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## INTERIM REPORT

on the implementation 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. (PETRA Programme)

(presented by the Commission)

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#### Introduction

To prepare for the 1990s and beyond, the Community must ensure that initial vocational training is available to all, so that no young person enters the labour market without at least a basic qualification; and that this training is increasingly European in character. These are the goals of the Council Decision of 1 December 1987 under which the PETRA programme was set up.

The Commission's Interim Report, required under Article 4 of the Decision, covers:

- the economic and social challenges facing Member States in trying to achieve these aims; and the disparities in Member States' progress towards achieving them (Part I);
- the policies and strategies being used by Member States to achieve them (Part II);
- the Community-level actions undertaken since 1988 within PETRA the European Network of Training Partnerships, the support of youth initiative projects; the expansion of the existing study-visits scheme for vocational training specialists; and support for collaboration on research (Part III).

The Report concludes with a set of priority points, on how the Action Programme should be developed for the future.

## I. Towards initial training for all

Youth training policy is no longer dominated mainly by the problem of youth unemployment. It also has to respond to the rapidly changing requirements of industry, and in many regions, a sharp drop in the number of young people available for training and employment, as the result of demographic change.

Industrial change and "1992"

The restructuring of industry, global competition, market economy thinking, and the imminence of "1992" are revolutionising perceptions of the importance of training; of priorities within it; and of strategies to deliver it.

Two main points follow from this. First, that "more of the same" in the sense of keeping more young people in school on existing courses, for a longer time, is unlikely to be the best solution. It is necessary to educate more young people to a higher level to ensure their employment and continuing employability in the new technological world. Fundamental changes of objectives are required: towards education which values autonomy, creativity and adaptability; and towards training which emphasises breadth, polyvalence, and preparation for further training.

Second, the need for such fundamental reorientation of priorities and processes could carry with it the need to change the structures of education and training in several important ways.

Decentralisation of decision-taking to regional/local level is becoming more common, as is the need to combine resources, through training partnerships, to meet new demands. Training is increasingly seen as a shared responsibility between social partners and the State.

The growth of interest, among training institutions, in sending their students abroad for a period of study or a period of work in a foreign training institution or firm, is evident almost everywhere. During the period in which PETRA has been working, and no doubt partly because of it, it has grown particularly rapidly. The period up to 1992 is likely to see it intensify. National authorities have encouraged bilateral exchange schemes in a few cases. But generally, national-level facilities to respond to this interest by providing information or help, are still lacking and need to be developed.

Much the same applies to the development of partnership or twinning arrangements between training institutions. Quite a few have acted, on their own initiative. But the extent to which this is so has not been monitored and there is a lack of guidance or models of good practice to assist the process. This aspect of training is of the greatest interest and importance, in the context of PETRA's role in helping add a European dimension to national vocational training.

## Demographic and social change

Most Member States are already experiencing a dramatic decline in the numbers of young people of training age. For every 100 young people in the age-range 15-19 in 1990, there will be 88 in 1995, and 84 in the year 2000. Among the changes this will bring will be new opportunities for improved participation by women in training and employment. It will also make it even more important to find successful solutions to the needs of those who leave compulsory school with poor qualifications and without motivation to enter training. Other effects will probably be:

- some rationalisation of training opportunities to cope with the smaller numbers. This may mean the merging or combining of separate training institutions, in order to preserve the existing range of course choice, or, where this is impossible, a reduction in the choice available. In sparsely-populated areas, special strategies to prevent choices falling to an unacceptable level will be necessary.

- there will be increasing competition between general education, the training system and the labour market for the diminishing number of young people. More attention will be needed to developing strategies to persuade young people of the long-term value of training, so as to counter the financial and other attractions of entering employment at the first opportunity;
- for the same reason, the role of the guidance services will become even more important.

Greater attention to the consumer's point of view in regard to training will also be needed. In a consumer's market, young people's aspirations, and their search for identity, status and independence in the adult world will need to be taken more seriously. The cultural gap between vocational training and general or higher education will have to be tackled. Equality of status, as well as better progression from vocational training into further training, will be on the agenda. In short, one effect of demographic change may be to reinforce the need to rethink the "cultural" and social status of the world of initial training, so as to reduce the gap between it and that of general education.

