



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 22.07.1997
COM(97) 385 final

**FINAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE PETRA PROGRAMME**

**Action programme for the vocational
training of young people and their preparation
for adult and working life**

(presented by the Commission)

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INTRODUCTION: NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

Our society is faced with a number of major challenges, such as the internationalisation of the economy, the effects of scientific and technological progress and the changes brought about by the information society. In order to respond appropriately to these changes it becomes more and more important to foster qualities like flexibility, the capacity to learn and curiosity, and to develop specialised and transversal skills. The challenge is to master these developments and in this context education and training play a crucial role. How can workers be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to adapt quickly to new developments ? How can individuals acquire the basic skills and qualities, which will serve them throughout their lives ?

It is clear that these challenges cannot merely be addressed at national level. Some of the trends in the evolution of society are international. Already in the 1980's programmes on education and training were launched at Community level. The awareness that action at Community level "shall implement a vocational training policy which shall support and supplement the action of the Member States, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content and organisation of vocational training" is stated in the Treaty on European Union, article 127.

This report aims to give a global analysis of the experiences from the PETRA programme and to give an impetus to the implementation of the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme (Council Decision of 06.12.94, 94/189/EC), which continues the measures of several Community programmes on Vocational Training launched in the 1980's and to the large action supported by the European Social Fund in this field. The PETRA Programme has already been the object of an ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation: internal monitoring and evaluation was carried out at programme level (Interim report of the Commission and the present report), at project level (each partner handed in a final report as well as a financial statement and relevant products) and at participant level (e.g. young people in placements had to evaluate this experience). External evaluation of the Programme carried out twice with an interim report in 1993 and a final report by the end of the Programme. The evaluation report made by *Coopers & Lybrand* is available from the Commission services on request. Ongoing assessment also took place at various seminars and very interesting conclusions were drawn at the closing seminar of the PETRA Programme, held in Killiney in 1995. ("Report on the closing seminar of the PETRA Programme").

This final report is part of the evaluation of the PETRA Programme and has been prepared by the Commission to take stock of the development of the PETRA Programme from its beginning in 1988 to December 1994, thereby fulfilling the obligation of Article 8 of the Council Decision 91/387/EEC. It illustrates the progress made in fulfilling the main function of the PETRA Programme, which was to support and supplement policies and activities in the Member States aimed at achieving a number of specific objectives set out in the Council Decision of 1.12.1987 (87/569/EEC) and amended by the Decision of 22.07.1991 (91/387/EEC).

This report will have two main chapters. One deals with the implementation of the PETRA Programme, and the other gives recent developments in Member States' policies and legal structure aiming to raise the standard, quality, attractiveness and responsiveness of initial vocational training. Finally conclusions and perspectives are stated.

The chapter on "Policy developments at Member State level" is the most difficult and ambitious part of this report, since it aims to describe measures taken at Member State level to improve and innovate initial vocational training and also to compare measures newly introduced in Member States with the objectives set out in the PETRA Programme. The aim is not a description of national systems, but an indication of trends and evolutions in the period 1988-1994 within the Community. Due to the number of themes to be treated the report can merely give indications, not a thorough analysis of each theme.

The main sources for this are the national reports on the development of Member State's systems concerning initial vocational training. These reports were presented by the Member States in June-December 1995 as required under the terms of Article 8 of the Council Decision. To supplement information from the national reports as well as to provide relevant information from Spain, Italy and the Netherlands, which did not submit their national report to

the Commission, other sources were used, notably the Country reports from the CEDEFOP: "Vocational education and training in (Country)", OECD-studies and a joint publication of the CEDEFOP and EURYDICE: "Structures of the Education and Initial Training Systems in the European Union". Earlier publications within the framework of the PETRA Programme have also been used as sources, notably the Final Evaluation Report of the PETRA Programme, phase I, the interim report of the PETRA Programme, phase II, and thematic publications concerning the PETRA Programme.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME

1.1. Council Decision

The PETRA programme was launched in 1988 on the basis of the Council Decision of 1 December 1987 concerning an action programme for the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life. It was initially intended to run for five years (1 January 1988 until 31 December 1992). However, during the initial phase of the Programme, it became evident that the issue of initial vocational training was attracting increasing attention in the policy agenda of the Community. Therefore, in November 1990, the Commission submitted a proposal concerning an extension and development of the PETRA Programme, including the previous Young Workers Exchange Programme to the Council. This proposal formed the basis for the Council Decision of 22 July 1991 which provided a consolidated framework for a new phase of PETRA to run from 1 January 1992 until 31 December 1994. PETRA provided the first practical example of the Commission's strategy to rationalise and coordinate Community action in the field of vocational training. This strategy has been carried on by the adoption of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme and by the implementation of the programmed action of the European Social Fund in the field of initial vocational training in particular in objective 1 regions and also on a transnational level through the Employment-Youthstart Community Initiative.

The PETRA Programme aimed at ensuring that all young people had the opportunity to receive one, two or more years of vocational training leading to a recognised qualification also inspired the Youthstart proposal in the White Paper on growth, competitiveness, employment. The main activities supported by the Programme which are reflected in the current Employment-Youthstart Initiative include:

- the further introduction of transnational work experience placements in training programmes as a measure to increase the esteem for training in general, and to motivate participants, in particular;
- opportunities offered to young people to take part in self-managed Youth Initiative Projects which, in a significant number of cases, encouraged participants to re-enter mainstream education or training and helped them to establish a "projet de vie" or their career objectives;
- the development of diversified training and guidance provision and of materials reflecting the different levels of ability of young people through transnational partnership.

The development of training provision for disadvantaged young people was a continuing theme throughout the life of the Programme and thus, modules, approaches and materials which are relevant in relation to Employment-Youthstart, can be found within the PETRA legacy.

1.2. Implementation and results of the actions of the Programme

The results of the PETRA programme consist of two types: *Studies* (see list of publications in appendices) and the *establishment of networks*. There are five groups of networks: - Network of National Coordination Units (NCUs); - Networks in Action I (Placements); - Networks in Action II (Training Partnerships and their results and products); - Networks in Action III (Vocational Guidance) and - Research Networks. The PETRA programme envisaged four main types of action:

Action I: *Support for training and work experience placements in another Member State, for young people in initial vocational training, young workers and young unemployed, and young people in advanced programmes.* A database on placements and beneficiaries was set up and from 1992 to 1994 a total number of 33.719 young people took up placements in Action I. These placements were organised in a decentralised way and managed by National Coordination Units (NCUs) who reported to the Commission. Several studies have been carried out concerning these placements and their conditions (cf annex 3 : References).

Certain National Coordination Units took the initiative to hold thematic seminars on Action I, involving all actors in placements. Following one of these seminars, a manual was developed called

"Basic communicative skills and cultural knowledge for transnational vocational placements" on linguistic and cultural preparation of young people before departure for the placement.

Several networks were set up since the operation of this Action was decentralised and administered by NCUs, they constituted the main Action I European level network within the programme. Through the network of NCUs, a **partner-finding service** was organised, as was the processing of multilateral application which required a decision by four or more NCUs.

Another European Network which was associated with Action I was the **Informal Network of Organisers of Work Experience Placements**. This was a network which existed prior to 1992 when the Young Workers Exchange Programme was incorporated into Action I of PETRA.

Action II: *Support for transnational cooperation to link innovative training projects from different Member States, including Youth Initiative Projects (YIPs), in a European Network of Training Partnerships (ENTP)*

European Network of Training Partnerships (ENTPs):

Throughout the whole period (1988-1994) approximately 1,000 projects joined the Network, involving approximately 160,000 and 30,000 teachers and training staff. Since 1992, the activities of the Network focused more sharply on the joint development and transfer of training modules, the joint training of trainers and on new thematic and sectoral priorities. The work carried out in this field has given the following results:

- The Compendium (global overview of the products and training modules of the ENTPs)
- The PETRASYS Database (information on projects)
- Interactive Follow-up (reports, visits...)
- Thematic meetings (exchange of ideas and capitalisation of positive experiences)

Youth Initiative Projects (YIPs):

In addition to the training projects involved in the ENTP, almost 1,000 YIPs were supported by the Programme in the period. YIPs were innovative projects in which young people themselves were mainly responsible for the planning and organisation, and which focused on information on the transition from school to vocational training and working life, and/or encouraged the development of entrepreneurial skills, creativity and responsibility among young people. The total number of young people directly involved in the YIPs since 1988, reached a figure of 25,000.

Action III: *Support for national systems for the exchange of vocational guidance data and experience, and examples of good practice in vocational guidance, through the establishment of a Community network of national contact points and the training of guidance counsellors/specialists on Community aspects of guidance.*

During the first phase of PETRA, Action III did not exist as an independent action area. However, transnational cooperation on the development of new curricular approaches to vocational guidance was the focus of more than one hundred projects involved in the ENTP. It was therefore estimated that this kind of projects should be one of the main actions of the PETRA II Programme. In this way, since 1992, a more structured Community framework was implemented for consultation and cooperation between the Member States' **vocational guidance systems**, including 4 measures:.

- **28 National Resource Centres** were set up as reference points and resource agencies for guidance counsellors.
- Three large **transnational partnership projects** were set up, which focused on the joint development of training material and joint training activities for guidance experts to increase awareness, knowledge and experience
- Each national guidance centre was also involved in one or more multilateral, transnational **development projects** to work out solutions to common problems or

needs, especially with regard to the Community dimension of vocational guidance. For example: networking existing databases in different Member States; enhancing the role of firms and social partners in the vocational guidance process; cooperation in improving the quality of guidance material and products.

- Finally, Action III promoted the **dissemination** and use of relevant information material prepared at Community level, e.g. the European Handbook for Guidance Counsellors, and comparative information on the structures and functioning of vocational guidance systems in all Member States.

Action 4: Complementary measures, including support for the dissemination of the results of the Programme; transnational cooperation in research on the vocational training of young people; and technical assistance at Community level, and in Member States, for the implementation, coordination and evaluation of the programme

- **Activities to facilitate the operation of the Programme/information events**

Since 1988, the PETRA Programme was presented at, or contributed significantly to, more than 200 major information events at Community or national level (including launching conferences, thematic seminars, national and international training fairs) and numerous regional events. This activity was supported by the provision of information material (e.g. Vademecum, project directories, thematic publications, leaflets, PETRA Yearbook) and services offered by the media.

