; 46,000 in 1969; and 48,000 in 1970). There was, however, a decrease in the number of individual requests for information sent to the guidance centres, which fell from 870,000 in 1968 to 855,000 in 1969 and only 642,000 in 1970. This fact is due to the wider distribution of information and the intensive activity of school guidance officers.

In the vocational training system in the Netherlands, the chief feature has been the work of the "school Dean", whose job is essentially to take charge of career information and general guidance work. The Deans also cooperate closely with the advisory officers in the regional labour offices. As regards information media, there has been an increasing use of radio, television and other instruments of mass communication. The total number of school and career guidance examinations for young people increased from 104,000 in 1968 to 117,000 in 1969 and 139,000 in 1970, the growth in the two years being 33 %.

Guidance for adults

- In Belgium there was an increase in the number of aptitude and vocational guidance examinations made by the medico-psychotechnical department of the National Labour Office. Individual examinations increased from 1,087 in 1968 to 1,358 the following year and 1,738 in 1970. There was also an increase in the collective examinations for admission to the vocational training centres. There were 3,461 of these in 1968, increasing to 3,739 in 1969 and 4,837 in 1970.

In Germany, there has in recent years been a material increase in the number of adults calling for consultation. In 1967/68 the number was 270,000 rising next year to 296,000 and in 1969/70 to 313,000. This growing recourse to vocational guidance facilities is due to an extensive publicity campaign, aimed at the adults, coupled with the offer of increased financial support. It is noted that the proportion of male adults who decide to take a training course inside the firm has shown a decrease during the period considered, from 28.4 % in 1968, followed by 24.9 % and 22.6 % in the following year. There was, on the other hand an increase in the proportion going for courses to a vocational or technical training school, which rose successively from 7 % to 7.7 % and then to 9.3 %. The change for female workers was on the same lines.

- In France, the National Employment Agency worked out a strategic publicity campaign, using the mass information media, concentrating its attack on selective operations, so as to break down resistances in specific population groups. The activity of the professional services of the agency is continuously expanding; and between 1969 and 1970, there was a growth of 85 % in the individual but non-personalised information, 51 % in the collective information and 90% in the career guidance sessions.

III. FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR SCHOOL AND CAREER GUIDANCE WORK

The guidance services in the different member countries are converging on a number of essential points. These are :

- development of campaigns aimed at different categories of population concerned ;
- more extensive general and preliminary information, accompanied by action of different kinds better adapted to the requirements of these categories;
- more thorough examination of individual cases and more detailed guidance advice ;
- progressive increase in the technical and financial resources, coupled with better trained personnel in the school and careers guidance work ;
- improved methods. The information, guidance and advice work has got to be integrated into a single plan of action which will have its place in the permanent education machine ;
- desirability of regular exchanges of notes and experience in a system of Community cooperation, which will be made increasingly close by the responsible administrations in the individual member countries.

In each of the Community countries, the foreseeable development of the work conforms to this pattern.

In Germany, it is envisaged that the careers guidance officers should be given a scientific training. The Federal Labour Office is to satisfy the consultation requirements of the higher-level schools, working in conjunction with the labour market and trade and professional organisations. It is forecast that there will be a careers officer for every 5,000 students. The aim is to create integrated consultation facilities at the university level, on lines which will avoid critical situations and find the best solutions for human problems. Special attention will be given to the care and guardianship of the handicapped.

In France, every educational district in the second cycle will be equipped with an information and guidance centre; and a definite status will be laid down for public servants in the information and guidance work. In Italy, the Law of March 31, 1969 has left with Parliament the task of working out regulations for school and careers guidance. In the Netherlands, every effort will be made not only to increase the number of hours and the facilities made available to the "school Deans"; but at the same time to extend their coverage to all sectors of further education. Care will be taken, too, to ensure that those who advise the

young in the regional employment offices have the necessary qualifications for dealing with young people. Special courses are being organised for this purpose.

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