#### Youth unemployment

The demographic changes and the economic upturn in most regions of the Community have meant that the alarmingly high levels of youth unemployment in the late 1970s and early 1980s are now, in many areas, a thing of the past. However, there are still serious regional disparities and youth unemployment persists at unacceptably high levels in many regions, especially Spain, southern Italy, Ireland, and France. In high unemployment areas, young people suffer disproportionately high rates of unemployment. The unqualified are worst hit, especially those from ethnic minorities. In addition, young women suffer disproportionately to their level of qualifications.

The PETRA Programme is well-suited to make a contribution to Community policies designed to reduce these regional and social inequalities. But it has to be recognised that the Community's main response lies in the deployment of the Structural Funds, under the new Regulations agreed in 1988, whereby Community resources, on a much increased scale, are being directed to help the less-developed regions (under Objective 1), areas suffering from industrial decline (Objective 2), the adaptation of rural areas (Objective 5), and the social integration of young people, as a special target group (Objective 4).

The Community's new policy for the deployment of its Structural Funds in this way implies a potentially important role for the PETRA Programme. In the past, and even now in some cases, a major criticism of the effectiveness of the training courses for young people organised by national authorities using European Social Fund resources, has been that they did not lead to a recognised qualification of general value on the labour market or providing access to adult training. The emphasis being given in the PETRA Programme to training for "entrepreneurship", and to local partnership approaches, reflects national and Community-level responses to the problem of making such training more responsive to local employment needs and possibilities, and the need for greater coherence, at all levels between training policy and policy for reducing unemployment and promoting local development.

In this context, the development work being undertaken through the PETRA Programme is of importance for identifying successful strategies and approaches, to be applied both in the deployment of the Structural Funds and by national and local authorities in the development and implementation of their own training policies.

The main aim of the Decision and Member States' progress

The Decision calls for one, two or three years of initial vocational training to be available to all who wish it. Such training should include some further general education, for personal development and to

prepare for further education and training in adult life, and a guidance element, to help plan for one's personal and vocational future. This cannot be done in a short course, and requires, as foundation, a substantial period of general education to precede it.

Although the length of compulsory schooling varies in Member States, there is a strong tendency towards fixing the minimum leaving-age at the end of the 15th year.

The extent to which young people are retained in full or part-time education and training beyond the end of compulsory full-time schooling (i.e. beyond 16, for these purposes) varies considerably between Member States.

In broad terms, <u>for 16-year-olds</u>, over half the Member States have retention rates over 85%, some nearer 100%. But the disparity is wide. The lowest figures are those of Spain and Portugal, at 50-60%.

For 17-year-olds, the pattern is of a "high" group composed of Belgium, France and the Netherlands with retention rates of 80% or more, and Germany with over 90%; a "low" group consisting of Spain, Portugal, Greece and the United Kingdom with figures between 40% and 60%; and the others, i.e. Dermark, Ireland, Italy and Luxemburg, in between.

At age 18, the disparities are even greater. Four out of five young people are still at school or in training in Germany. Belgium, Dermark, France, the Netherlands and Ireland show figures around 60-70%. Portugal and the United Kingdom show figures aroung 30%. The rest are in between.

The sources of these figures are primarily the PETRA Interim Reports prepared by each Member State. In addition, information from national statistical offices and the OECD was used.

#### II. National policies and programmes

Initial training is only one stage in a connected process of life-long education and training. Policies to provide it have to be integrated with those for the other stages before and after it, so as to ensure: the development of (full-time) compulsory education in such a way as to prepare young people for entry into vocational training; the provision of initial vocational training which is of high quality, in terms of its adjustment to social and economic needs, and of its attractiveness and appropriateness to young people; clear articulation of initial vocational training with continuing training, especially by the creation of "bridges" into it and by facilitating the accumulation and transfer of training credits.

### A. Improving and extending compulsory schooling

As part of their strategy to develop and improve their initial training, nearly all Member States are engaged in developments to strengthen the foundations on which it rests, i.e. compulsory secondary education. Four distinct types of development can be seen:

- Extending compulsory schooling. Big differences exist in the length of full-time compulsory education. In a number of Member States the statutory minimum age for leaving full-time school is fixed at 16, or after 10 years of schooling; in some others young people can still leave much younger, i.e. at 15 in Greece, Ireland, Luxemburg, Belgium; at 14 in Italy and Spain; and at 13 in Portugal.

In response to this situation a major reform is currently being implemented in <u>Portugal</u> to extend compulsory full-time education by three years, and similar reforms are being prepared in <u>Italy</u> and <u>Spain</u>, to extend it by two years. In all three cases, new provision is envisaged, to strengthen vocational preparation as part of compulsory education.