- **Activities to Support Cooperative Research and Studies / Research Networks**

The PETRA Programme provided for transnational bilateral and multilateral research partnerships, involving more than 70 research institutes nominated by the national authorities, to work on a set of specific themes directly related to the objectives of the PETRA Decisions. These partnerships have now completed their work, and their results are being made available to underpin Community-level cooperation in the provision of vocational training and to support further development in policy and practice. Several major studies were completed, with expert assistance from all Member States (cf point Action 1), on the social and legal status of young people involved in transnational training placements, on the recognition and certification of transnational work experience and training placements, and finally on improving and completing information on the participation of young people in vocational training.

The PETRA Programme also provided technical and/or financial assistance to a number of other networks which were concerned with topics of relevance to the Programme's aims and objectives, including the European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training; European Secondary Headteachers Associations; and the European Work Experience.

- **Development of statistical indicators**

As part of cooperation with EUROSTAT, a study was carried out on the development of statistical indicator ("Development of Statistics on initial vocational training -final report"). The work in this field is being continued in the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, Strand III.2.b: ("Development of knowledge in the field of vocational training, exchange of comparable data in the sphere of vocational training").

- **Study Visit Scheme**

Complementary measures were also taken to ensure close coordination with the study visit scheme for practitioners and policy-makers in the field of vocational training which was administered by CEDEFOP (European Center for the development of Vocational Training), on behalf of the Commission. These visits were organised on a thematic basis and were undertaken in small groups each comprising participants from several Member States. By June 1993, nearly 800 training specialists from all Member States had benefited from visits which had a special thematic focus on the priorities of PETRA. Work in this field is being continued within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme: Strand III.3.b: "Development of the dissemination of innovation in

the field of vocational training; transnational exchange programmes; study visits". Study visits continue to be administered by CEDEFOP on behalf of the European Commission.

1.3. Management and Consultation Procedures

The European Commission had responsibility for the overall management of the Programme. The Commission worked with two bodies, set up by the Council Decision to ensure the implementation of the Programme: the Advisory Committee and the National Coordination Units. In addition, the Commission called upon experts when necessary and the Commission was also assisted by a Technical Assistance Office.

1.4. Financial Resources

Financial support from the Community, provided within the framework of PETRA I (1988-1991) amounted to 39.99 Million ECU. The amount available for PETRA II (1992-1994) was 105.318 Million ECU. The increase in the financial resources of the programme over the years was particularly important, evolving from 8 Million ECU in 1988 to a budget of 40 Million ECU in 1994. This progression was due, to a large extent, to the continuing support of the Programme by the European Parliament. However, the financial resources of the Programme have not been sufficient to satisfy the increasing demand for participation in its different activities. (annex 1 for a table on the allocation of financial resources to the various actions of the programme).

2. POLICY DEVELOPMENTS AT MEMBER STATE LEVEL

The purpose of this chapter is to draw the attention to trend in policy developments in the Member States which are compatible with and contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the PETRA Programme. The thematic method of presenting changes in national systems, as opposed to a "country by" approach, has been chosen despite of the differences in the organisation of initial vocational training at national training. Even though systems may seem different, the challenges met by the Member States are very much alike, such as high unemployment rates for young people, (see annex 2, Fig. 2 and Fig. 5) problems concerned with the insertion of young people into the labour market and a growing need for a skilled work force. Initial vocational training systems throughout the Community vary considerably, according to each national current economic situation, culture and traditions. Generally all countries are continuously adapting their national systems for initial vocational training and this chapter explains these changes briefly. Some countries made great progress in their aspiration for change and have made major structural reforms to their systems, notably Denmark, Greece, Spain, France, Ireland, Portugal and Luxembourg. Other countries have chosen to adjust their systems where necessary without changing the basic system.

2.1. Enhancing participation

The first principal objective of the PETRA Programme was *"to support the policies and activities of the Member States that are aimed at ensuring that all young people in the Community who so wish receive one year's, or if possible, two or more year's vocational training, in addition to their full-time compulsory education, and leading to a recognised qualification"* and these objectives should be seen in the context of the employment situation for young people. (For a comment on basic statistics, please cf. annex. 2)

The statistics reflect both demographic trends and the tendency of young people to stay longer in education and training. It should be noted that school-leavers without a qualification continue to form a group of young people for whom the risk of unemployment is up to four times higher than for those with a qualification. There is no doubt that successful basic education and initial vocational training provide the key to young people's integration to the labour market, in all Member States. Training systems will therefore have to pay special attention to the development of opportunities for young people leaving compulsory school with low levels of achievement.

Moreover, it should be born in mind that growth in employment and opportunities for vocational careers occur primarily in more highly skilled occupations. Within occupational sectors, a trend

towards increased skills requirements is evident for most jobs. It is becoming widely acknowledged that initial training systems need to place more emphasis on developing a wide-ranging set of core skills, including the capacity of learning to learn, autonomy, initiative, self-employment and adapting to new requirements.

2.1.1. Fixing quantitative targets for participation in initial vocational training

Quantitative targets are among the concrete goals set for initial vocational training set by several Member States, notably when major reform has been introduced into their national systems. There is a political desire to accelerate the upgrading of the labour force to meet the structural changes in business and industry.

For example, it is the overall goal of the plan "Education and Training for all" in **Denmark**, that in the year 2000, 95% of young people in any year group will start a youth education programme, (93% in 1990). The plan will ensure that 90-95% of young people in any year group will actually finish youth education (77% in 1990) and attention is given to decreasing the number of drop-outs. The Act on Active Labour Market Policy (1994) has as its aim to contribute to ensuring a well-functioning labour market through an active labour market policy targeted at persons seeking employment or training. Behind the Labour Market Reform lies the goal of creating 60.000 extra adult educational and training places before the year 2000. Thus, in 1994, about 10.000 such extra places were created.

In **Italy**, the new law on upper-secondary education proposes that, by the year 2000, 80% of an age group will obtain an upper-secondary leaving certificate through completion of either general, scientific, technical or vocational courses.

In **Luxembourg** a number of measures have been taken to combat school failure. The advancement system (from one year to the next) has been modified, introducing the possibility of offsetting poor results in specific areas; the option of undertaking training in two phases has been introduced, with the CITP (Preliminary Technical and Vocational Certificate) leading on to the acquisition of the CATP (Technical and Vocational Proficiency Certificate).

In **France**, the Guidance law (1989) sets a target of 80% of young people reaching level IV by year 2000, i.e. having completed three years of upper secondary education (general, technical or vocational education) beyond compulsory education.

In **Spain**, within the context of the recent reform (LOGSE, 1990), the target for the year 2000 is to retain 80% of all young people in school, up to the age of 18, and to give them the possibility to choose between a specific training course (middle level) or the "bachillerato". A new technical "bachillerato" has been created which is very close, in terms of content, to initial vocational training.

United Kingdom: The National targets were launched in 1991 with support from all major political players. Progress towards the targets are monitored by the independent employer-led organisation NACETT (National Advisory Council for Education and Training Targets) which reviewed the targets in 1994. Updated targets have been published in the May 1995 White Paper "Competitiveness - Forging ahead" and are: 1. All employers should invest in employee development to achieve business success; 2. All individuals should have access to education and training opportunities, leading to recognised qualifications, which meet their needs and aspirations; 3. All education and training should develop self-reliance, flexibility and breadth, in particular through fostering competence in core skills. Targets have also been set in quantitative terms for initial vocational training.

2.1.2. Establishment of an entitlement or right to obtain a vocational qualification or to take part in vocational training

In **France** the 1990-Law (90-579, 4.6.90) on vocational training monitoring and quality establishes the right to a qualification for all workers in the form of a "crédit formation" (training entitlement). It reinforces the obligation incumbent on training agencies and their supervision. The right of young people to a vocational qualification is inscribed in the "Code du Travail" (1991 and 1992) and training must lead to a qualification corresponding to the short or medium term needs of the economy.

In 1991, the **Dutch** Government announced that everybody, of any age, should have the right to obtain a "starting qualification", i.e. a vocational qualification at the level of an initial apprenticeship course and this is underpinned by action at the lower-secondary stage to prevent early leaving, by projects which aim to enhance the success rate of upper-secondary training and, within the context of the "Youth Work Guarantee" scheme, by specific efforts to motivate unqualified leavers to enrol in apprenticeship courses.

In **Portugal**, the Government and the Social Partners signed, in July 1991, a formal agreement to make every effort to ensure that young people will receive at least one year of initial vocational training, after completion of their compulsory schooling. The national authorities are currently redesigning the training courses run under the responsibility of the Employment Ministry and will no longer organise initial training courses of less than one year's duration.

In the **United Kingdom**, two measures have been introduced which give an entitlement to obtain a vocational qualification or to take part in vocational training: The Youth Training Programme and a system of Youth credits.

In **Germany**, the unification process involved the application, of FRG legislation on vocational training to the 5 new länder, which notably is based on a dual system of training in training bodies and practical experience in undertakings. This meant a radical change of the training system in the new länder, which caused problems in ensuring adequate provision of training places for young people, especially as the collapse of a large number of enterprises resulted in a serious reduction in the number of company-based training opportunities. Major initiatives were taken, at national level, to counteract the impact on the training situation, which had the desired positive effects; in September 1993, as in 1991 and 1992, the overwhelming majority of young people who applied had actually been placed in training, and the remaining small minority had received a placement offer.

In **Ireland**, the Social Guarantee / YouthReach Training Programme, introduced in 1985, envisaged a five-year implementation programme. This gives unemployed young people the right of access to training and work experience programmes that have been specially designed to meet the identified needs of this group.

2.1.3. Extending provision of initial vocational training

Greece: The provision of vocational education has been raising rapidly over the last few years. It should thus be noted that the number of programmes rose by 50.8% and the number of participants by 55.1% compared to 1990. This might be the result of Community support from various programmes as well as from the European Social Fund, but another very important impetus has been the creation of the legal basis for these new provisions, i.e. the setting up of the new institutes for vocational training (IKEs) which have been set up under the 1992 law and cater mainly for those young people who, after completion of post-compulsory secondary education, do not proceed to higher education.

Denmark: "Education for all". Within the framework of the overall reform "Education for all", 1993 two measures have been made to address the so-called "rest-group", i.e. the young people

(approximately 1/4 of any age group) who never complete any kind of education or training: the *EGU* (Basic Vocational Training, adopted by law in June 1993) and *Open Youth Education* (established on 1 January 1995). Both initiatives are addressed to young people who either cannot or do not want to participate in traditional youth education and training courses. The aim is to motivate about 3000 young people every year to complete youth education, who would not otherwise have done so.

Luxembourg: The Law of 4 September 1990 contains a number of main objectives for the national vocational training policy for young people, one of which is to ensure that all young people enter into the labour market with a recognised vocational qualification. This is done by diversifying and improving the provision of training through the development and implementation of training modules; by diversifying and improving the provision of training for disadvantaged young people; and by raising the attractiveness and status of initial training.

In **Spain**, young people who leave secondary education without a certificate and young people up to the age of 21 without formal qualifications, benefit from the "Programas de Garantía social", organized by the education authorities. These programmes aim at preparing young people and at ensuring their integration into work or their re-integration into education or training.

2.1.4. Raising the status and attractiveness of vocational training

Vocational training should on the one hand allow weaker groups of young people (who now enter the labour market without any qualification) to obtain a qualification, but should on the other hand also attract resourceful young people (who now choose high school and general education). This can only be done if vocational education and general post-compulsory education have equality of esteem. This in turn is a question of job possibilities. It is also important to ensure a horizontal and vertical flexibility in the training systems. One of the aims of the PETRA Programme was therefore to strengthen the status of vocational training, notably through the placements and exchanges and through new curricula. Many countries have initiated actions aimed at making the option of vocational education and training more attractive to young people, by raising its status or facilitating access to it.

In **Germany** these objectives are reflected in a new initiative launched in 1991, offering new opportunities and special support to particularly gifted young people in vocational training, and in the discussion and implementation of new regulations facilitating progression from vocational training to higher education. A working group set up by the Federal Government and the Länder, decided on 10 February 1994, that the attractiveness of vocational training must be increased and the equality of esteem between vocational training and post-compulsory general education must be ensured. The group is composed of representatives from the federal level, from the länder and social partners. It has made a medium term work programme, including measures to ensure that an adequate number of apprenticeships are provided and that quality in vocational training is guaranteed. The dual system should be differentiated on a broader scale, so that weaker apprentices (due to lack of motivation, social disadvantages) and highly motivated apprentices are enabled to achieve a qualification appropriate to their personal situation.

In **Belgium**, a specialisation year following the third grade of full-time vocational training, has been introduced to enable young people to move to higher education, thereby enhancing the equality of status between vocational training and post-compulsory general education.

In the **United Kingdom**, the Government wants academic and vocational qualifications to be held in equal esteem. The White Paper Education and Training for the 21st Century states that the government, following wide consultation, intends to establish a new system of ordinary and advanced diplomas which enable students to combine General Certificates of Secondary Education and vocational qualifications at age 15/16 or A levels, AS levels and vocational qualifications at age 17/18. At the same time the Government wants to increase the number of school students

studying for vocational qualifications, permitting Business and Technology Education Council lower level Diplomas to be offered from September 1991, and increasing the rigour of Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education so that it offers a suitable route to higher level qualifications.

In **Denmark**, the Vocational upper secondary education (HTX, HHX) is a valid alternative to the general upper secondary school, since it qualifies for admission to higher education as well as employment. It has become very popular and contributed to the parity of esteem between general and vocational education.

Italy: In the late eighties the Ministry of Education launched a major initiative, "Progetto 92", to make initial training a more attractive option and to increase its success rate by e.g. introducing broader, modular courses. The results have been so promising that they will be implemented in all vocational institutes by 1996, thereby catering for some 20% of the age group. The work undertaken under Action II of PETRA is recognized by the Italian authorities as having had a significant impact on the introduction of new training methodologies and the up-dating of training curricula.

2.1.5. Vocational guidance

Vocational guidance has a central role to play in a rapidly changing and more international society in facilitating access to vocational training, and in reducing the number of drop-outs from education and training. Vocational guidance must be recognised as a key to the development of human resources, underpinning policies which strive for a better match of training provision, vocational qualifications and prospective areas of local or regional development. The issue of vocational guidance is attracting growing attention in all Member States; the need for innovation in the guidance systems and the development of existing, or the creation of new, services appears to be a common concern.

In **Germany**, the PETRA Programme has supported and accelerated decisions concerning the introduction of a Community dimension into guidance services, involving the provision of information on training opportunities in other Member States and cooperation with relevant agencies in them. In **France** the new focus on implementing a Community dimension in guidance has also encouraged cooperation between the different competent Ministries and their services, and advanced the regionalisation of the guidance service.

In the framework of the implementation of the reform of the **Spanish** system, new guidance departments are being created in all educational centres, and in **Ireland** the need for a complete overhaul of the system of vocational counselling has been recognised. The PETRA Programme has given impetus to this, and in particular, to the use of databases in the guidance system. Moreover in **Italy**, a new National Council is now concerned with the development of educational and vocational guidance.

In **Denmark** the analysis of changing needs for guidance identifies three trends: more transnationality due to the internal market; changing job profiles and the introduction of market economy in the guidance centres. Compared to the information level of 4 years ago when the activities under Action III of the PETRA Programme were initiated, there is now a much higher level of awareness amongst guidance counsellors and young people of the possibilities in other Member States.

In **The United Kingdom**, recent Government legislation now opens up management options for the provision of Careers Service. A phased process of tendering for the management of area Careers Services has been introduced to ensure that the resulting services move closer to employers and become more responsive to local needs and conditions. The White Paper on Education and Training for the 21st Century (1995) stated the Government intention that, building on existing good practice, the Careers service should raise its standards, draw even closer to employers, help

Training and Enterprise Councils build up employer commitment to training, and encourage more young people to take up education and training opportunities and aim for higher qualifications. In Scotland the Careers Service is also provided by education authorities. In late 1991 the Government held consultations on the best way of providing a strengthened role for employers in the organisation of the service.

Portugal: Since 1993, a network of 354 Psychology and Guidance Services have been created in schools and their sphere of operation may be extended. Several innovative measures have been developed over the past years including a new type of guidance for vocational training applicants, which will begin at the job centre and will continue at the training centre and will be developed in a coordinated manner, i.e. incorporating the contributions of various experts workings together as a team.

The Netherlands: In early 1993 several guidance providing organisations merged into 18 regional level Careers Guidance Offices. From 1996 they will become independent firms selling their services to schools and firms. The policy aim is to make these services more demand-led and more responsive to regional need. Efforts are also being made to create a national structure of qualifications for each sector of industry with a system of training with related final attainment levels, certification units, examinations and diplomas and the rights that go with them. A major step in this direction is the decision to integrate the Business Sector Consultations between Education and Industry, which sets the final attainment levels for senior secondary vocational education (MBO) courses and the national training agencies which set the levels for the apprenticeship system.

The PETRA Programme: The implementation of these national initiatives draws on, or is being influenced by, the new opportunities for transnational cooperation which are provided through the European network of guidance resource centres, special development projects, and training activities for guidance staff which were established under Action III of the PETRA Programme. This work under Action III was completed by other Actions of the Programme. Several ENTP projects worked directly, or indirectly, on different aspects of guidance and jointly developed new material, methods and practices. A large number of YIPS also were concerned with providing easily accessible, local information services for young people, outside the institutional frameworks. Some of the transnational Research Partnerships have also focused on the effectiveness of guidance methods and on new models to meet the guidance needs perceived by young people.

2.1.6. Promoting equal opportunities for young men and women

One of the goals of the PETRA Programme was to ensure a higher and more equal participation rate of young women to vocational training to promote a more equal gender participation at the labour market. Indeed statistics clearly demonstrate the need for this kind of action. (For an analysis of basic statistics, please cf annex. 2) Member States have reacted to this situation in several ways.

Denmark: AMU-centres - regional training centres under the auspices of the National Labour Market Authorities, Ministry of Labour - have a number of new training courses directed towards target groups of unemployed unskilled women.

In the **Flemish Community of Belgium**, recent educational policy is aimed at promoting an increasing influx and participation in the educational system in general. For this purpose risk groups have been defined and new concepts such as scope of attention have been defined. Within this general framework, specific attention is given to a priority policy regarding girls' choice of studies in technical education.

Portugal has one of the highest rates of female employment in Europe (42.7%), but two measures have been developed: a) positive action measures in the programmes run by the Institute for

Employment and Vocational training; and b) projects to train and integrate women (ex: development of women's business initiatives).

In **Ireland**, the Government's 1995 White paper on Education indicates that the Government will expect all higher education instances to develop and publish policies to promote gender equality. The Higher Education Authority will be responsible for monitoring these policies and providing appropriate support at national level.

The PETRA Programme: The theme of "*increasing the participation of girls and young women in technical and vocational education and training*" has been a transversal theme throughout the life of the PETRA Programme (1988-94). As a result, 111 projects out of a total of 732 projects involved in the ENTTPs worked on this theme. There was a good quantitative gender balance in programmes, but nevertheless the sector involved tended to reflect existing patterns. There was a majority of girls and young women in the services and commercial sector whereas young men were found in the traditional industrial branches. Also in the Leonardo da Vinci programme equal opportunities take a prominent place: Vocational training should aim to "promote equality of opportunity as regards access for men and women to vocational training and their effective participation therein, in particular so as to open up new areas of work to them and encourage them to return to work after a career break."

2.1.7. Disadvantaged persons

The reinforcing of this priority reflected the Conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council in Copenhagen in June 1993 which, urge for more intensive action to reduce unemployment and social exclusion in the Community, especially where young people are concerned. Disadvantaged young people include many different types of young people, ranging from young unemployed people and slow learners to persons with a mental or physical handicap. Action carried out at Member State level remains essential and the following developments can be identified.