- <u>Strengthening vocational/technical elements in the curriculum</u>. In other Member States, where structural reforms are not being undertaken, similar developments can be seen, aimed at strengthening the technical and vocational side of the curriculum for all pupils.

In the <u>United Kingdom</u>, an important development is the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI), which started as an experimental programme in 1983 and is aimed at shifting the emphasis in general education for the whole 14-18 population by introducing technical and vocational elements and relating the whole curriculum better to the world of work. The Initiative has progressively expanded in England, Wales and Scotland, and by the early 1990s, all schools and colleges will have the opportunity to participate in it.

A more recent initiative in the United Kingdom is the development of local area-based Compacts, i.e. agreements between schools, employers and young people, by which firms guarantee a job with training, or training leading to a job, for every participating young person who has achieved an agreed set of objectives and a certain level of attainment at school. Somewhat similar objectives apply to the new group of City Technology Colleges (CTCs) which are jointly sponsored by the Departments of Education and Industry, while the introduction of the new National Curriculum (1988) will also reinforce other initiatives aimed at improving school-industry links.

In <u>Ireland</u>, Vocational Preparation Training Programmes (VIPT) of varying length (1 or 2 years) have been developed in the last few years; and are now offered by 50% of all secondary schools to young people at the age of 15 (end of compulsory education) or 17 (end of uppersecondary education).

- Improving teaching methods and links with guidance. Strengthening the compulsory school curriculum does not necessarily imply more emphasis on technical subjects or vocational preparation, but also new methods of teaching and learning, integrating guidance more closely with the learning process. Several examples can be quoted.

In <u>France</u>, the ongoing process of 'rénovation des collèges' (curriculum development in compulsory schools providing general education up to age 16) and the new framework legislation ('loi d'orientation') on the development of education, have provided strong new encouragement to schools, to respond more flexibly to the varied needs of their students.

In <u>Dermark</u>, broadly-based vocational guidance is fully integrated into the compulsory school curriculum. It involves a wide range of inschool and out-of-school activities, including project work and work experience in the local community, to help young people understand the world of work and make informed vocational choices. This is also true for <u>Germany</u>, where the concept of 'Arbeitslehre' (Teaching about the world of work) forms an integral part of the curriculum of the 'Haupt-schule'. It has been successfully developed further over the past 20 years and is now being extended to other types of secondary school.

- <u>Developing the use of, and learning about, new technologies.</u>
Introducing new information technology (IT) into secondary education is clearly seen in all Member States as an important strategy to develop in young people the skills needed for training and working life.

In <u>Ireland</u>, the new "National Information Technology in Education Centre" (NITEC) provides information and networking services to schools, helping them to draw on recent developments and to co-operate with other schools and experts, in Ireland and abroad.

In the <u>United Kingdom</u>, a national five-year programme, the "Information Technology in Schools Initiative", aims at increasing the effectiveness of schools' use of IT throughout the country.

Major national programmes have also been launched, in a number of other Member States, to foster the use of computers in schools, e.g. in Dermark, Germany, Greece, France, the Netherlands, and Spain.

#### B. Developing post-compulsory education and training

In turning to the strategies being used to develop post-compulsory vocational education and training, it is necessary to bear in mind that national systems differ here even more than at the compulsory school level. They differ principally with regard to:

- the provision of part-time compulsory education or vocational preparation, which is a feature in the Netherlands (up to age 17) and in Belgium and Germany (up to 18);
- whether mainstream initial training is school-based or work-based. In Germany, for instance, it is mainly work-based; elsewhere it is mainly school, college or training centre-based;
- where central Ministerial responsibility for training is located. Apprenticeships and work-based training are regulated sometimes by Education Ministries (e.g. Dermark, Germany) and in other cases by Employment (e.g. Portugal, United Kingdom). In nearly all Member States, post-compulsory vocational courses, of one or more years' duration, are the responsibility of Education Ministries. But vocational training is also provided to young people by much shorter courses, often run by Employment authorities. These courses are usually outside the regulated mainstream systems, and many of them do not lead to qualifications which are recognised on the labour market;
- the treatment of the social and economic status of young people in vocational education and training. Depending on the type of training they follow, and the Member State they live in, young people may have the status of student, trainee or employee; and they may be receiving training allowances or salaries, or not.

A series of related strategies are being used by Member States to improve post-compulsory education and training. Most of these actions involve projects linked to the PETRA Network.