In **Denmark**, production schools have been set up to offer training to young unemployed persons under 25 years with no formal qualifications and who are deemed to have no immediate motivation or possibility to acquire such qualifications. The schools give the target group the possibility to take part in combined training and production programmes.

In **Ireland**, specific measures for travellers have been established. These are training workshops to help the travellers to develop their full potential, to break the cycle of illiteracy and social deprivation in which they are trapped and to enable them to become self-reliant and self-supporting members of society.

In **France**, *Solidarity employment contracts (contrats emploi solidarité)* were created in 1990 for 18-25 year olds who have difficulty in finding employment. These give a qualification equivalent to vocational "Baccalauréat" or a technical certificate.

In **Luxembourg**, specific measures directed towards children with difficulties to learn were carried out. In 1991, the Ministry of National education presented 40 measures which should make the integration of foreign children easier. However, these possibilities are mainly available at lower levels and it has not yet been possible to introduce this at higher levels of vocational training.

In the **United Kingdom**, apart from the general Youth Training programme several measures centred on vulnerable groups have been implemented. These are for young homeless people, young residents of inner cities and other deprived areas a Training for Work programme for young people.

In the **PETRA Programme** "young disadvantaged" people was a prioritised target group, and at least 10% of the placements were destined for them. The results and experience have proved that placements are a strong pedagogical instrument for this group, and many individuals have

improved their life situation partly as a result of the experience of mobility. However, the experience gained has also shown that it is far beyond the aims and means of a programme like the PETRA Programme to take heavy responsibility for the young disadvantaged in the European Union. The new Leonardo da Vinci Programme takes up these challenges and one of its objectives is to promote equality of access to initial and continuing training for persons disadvantaged by socio-economic, geographical or ethnic factors or by physical or mental disabilities.

2.2. Raising quality of Vocational Training and Adapting to change

The national reform initiatives are also aimed at raising quality and adapting initial Vocational Training to changing needs. In the following chapter major trends are identified which are closely interlinked with each other and which serve to enhance participation in vocational education and training and to raise the status and attractiveness of vocational training.

The Netherlands: Vocational education is currently undergoing significant changes. Reform began in 1987. In 1996 with a new law (SVM-wet) on vocational education and adult education was made together with a Restructuring and Modernisation Act (SMV-wet) for senior secondary vocational education. Vocational education now covers senior secondary vocational education, apprenticeship and training provided in the context of schemes for the unemployed, and part-time senior secondary vocational education and training for specific occupations. The aim of the reform process is to introduce a flexible system of retraining and refresher courses, to align education with the labour market and to utilise the educational infrastructure for the benefit of the employed and unemployed.

Greece: Vocational training institutes (IEKs) have been established by the new national system of vocational education and training. Their aim is to modernise the Greek provision of training to give it a higher quality.

In **Portugal** a particularly important step towards raising the quality of vocational training was made with the development of a new type of vocational school, the "Escolas Profissionais", where at the same time, the old technical / professional courses were replaced with new technological courses. Laws have been made establishing: a) a legal framework for vocational training by incorporating it into either the education system or the employment market via legal provisions which give it the required uniformity and effectiveness; b) a legal framework for vocational training related to into the employment market; c) a system awarding a vocational qualification for training related to into the employment market or acquired through occupational experience; d) a system for the creation and operation of vocational colleges; e) the generalisation of technological courses in secondary school.

Luxembourg: The law of 4 September 1990 on the reform of technical secondary education and continuing training sets as an objective to intensify the incorporation of information and communication technologies in curricula, both as subjects and as a means of learning.

Ireland: A wide range of vocational education and training programmes is provided to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and the human resources needs of the economy. The main objectives of the programmes are to improve the responsiveness and flexibility of the education and training system to meet educational, social and economic needs; to improve the attractiveness of Ireland as a location for new enterprises by providing a highly educated, skilled and versatile workforce; to maintain and enhance participation in vocational education and training at all levels in order to promote equity and enhance industrial competitiveness; to equip enterprises and workers with the skills and competencies needed to cope with occupational, structural and technological change; and to ensure the competitiveness of Irish industry through the supply of skilled manpower at a variety of levels.

2.2.1. Promoting creativity, initiative and entrepreneurial spirit in young people

In adapting initial vocational training to meet new skills requirements, priority should be given to the development of transversal qualities and competencies rather than specific job-related skills, thereby promoting and fostering creativity, initiative and enterprise amongst young people. This concept is now reflected in new approaches to youth training in all Member States.

Denmark is one of several Member States where the reform of the vocational training system has placed an explicit emphasis on the development of transversal skills by requiring that one third of the subjects taught in vocational education and training courses must be general subjects aimed at strengthening the individual's personal development and enabling students to play an active role in society.

In **Luxembourg**, one of the objectives of vocational training set out in connection with the 1990 reform is to modify training methods with a view to promoting trainee's autonomy and creativity, their ability to search for and find ways of solving problems, their capacity for cooperation and ability to communicate orally and in writing in the multilingual situation prevailing in Luxembourg.

In **Germany**, in the continuing reform or re-organisation of training curricula - already completed in a number of vocational fields - particular importance is attached to improving training methods which value personal development, motivation, responsibility and key competencies of young people.

The **PETRA Programme** played an essential role in promoting such approaches, by providing a framework for pilot action and facilitating extensive transnational exchange of experience. Central to this work was the development of methods to foster key competencies, which prepare young people to cope better with the fast-changing requirements on the work place, new patterns of employment and possibilities for self-employment. Both the European Network of Training Partnerships and the Youth Initiative Projects have concentrated very strongly on these aspects and developed a variety of models involving specific forms of project work, new methods of assessment, or training of teachers and trainers. This work has attracted wide-spread attention amongst vocational schools, training centres and firms. Placements under Action I provide a valuable complement to these developments in national training systems by providing a real environment for "putting theory into practice" which enhances the individual's acquisition and further development of transversal skills. A specific Research Partnership was set up in 1991 to analyse the effectiveness of different enterprise training schemes.

2.2.2. Qualifying teachers and training staff

The principal factor determining standards in initial vocational training is the quality of the teaching and training staff. Most, if not all of the national reforms mentioned in this report are accompanied by major efforts to train the teachers and the trainers.

In **Belgium**, great emphasis is put to the continuing training of the training staff. A Government decree of 1993 defines the objectives of the training of secondary school teachers as the capacity to implement educational and pedagogical priorities; the acquisition of personal behaviour to efficiently administer human relations; the updating of competencies and vocational aptitudes in exercising their function; the acquisition of knowledge and capacities with a view to exercising another function; the study of societal problems which influence the behaviour of young people as well as the understanding of social, economic and cultural phenomena; and the development of communication, group work as well as the implementation and development of projects within the framework of teaching establishments.

Within the Department of Education in **Ireland** there is equally a recognition of the need for a cohesive national policy on and a comprehensive programme of in-career professional

development of teachers. Thus a major restructuring of teachers/trainer in service provision is foreseen in the Education White Paper from 1995.

In **Germany**, the PETRA Programme was the first programme which organised transnational cooperation of trainers and which allowed these trainers to get familiar with different methodologies and in some fields with a high standard of new technologies in vocational training, such as multi-media.

The United Kingdom: The implementation of the NVQ/SVQ (National vocational qualifications, Scottish vocational qualifications) framework from 1986 includes the establishment of standards that form the substance of training programmes for trainers in all areas and are being embedded in NVQs. Another important initiative is the *Teacher Placement Service (TPS)*, which aims to organise placements in business for 10% of teachers each year, increasing their self development and that of their students. Awareness of industry and commerce promotes realistic expectations and helps students to make more informed decisions about future training and career choices. More than 70,000 teachers have been involved so far, thereby benefiting many thousands of young people in schools.

In 1992 the **Portuguese** Ministry of Education published a new legal arrangement for the in-service training of teachers. Under this system, teacher training centres associating schools of all levels of education are created alongside the institutes of higher education responsible for initial teacher training. At the present time there are 200 training centres. During their first year of operation, 70,000 teachers received training (70% of the overall total employed in basic and secondary education). The main fields comprising the standard source content of training for trainers are: social training, training management, planning of training, organisation of training and training technology.

In **Spain**, stricter rules are to be followed in the process of recognising vocational training teachers, in order to improve the quality of the teaching and training staff: A university degree will be required, the teacher must belong to the Association of Teachers in Secondary Education, and finally the trainer must have completed a teacher training course.

Some of the PETRA Research Partnerships were focused on this issue, but the widest range of activity in this field was developed within the framework of ENTP. The great majority of projects used the opportunity presented to them through the transnational partnerships to exchange staff and carry out staff training activities, with a view to widening their staff's awareness of industrial standards, attitudes and practices in other Member States. Since 1988 approximately 30,000 trainers, tutors and teachers who have participated in, or are still involved in, the PETRA Programme were introduced to the Community dimension and increased their knowledge about the policies, practices and attitudes in other member States. They are now able, in their day-to-day training practice, to apply this European experience and thus underpin the implementation of reform activities in their respective Member States.

2.2.3. Certification of qualifications

The certification of qualifications and the qualitative improvement of training provision forms a central part of current reform or new legislation launched in a number of Member States, and some of the developments in this field are set out briefly below.

In **Luxembourg**, measures to increase the success-rate in initial vocational training have been introduced, notably an apprenticeship system with two levels of certificates: One basic certificate after 2 years (CITP = certificate d'initiation technique et professionnelle). A second degree of apprenticeship (CATP = certificate d'aptitude technique et professionnelle) can be obtained later. Since this system only entered into force in the 1994-1995 school year it is yet too early to evaluate.

Ireland: The main drive to improve the standards and quality of training and its overall attractiveness to employers, parents and young people has been in the development of appropriate certification as part of general education and the expansion of certification in post-compulsory education and training through the National Council for vocational awards. Thus, in September 1989, a new two-year vocational training initiative was introduced, which provides a Leaving Certificate Course giving each participant a grounding in specific technological areas, a modern language, and work experience (age 17/18). Work experience (minimum 4 weeks) is undertaken during the course. The European Dimension in education will be emphasised in the areas of language, technology, work experience and guidance counselling. The leaving Certificate Applied programme was available from September 1995.

In **Denmark**, all vocational education and training courses lead to a skilled worker-certificate issued by the general Committees which has general validity.

Greece: In the law (1992) reforming the national system of vocational education and training one of the main tasks is the formal certification of vocational training. It is hoped that the OEEK (Organisation for vocational education and training, set up by this law) will develop into a research, advisory, executive and supervisory body for Education/training programmes as well as an agency for the definition of specifications for the recognition of diplomas.

In the **United Kingdom**, similar aims are intended with the introduction of General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQs), which assess whether an individual is prepared for entry into a broad range of related occupations, including the possibility that this may entail progression through higher levels of education. **Scotland:** SCOTVEC (Scottish Vocational Education Council) completed a major reform of its advanced level qualifications in 1993, the central features of which are unitization of the Higher National Certificates (HNC and HND) qualifications and the introduction of two new qualifications (SVQs= Scottish Vocational Qualifications and GSVQ= General Scottish Vocational Qualifications).

2.2.4. Reinforcement of links between training establishments and industry

Some of the most important measures in forging closer links between educational or training establishments and enterprises are all forms of on-and-off-the-job training and apprenticeships / traineeships, and almost all countries have developed their initial training provisions in this direction. An important trend is that more emphasis is put on a dual system of vocational training and practical experience. As a consequence of this growing awareness of the importance of closer links between training establishments and industry, countries who earlier didn't have a dual system of initial vocational training, with part of the training given by training bodies and another part of practical experience in enterprises, are now introducing this form of initial vocational training. In countries where the dual system already existed, this is now being reinforced (e.g. France, Belgium). It seems that there is a growing awareness that practical experience is indispensable to ease young people's access to the labour market by giving them a first practical vocational experience.

Denmark: There is open admission to training and education and a free choice of school, but intake is limited by the number of training places supplied by companies. To counterbalance this short-term demand led model and to make it more attractive to enterprises to create training places, the AER (Law on Employer's apprentice reimbursement scheme of February 1992) system was set up, which is now the backbone of the Danish alternance training model.

As it has already been mentioned, **Germany** has a long tradition for the dual system and measures are currently being taken in order to further strengthen the efficiency of the system .

United Kingdom: In September 1995 two provisions for apprenticeship were launched nationwide: *Modern Apprenticeships* which offer young people a work-based route to skills at craft,

technician and junior management level, mainly aimed at 16 to 17 year olds, and *Accelerated Modern Apprenticeships* for 18 to 19 year olds.

In **France**, the apprenticeship system has been enhanced in a way which is very much in line with the alternance system propagated by PETRA, and which attaches much importance to placements. A new law on apprenticeship was passed in 1992, with the following objectives:

1. to involve trade sectors and employers more closely in young people's initial training;
2. to improve the position of apprentices, for example by increasing their earnings and taking the skills they have already acquired into account when determining the duration of their articles;
3. to adapt apprentice training centres and allow vocational lycées to accept apprentices;
4. to introduce regional-level negotiation on the development of apprenticeship, leading to agreements between the State and the regions;
5. to extend the scope of the apprenticeship contract to the public sector.

The French system now comprises alternating training measures for 16 to 25 year olds, which are based on three types of integration contracts: guidance contracts, qualification contracts and adaptation contracts.

In **Luxembourg**, one of the objectives of the 1990-reform is to adapt the content of training to the socio-economic context, in particular by promoting school-industry links. Another objective is to adapt the aims of apprenticeship in line with economic and social changes and the challenge of Europe.

The Netherlands: On August 1, 1993, the part-time Vocational Courses Act (WCBO) came into effect, establishing regulations for the apprenticeship system, part-time senior secondary vocational education and training for specific occupations.

Ireland: In 1991, the Ministry for Labour announced the introduction of the new apprenticeship system which came into effect in 1993.

In all Member States, enterprises were encouraged to take an active part in the **PETRA Programme**, and a number of projects, both under Action I and in the ENTPs were initiated by firms. Through their involvement in transnational training cooperation, and the opportunities offered to their young workers or trainees to benefit from a training placement in another Member State, firms were able to develop European experience amongst their staff, including SMEs where such opportunities rarely exist because they do not have the resources needed for transnational cooperation. In Germany, for instance, experience under Action I has shown that professional organisations and chambers of trade and crafts can be instrumental in involving SMEs in transnational training and work experience placements. They can provide an operational framework at local and European level which compensates for the lack of organisational infrastructure in individual firms, guarantees that the quality and content of placements correspond to specific needs, and makes it possible to capitalise on transnational experience gained by other SMEs in a particular sector or local area. In addition, some professional organisations, chambers and regional authorities use the framework provided by PETRA to create, or develop, their own networks for transnational cooperation and joint exploitation of training resources, especially in border regions, but also between more remote parts of the Community.

2.2.5. Involving social partners

In order to better adapt national provisions for initial vocational training to the labour market need, closer links with the social partners are created almost in all countries. Indeed, the close association of social partners in the definition of training need allow for a more effective training of young people.

The involvement of social partners in the definition of national training needs is indispensable in order to better adapt training provisions to the needs of the labour market. This theme is closely interlinked with the theme "Reinforcement of links between training establishments and industry"

but goes beyond it, since the involvement of the social partners include not only dual training methods, but also the involvement of social partners in the definition on training needs, and the financing of certain training provisions.

The role of social Partners has been strengthened in almost all countries, and this aspect has a high priority at national level.

Denmark: Traditionally, the Social Partners have always been closely involved in vocational training provision and with the reform of 1989 their position within the system has been further strengthened, both at national and at local level. The social partners participate extensively in the policy making and management of the system at central as well as local level, and the system has been designed to secure that the labour force currently has the skills and qualifications demanded in the labour market. The organisational structure at national level involves a new VET Council which consider general issues. The Council is an advisory board and makes recommendations to the Minister of Education. It also involves Trade Committees (parity of membership of social partners) which handle curricula-issues. At school level, local education and training committees have been set up to which representatives of social partners must make up the majority. These committees have an advisory capacity and will strengthen the cooperation between the school and the local labour market.

Italy: Over the past years a series of agreements have been concluded between training authorities and national and regional level associations of employers and trade unions. As a result, the Social Partners now share responsibilities e.g. for identification of skills needs at regional level, the designing and delivering of training curricula and, in particular, for the provision of work experience places. Since 1992, in both technical education and vocational training, these placements have become compulsory. Both transnational placements under Action I (in which participated over 3,500 young people in initial training and some 2,000 young workers), and work developed in the ENTP projects contributed to the integration of work experience in the curriculum. The relevance of transnational placements, as developed in PETRA, was explicitly recognised in the Bill on work experience placements, adopted by Parliament in 1993. In this Bill it is stipulated that all regulation, e.g. on the social and legal status on Italian trainees also pertain to foreign trainees on work experience in Italy, thereby giving them a profound legal status.

The Netherlands: The social Partners now bear the main responsibility to set the standards for initial training: Sectoral level committees, in which training organisations also participate, have the task to develop training "attainment targets", which are valid for both senior secondary vocational education and apprenticeship courses. They also identify new emerging training needs. Social Partners have seats in the board of the newly established Regional Employment Committees. Finally they help deliver the training curriculum. In close consultation training institutions and the social partners have to agree on the means to use to achieve the attainment targets for example on the role and place of work experience placements.

In **Belgium**, a tripartite **Flemish** Education Council was set up in 1991 to bring together all parties concerned with education and training in a common approach to identifying training needs, and to feed relevant information to vocational schools, training establishments and employment services. Similar committees were also set up a regional level. This institutional effort was followed up by the creation of the States General for Technical Education in 1993, which brings together representatives of Education, Social Partners and the Government to regroup study disciplines in certain areas and adapt training programmes to the need of the labour market. In the **French Community** of Belgium, the formal signature of the "Apprenticeship Charter" in March 1993, by the national educational authorities and the social partners, marked the beginning of close cooperation and concertation between schools and enterprises.

The Organisation for Vocational Education and Training, in **Greece**, involves representatives from different Ministries and the Social Partners in its management board and is responsible inter alia for

policy development, the implementation, planning and coordination of training provision and cooperation with national and international bodies.

In **France**, in addition to the work of the High Level Committee on Education and Economy (HCEE), created in 1987, a National Committee on Education and Professions (CNEP) was set up with the participation of the Social Partners to examine all decisions which concern both areas. The 1991 law, which concerns the establishment of university institutes with a vocational training content, embodies the main provisions of the agreement reached by the Social Partners in July 1991 (greater participation on the part on employers, extension of the arrangement to enterprises employing fewer than 10 people, reform of alternance training, etc).

In the **United Kingdom**, many of the detailed responsibilities for the management of training, and the provision of training which meets the skills requirements of a particular geographical area, have been decentralised to Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) or Local Enterprise Councils (LECs) in the case of Scotland. These TECs and LECs are locally based, employer-led bodies which provide a focus for cooperation between education, training and the world of work.

In **Portugal**, the agreement on vocational training policy, concluded in July 1991 and signed by the Government and the social partners, has reinforced the social dialogue in the field of vocational training. Under the agreement, action by the social partners includes the following: definition, monitoring and evaluation of training policy; participation in the structures for the coordination of training and qualification; and monitoring of the development of Community vocational training policies. The Social Partners are beginning to assume an important and increasing role as promoters of training. New training profiles and curricula and new training programmes have been established in direct association with the social partners. As a result of this cooperation, there has been a significant increase in the dissemination and recognition of new offers of training and the rate of employability of young people.

In **Ireland**, the Social Partners are playing a full part in discussions on initial training. The Irish Business and Employer's Confederation (IBEC), in their policy statement of June 1992, underlined the need for all young people to have the opportunity of a structured training programme organised and controlled by industry and providing certification with national and international recognition.

In **Luxembourg**, the new law on technical and vocational education urges schools to establish stronger links with the world of work, through support for cooperative projects with industry.

In **Spain**, the "Plan Nacional de Formacion Profesional" proposed by the General Council for Vocational Training with the participation of the Social Partners was approved by Government. This plan necessitates a close cooperation and coordination between all bodies responsible (the Ministries of Education and Employment and the Social Partners) in the initial vocational training of young people (formacion reglada), training of the unemployed and continuing training of workers (formacion ocupacional).

2.2.6. Decentralisation - local and regional focus

Young people have different training needs and often require assistance in identifying which particular type of training would be most suitable for them: fully school-based courses, with work experience placements, apprenticeship type courses, combinations of these in long or short courses, etc. To suit these various needs, several Member States are experimenting with regional training centres in which different training options, and sometimes also guidance and pre-vocational options, are provided. Moreover decentralisation of responsibility for the provision of training has especially helped make vocational training more responsive to local and regional requirements.

In **Germany** a pilot project is currently running (1990-1996) called "decentralised learning". Focus is on cooperation between training establishments, undertakings and schools. It is build on the

hypothesis that in modern, technology based work methods is has become possible and necessary to promote integrative forms of relationships between work and training. "Decentralised learning" has the advantage of combining real action in working life and learning by doing with international learning.

The Netherlands. The decision to create regional bodies for the apprenticeship system (ROC), for vocational education and adult education represents a major step towards the integration of the various sorts of vocational training, as intended in the new law on vocational education and adult education which entered into force in 1996 (WEB). The ROC provide the following types of training: adult basic education, general secondary adult education, apprenticeship system, senior secondary vocational education (MBO) and local non-formal education.

In the **United Kingdom** TECs (Locally based Training and Enterprise Councils) were set up in meet local needs. In May 1994 the Government announced new arrangements for contracting with TECs in England based on the provision of 3 year licences to TECs which meet specified levels of performance and capability. The first TEC licences were issued in April 1995. All TECs must achieve a licence by 1997 as a condition of continued government funding. TECs are responsible for designing and delivering training and enterprise programmes that meet the needs of their particular labour markets.

One of the main features of the 20 December 1993 law covering the next five years in **France** is to enhance the role of regions, which are seen as privileged geographical areas for vocational training. This feature involves an extension of the ongoing decentralisation process, the elaboration of a regional development plan for vocational training of young people, and the extension of the competencies of the coordination committee for regional apprenticeship programmes and programmes for vocational training.

In **Portugal**, the Ministry for Education was restructured in April 1993, making the regional services stronger and the central structure more flexible.

In the **PETRA Programme**, some of the Research Partnerships worked on new models for more effective planning of training provision at regional level. The ENTP projects, through their commitment to practical cooperation with a variety of partners in their local or regional context, underpinned responsiveness to new needs. Through transnational training placements and partnerships projects, new approaches were developed to enhance more "transversal" skills which increase young people's capacity to adapt to changing requirements in the workplace. New experience was gained through the work of the ENTP, in the joint elaboration and implementation of training units covering specific content topics. A major contribution of both the transnational placements and the ENTP projects is to be seen in the fact that they have highlighted practical ways of facing a number of needs and changes with regard to training in a new, evolving Community context.

2.2.7. Modular organisation of training

The importance of introducing flexibility to national systems of initial vocational training has been acknowledged widely. There is a trend towards prolonging courses of initial vocational training, introducing more general subjects, which will enable young people to become more able to adapt to new situations, learn how to acquire new knowledge, and providing young people with the possibility to change from one area of vocational training to another.

2.3. Transnational cooperation

2.3.1. European dimension

A number of Member States have deliberately explored the opportunities offered through the PETRA Programme to introduce or reinforce a Community dimension in their initial training provisions.

In **Denmark**, two new laws inspired by the PETRA Programme were passed in February 1992 entitling all young people in vocational training courses to spend all, or part of, the practical work experience component in another EC or EFTA country. The periods spent abroad are fully recognised and accredited and financial support is made available from a training fund created by a training levy paid by employers. The main objective is to internationalise the aims and content of Danish training courses and despite the limited experience so far, many vocational schools and Trade Committees would like to see placements abroad as an integral and compulsory part of vocational training courses.

Similarly, in early 1992, the **Dutch** Government published a discussion paper to outline its new policies for the internationalisation of education and training. Amongst other activities, this policy involves the promotion of a new exchange programme for teachers and trainers; financial support for a national support agency for transnational exchanges. As a result, in 1993, almost all of the 140 senior secondary vocational education training colleges have participated in at least one of these transnational programmes.

United Kingdom: The European Dimension is an important feature of the Technical & Vocational Educational Initiative (TVEI) from 1987. TVEI funds have been used to introduce aspects of European business and culture into schools and colleges and to facilitate experience of work in other countries.

In **France**, an important number of Academies have set as a priority the development of the transnational, and in particular, European activities and thus, all training bodies are encouraged to participate in Community Programmes.

Luxembourg: One of the priority lines in the 1990 reform is to prepare the workforce for the single market, through the introduction of a European dimension in initial vocational training.

Other Member States have used "their" projects in the ENTP to provide a "Community window" in national reform initiatives. In **Ireland**, contact with the initial training systems of other Member States has been a major positive element which has informed the debate on the development of the Irish system.

As a clear demonstration of the interest of the **Italian** authorities in transmitting the importance of a European dimension to students in initial training, it was decided to translate the text of the official diplomas into all other official EU languages. As they are forwarded together with a description of their content, they form an important contribution to the discussions about a "training portfolio". Participation in PETRA placements, or other similar activities, are explicitly mentioned on the diploma.

By networking projects throughout the territory of the Community, **the PETRA Programme** has also created practical facilities to promote cooperation between the more advanced and the less developed regions and between Northern European countries and Southern ones. Through the PETRA Programme, the Community has played a particularly active role, since 1988, in the development of transnational vocational training placements for young people. Compared to general youth exchange activity or mobility of university students between the Member States, opportunities for exchange in the field of vocational training were, and still are, very under-

developed; studies conducted during the first phase of the PETRA Programme suggest that only between 0.5% and 1% of the young people were benefiting from a placement period in another Member State which formed part of, or completed their initial vocational training. Since 1992, the placement element has been formalised in Action I and now constitutes a structured framework for the organisation of training and work experience placements in another Member State ensuring that such placements are undertaken in conditions which promote the development of vocational knowledge and skills.

By publishing and providing financial and technical support to transnational exchanges, the PETRA Programme has provoked an upsurge of interest, at all levels in the training world, in Community aspects of training and in cooperation with partners in other Member States. Through its operations, the Programme has lowered the threshold of access to cooperative work in the Community for many training institutions which had little or no previous experience in this field, and has directed their attention to the European dimension of training. It has also promoted the idea, amongst training establishments, of "shopping around" for innovative training products (methods, materials, courses) and other training support, and of offering, in turn, their own specific experience and practice. To some extent, this has fostered a form of entrepreneurial spirit in the establishments involved in transnational placements or in the ENTP, which was enhanced through their search for partnership at the local/regional level, and helped them to play a more pro-active role on the training market.

In a large number of training partnerships, this has led to the joint development and application of curricula and training materials. In some of the partnerships, where the young people completed a jointly-developed new training module in another Member State, the results were fully credited for (part of) a vocational qualification, by all the Member States participating in the respective partnership.

2.3.2. Mobility

Transnational mobility is not only a vital element in providing young people with inside knowledge of working cultures in other countries; it is also a rather new element, which meets a wide range of obstacles. (Obstacles to transnational mobility are dealt with in the Commission's Green Paper "Education - Vocational training - Research: The obstacles to transnational mobility", cf Annex.3)

In some Member States, PETRA placements have provided young people with the first opportunity to experience training and work situations abroad, and they represent the largest part of transnational placements available to young people from that country (Greece, Italy, Portugal), while in other Member States, they have provided an important stimulus to improve further the quality and increase the number of transnational placements (Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands). The Programme contributed to the broadening of experience in this field, and particular efforts were made to overcome the organisational, linguistic and other obstacles to young people's participation in transnational placements. NCU pooled experiences and examples of good practice as well as developed guidelines and material for foreign language provision designed to meet the needs of the PETRA Programme and its public.

In **Belgium** the Ministry of Labour had agreed to an exemption for young unemployed persons carrying out a transnational placement not exceeding three months. They could leave Belgium without losing their right to unemployment benefit and without having to wait for a period of time before starting to receive unemployment benefit again when they returned. This exemption is also agreed within the framework of the Leonardo da Vinci Programme.

The French-speaking Community in Belgium: The Ministry of Labour has officially recognised PETRA placements in the beginning of 1994, and the right to obtain unemployment benefit may be maintained during vocational training placements abroad. This is a direct consequence of a joint initiative of the PETRA NCU and the EU Programme EURES.

In **Italy**, a new law "Progetto 92", which integrates apprenticeships / mobility measures, is clearly inspired by the PETRA Programme.

Denmark: In February 1992 two laws were passed, and it could be said that they were influenced by the objectives and the common framework of the PETRA Programme, as they concern mobility. According to this new legislation young people in VET courses may pass all or part of their practical work experience in an enterprise in another country and have it recognised on equal terms. So far, 300 students per year have utilised this new opportunity and it is hoped that the yearly number will increase to 500. Placements abroad are welcomed and supported legally and financially in many sectors, notably the metal sector, the hotel and catering sector and the construction sector which have been very active in facilitating placements abroad.

Germany: The mobility actions of the PETRA Programme have been an important complement to existing mainly bilateral placement programmes and have raised the number of participating young persons in this kind of activities considerably. Placement experiences have proved essential to foster key qualifications.

In the **United Kingdom**, the Teacher Placement Service has helped to establish placement programmes in a number of other Member States and has developed a Euro-wide network to facilitate reciprocal placements between states.

Raising quality of vocational training is in the centre of all national reforms, many of which lay greater emphasis on strengthening the link between training establishments and industry, for example by means of work or training placements. Vocational qualifications aside, there is no doubt that work or training placements have an enormous impact on the young people in terms of learning other skills. These skills have in the past years proven to be more important than narrow, technical skills, which might become obsolete with the rapid development in technology. For this reason the acquisition of core competencies has become one of the priorities in the Leonardo da Vinci Programme, and is one of the five major priorities listed in the White Paper "Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society". Key qualifications include entrepreneurial skills such as creativity, initiative, risk-taking, overview and responsibility, flexibility, communication, linguistic skills, decision making, problem solving, quality consciousness, self-confidence, social skills and tolerance, team-building.

The acquisition of transversal skills is hard to measure - as well as to assess. However, transnational mobility has proved to be one of the best ways of conveying them, because placements are made up of a series of situations in which you have to apply transversal skills in order to survive or to be successful.

2.3.3. Vocational language skills

As a complement to the objectives of the PETRA Programme it is evident that adding vocational language skills to the curricula is very important. In almost all countries awareness of the necessity to develop foreign language teaching further is increasing, and this is often seen in the broader context of furthering a European or international dimension or in the context of the definition of transversal key competencies. Improving vocational language skills, however is seldom a high ranking priority at national level.

United Kingdom: Awareness of the importance of increasing young people's language skills is rising. Thus the development of young people's understanding of European and World issues is an integral aspect of the United Kingdom national curriculum. The study of another European language is an important part of compulsory education of most young people. As one of the foundation subjects of the national curriculum, a modern foreign language must be studied by all pupils.

Luxembourg: One of the objectives of the 1990 reform is to promote young people's autonomy and creativity and other transversal skills such as the ability to solve problems, cooperate with others and to communicate orally and in writing in the multilingual situation prevailing in Luxembourg.

In **Germany**, emphasis is laid on the "European ability" of young people. The further development of European cooperation and the dynamic of the Internal Market makes it necessary to make German vocational training more centred on European matters. In this connection, the practical knowledge of foreign languages is indispensable as is the further development of transnational placements in the framework of European and bilateral programmes of exchanges.

The PETRA Programme has, together with the LINGUA Programme backed up national efforts to promote vocational language skills, and it could initiate new national initiatives as for example the development of a national action programme to promote language learning within vocational training. In the framework of this action programme a project has been implemented which promotes young workers coming from small and medium size enterprises to learn languages abroad.

3. CONCLUSION AND PERSPECTIVES

A number of challenges remain for the future. This is clear from the analysis of the actions carried out under the PETRA Programme and the policy development in the Member States in the field of initial vocational training. A number of aspects should be given further attention in the development of future Community action in the field of initial vocational training. It will be important to give priority to the following main areas:

- Reducing the number of young people who enter the labour market without a basic qualification.
- Increasing the attractiveness of vocational training
- Introducing a practical Community dimension into initial vocational training
- Developing core competencies through initial vocational training
- Reinforcing vocational guidance provision and adding a Community dimension to it
- Disseminating innovation in initial vocational training, within Member States and transnationally

The Leonardo da Vinci Programme has broken down the sharp division line between initial vocational training and continuing vocational training thus aiming at furthering life long learning and closer links between training provisions at all levels. It builds on the experience from the PETRA Programme and other Community Programmes in the field of vocational training and is thus an instrument to answer to some of the future challenges outlined above. The Leonardo da Vinci Programme was adopted on 6 December 1994 and covers the 5-year period from 1994 to 1999 and all 18 EEA countries take part in it.

Annex 1:

The allocation of financial resources to the various Actions of the programme is summarized below:

Million ECU	1988-1991	1992-1994	1992	1993	1994
Action I: Transnational training and work experience placements	*				
- Young people in initial vocational training		15.844	3.699	5.144	7.000
- Young workers, young people in advanced programmes, young unemployed		39.200	13.143	12.557	13.500
Sub-total Action I		(55.044)	(16.842)	(17.702)	(20.500)
Action II					
- ENTPs	20.648	29.935	7.953	11.001	10.980
- YIPs	5.031	3.317	1.011	1.106	1.200
Sub-total Action II	(25.679)	(33.252)	(8.964)	(12.107)	(12.180)
Action III: Cooperation in the field of vocational guidance	**				
- National Resource Centres		3.548	600	638	2.310
- Development projects		2.340	414	1.396	530
- Transnational projects on the training of guidance counsellors					
Sub-total Action III		(5.888)	(1.014)	(2.034)	(2.840)
Complementary Measures					
- Information and Dissemination Activities	2.823	4.239	719	1.380	2.140
- National Coordination Units	3.082	4.540	1.554	1.466	1.520
- Community-level Technical Assistance	6.385	***	2.900	***	***
- Cooperative research and studies	2.021	2.356	728	807	820
Sub-total Complementary measures	(14.311)	(11.135)	(5.901)	(3.653)	(4.480)
TOTAL	39.990	105.319	32.721	35.496	40.000

* In the period 1988-1991, transnational training placements and exchanges were organised within the framework of ENTP

** In the period 1988-1991, activities in the field of vocational guidance were included in the work of ENTP.

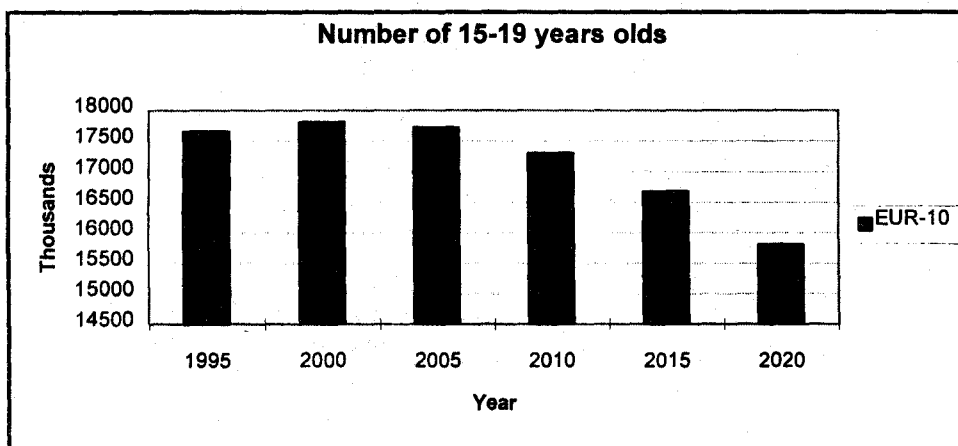
*** From 1993 onwards, the allocation for this assistance is included in part A of the Commission's general budget

Annex 2: Statistical background

In the current period of demographic decline, vocational training institutions are facing increased competition for young people in the training age group. In 1988, the first operational year of the PETRA Programme, the total number of 15-19 year-olds was 26.1 million in the Community and about one third of these young people were estimated to participate in full-time or part-time initial vocational training.

Forecasts on the **number of young people** (not including Italy and Portugal) in Europe indicates that the number of 15 to 19 year-olds will increase slightly in the year 2000 and afterwards decline from 17.7 million in the year 2000 to 15.8 million in the year 2020. (cf Fig. 1). This means that to retain only the same number of people with technical qualifications as in 1995, training systems will need to attract about 37% of the relevant age group in the year 2020; even larger efforts will be required to increase the number of participants in initial vocational training.

Fig. 1: Total number of young people
(Source Eurostat, EUR-12 figures not including Italy and Portugal: EUR-10)

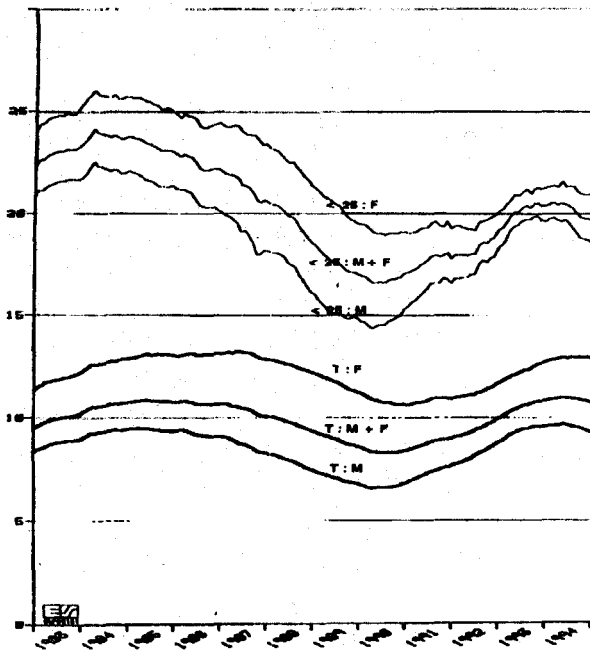


The **unemployment rate for the population as a whole** has been increasing during the last few years from 9.2 % in 1991 to 11.2 % in 1994 (cf. Fig. 2). This figure hides some important discrepancies between countries and between various groups of people. Thus, unemployment is raising in all countries over the period from 1988 to 1994 with the exception of Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, where there was a small decrease in unemployment from 1993 to 1994. When considering the change from 1992 to 1994, only Denmark and Ireland showed less unemployment in 1994. Moreover the overall unemployment rate was falling from 1988 to 1991, whereafter the unemployment rate rose again (cf. Fig. 3).

Fig. 2: Unemployment rates, annual averages
(source Eurostat)

	EUR 12	B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
TOTAL MALES AND FEMALES													
1988	9,8	10,2	6,4	6,3	7,7	19,4	9,9	17,3	10,9	2	9,3	5,7	8,5
1991	8,7	7,5	8,9	4,2	7,7	16,4	9,5	16,2	10,1	1,6	7,1	4	8,9
1994	10,9	10	10,1	6,2	n.a	23	11,3	17,7	11,8	3,3	n.a	6,1	9,6
MALES													
1988	7,9	6,9	5,4	5,1	4,9	15,2	7,6	16,8	7,3	1,5	7,1	4	8,7
1991	7,2	5	7,8	3,7	4,8	12,3	7,4	15,6	6,8	1,3	5,3	2,8	10
1994	9,5	7	9,1	5,9	n.a	18,5	9,4	16,7	8,3	2,6	n.a	5,3	11,2
FEMALES													
1988	12,6	15,4	7,6	7,9	12,5	27,5	12,8	18,4	17,2	3	12,7	8	8,3
1991	10,9	11,4	10,2	4,9	12,8	23,8	12,1	17,3	15,6	2,3	9,8	5,7	7,6
1994	12,9	14,4	11,2	6,7	n.a	30,9	13,6	19,7	17,8	4,4	n.a	7,3	7,4
UNDER 25 YEARS MALES AND FEMALES													
1988	19,8	20,3	8,7	6,8	25,6	40,3	22,1	25	33	4,8	14,6	13,1	12,4
1991	17,7	16,7	11,2	3,8	24,6	31,1	21,3	24,5	28,5	3,2	11,4	9,1	15
1994	20,2	20	10,6	5,2	n.a	38,3	23,4	26,4	31,1	7,1	n.a	11,4	14,9
UNDER 25 YEARS MALES													
1988	17,4	15,1	7,8	6,2	16,8	34,1	18,3	26,8	27,6	4,4	13,9	9,6	13,3
1991	16,3	13,6	10,2	3,9	17,1	25,7	18,1	25,9	24,2	3,2	10,8	6,5	17,3
1994	19,3	17,7	9,7	5,6	n.a	34,3	21,2	27,8	27,1	7,9	n.a	9,5	17,5
UNDER 25 YEARS FEMALES													
1988	22,4	25,8	9,7	7,4	35,6	47,7	26	22,7	39,2	5,2	15,4	17,5	11,3
1991	19,3	20	12,4	3,8	33,5	37,8	24,6	22,7	33,7	3,1	12	12,1	12,1
1994	21,2	22,4	11,5	4,7	n.a	43,5	25,7	24,7	36,1	6,1	n.a	13,6	11,8

Fig 3: Unemployment trends for the European Union (EUR-12, source Eurostat)



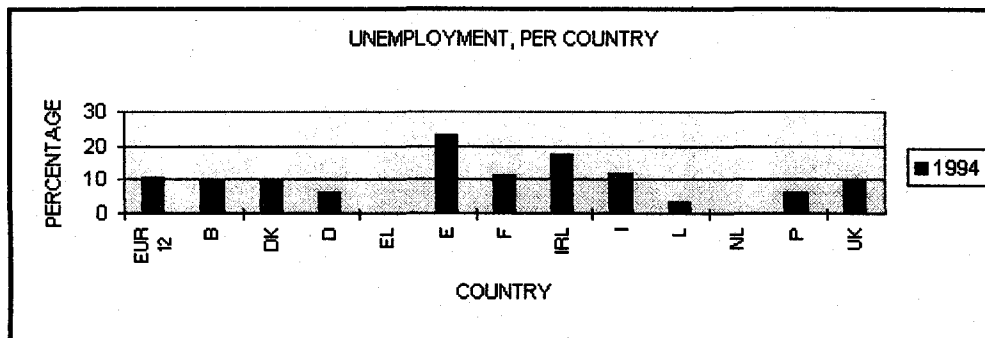
Legend:

- < 25 : F Unemployment rate for young women under 25 years
- < 25 : M+F Unemployment rate for young persons (men and women) under 25 years
- < 25 : M Unemployment rate for young men under 25 years
- T : F Unemployment rate for women
- T : M + F Unemployment rate for the total population of working age
- T : M Unemployment rate for men

Some countries (cf. Fig. 4) have particularly high rates of unemployment (IRL: 17.7% in 1994 and E: 23% in 1994) whereas others have very low numbers of unemployed (P: 7.0% in 1994; L: 3.3% in 1994). This means that unemployment in the countries with most difficulties (E) is nearly 7 times higher than in the country with least unemployment (L).

Moreover there is a higher unemployment amongst women than amongst men. Thus, unemployment for women was 13.1% in 1991 compared to only 8.7% for men, and 12.9% in 1994 compared to only 9.5% for men.

Fig. 4: UNEMPLOYMENT PER COUNTRY (Source Eurostat)

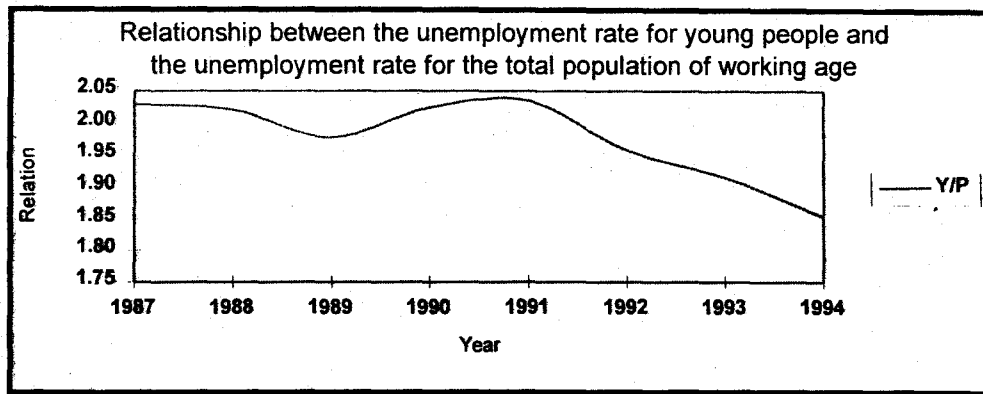


Young people have been particularly badly affected by unemployment during the whole period of the PEIRA Programme (cf. Fig. 5). On average the unemployment rate for young people under 25 years is twice as high as for the population as a whole, reaching 21.3% in 1991 and 20.2% in 1994. There is a slight tendency of the unemployment of young people to approach that of the population as a whole: the relationship between the unemployment of young people and the population of working age was 2.03 and fell to 1.85 in 1994, but this may be due to the fact that unemployment is generally increasing.

Fig 5: Unemployment rate: young people & total population of working age (Source Eurostat)

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
EUR12								
P=M+F	10.5	9.8	8.9	8.3	8.7	9.4	10.5	10.9
M	8.7	7.9	7.1	6.6	7.2	8.1	9.3	9.5
F	13.1	12.6	11.8	10.8	10.9	11.3	12.3	12.9
Y=YM+YF	21.3	19.8	17.6	16.8	17.7	18.4	20.1	20.2
YM	19.1	17.4	15.2	14.7	16.3	17.4	19.5	19.3
YF	23.9	22.4	20.3	19.1	19.3	19.5	21	21.2
Y / P	2.03	2.02	1.98	2.02	2.03	1.96	1.91	1.85
YF / P	2.28	2.29	2.28	2.30	2.22	2.07	2.00	1.94

- Legend:
- P: Total population (male and female)
 - M: Total male
 - F: Total female
 - Y: Total population under 25 years (male and female)
 - YM: Total male under 25 years
 - YF: Total female under 25 years



Here again we find important differences between countries, with Luxembourg having only 7.1% in 1994 and Germany having only 5.2% in 1994. Countries with high levels of unemployment amongst young people are Spain with 38.3% in 1994 and Italy with 31.1% in 1994.

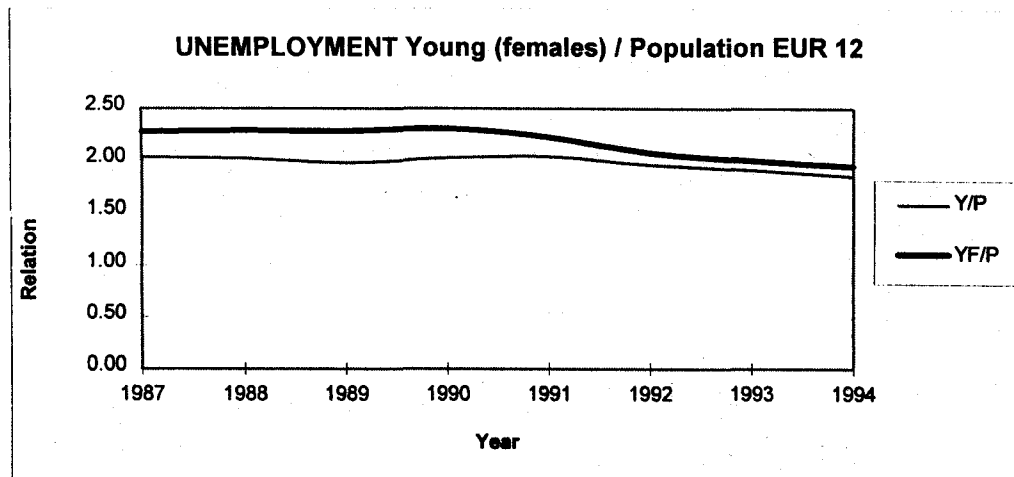
Equal opportunities:

Indeed unemployment figures show that unemployment for women is generally *higher than unemployment for men*. Thus the unemployment rate for women was 13.1% in 1987 (8.7% for men) and 12.9% in 1994 (as opposed to only 9.5% for men). When we look at the group of young women under 25 year of age, the situation is even clearer: Young women have a particularly high rate of unemployment (1994 21.2% of young women are unemployed compared to 19.3% of young men and 10.9% of the population as a whole, cf Figure 2).

Unemployment for young women has largely followed the *same trend as unemployment of the population as a whole*: The rate falls slightly from 1987 to 1991 and thereafter raises again. The figure of unemployment for young women in the Community hides very important differences between countries: Unemployment for young women is particularly high in countries like Spain (43.5% in 1994) and Italy (36.1% in 1994). In Italy the unemployment rate of women (1994: 17.8%) is more than double of that for men (1994: 8.3%). Other countries have remarkably low rates of unemployment for young women, e.g. Germany with only 4.7% in 1994.

Moreover it is interesting to consider the *relationship between the unemployment rate for the population as a whole and the unemployment rate for young women* (cf. Fig. 6). We see that the difference between the two rates is becoming smaller: In 1987 relationship was 2.27 whereas in 1994 it had fallen to 1.94. The unemployment rate for young women remains however, almost the double of the unemployment rate for the population as a whole. Finally, it should be noted, that the relationship between the unemployment rate of young women is approaching that of young people in general.

Fig 6: Unemployment rate of young women compared to the unemployment rate of the population as a whole (source Eurostat)



Legend :

- Y:** Young people under 25 years (men and women)
- YF:** Young women under 25 years
- P:** Total population of working age (men and women)

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ISSN 0254-1475

COM(97) 385 final

DOCUMENTS

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04 13 16

Catalogue number : CB-CO-97-388-EN-C

ISBN 92-78-23016-2

Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

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