An important objective is to raise the status of vocational training. In <u>France</u>, a vocational 'baccalauréat' has been introduced into the 'lycées professionnels' which may be obtained by young people on successful completion of a two-year course following their initial vocational qualification. Under the new reform in <u>Spain</u>, "Module 2" courses (post-compulsory vocational courses) and "Bachillerato" courses (upper secondary general, technical or scientific education providing entrance qualification for university) will be located together, though not integrated, in the same schools or centres.

New strategies to adapt the content and methods of initial training to meet new needs aim particularly at fostering key personal competences such as creativity and analytical thinking, ability to work in a team, independence and communication skills. In Germany, this concept is central to the current progressive review of vocational training in all sectors of the 'Dual System'. Similar concern can be found in other Member States. Within the context of PETRA, a group of mini-company projects, involving initiatives from Spain, France, Ireland, Inxembourg and the United Kingdom, are developing transnational cooperation with this aim in view. They also include measures to broaden training so as to develop more polyvalent skills, and knowledge.

The introduction of more new technologies, and the integration of industrial work into school or college-based training, are other objectives being pursued. There is also an increasing responsiveness to regional industrial needs. Most Member States are reinforcing their efforts in this field. In <u>Denmark</u>, <u>France</u>, <u>Ireland</u>, <u>Italy</u>, the <u>Netherlands</u>, <u>Portugal</u> and the <u>United Kingdom</u>, action is being taken to strengthen the autonomy of training institutions, and to encourage them to work more closely together with employers, trade unions and other partners in their area, so that they can provide the training programmes needed to enhance local and regional development.

Increasing coherence and flexibility between systems run independently by education and employment authorities, so as to remove barriers to progressive qualification, is also an important aim. This implies greater cooperation between providers of training, and the creation of partnership structures at national and regional levels: National and regional coordination mechanisms, involving education and training authorities, and the social partners, have been an important stimulus for this - e.g. in <u>Belgium</u>, <u>Dermark</u>, <u>France</u>, <u>Germany</u> and the <u>Netherlands</u>. In <u>Greece</u>, new regulations for training and employment have been introduced under a recent law (1989) which provide for a National Council for Vocational Training and Employment, led by the Ministry of Labour and involving a number of other Government departments concerned, industrial organisations, the social partners, the association of local communities and municipalities and others. A new development in the <u>United Kingdom</u> is the creation of a network of Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). Starting in 1990, about 100 TECs will be established over the coming three or four years, to promote new training partnerships with employers.

The strengthening of apprenticeship and other work-based systems is also being tackled in a number of Member States. In <u>Germany</u>, almost three-quarters of young people obtain their initial vocational qualification through the "Dual System", i.e. regulated training of about three years' length on an employer's site, with alternating periods of attendance at a vocational school. Similar types of apprenticeship training play also an important, and increasing role in Dermark, including the EFG-Scheme, and in Luxemburg. Some other Member States (Portugal, France, Belgium and the United Kingdom) have recently launched initiatives to enhance forms of work-based training.

The importance of improving vocational guidance is reflected in attempts to introduce greater continuity in the guidance process, from compulsory education through to the first stages of stable employment; in efforts to coordinate services better and to integrate them closely with training programmes; in initiatives to encourage self-information and the use of new information media in the guidance process; and in efforts to introduce a European dimension into guidance provision.

Finally, efforts to train more girls in scientific and technical fields are a feature in the strategies being used by all Member States.

#### C. Programmes for disadvantaged young people and disadvantaged areas

The purposes of the Decision cannot be achieved unless special attention is focussed on the needs of "disadvantaged" young people, i.e. those without qualifications or with hardly any, or with unmarketable ones, and who are therefore most at risk of unemployment.

The measures being taken to improve compulsory full-time schooling are all helpful towards meeting the training needs of these young people, in that they imply a shift towards broad vocational preparation, and in some cases the provision of alternative curricula designed to respond to the needs of low-achieving pupils. In <u>Spain</u>, a vocational preparation course ("Module 1") is to be developed as part of the current reform, for those who cannot cope with the mainstream curriculum. In <u>France</u>, reinforced action to reduce school failure in all schools, has been initiated under the 'loi d'orientation', and fosters the concept of a 'pédagogie de la réussite' (learning through success).

In vocational training, the concept of a "social (or youth) guarantee" is increasingly permeating Member States' policies. Closer cooperation between education and employment authorities is noticeable in some Member States in this area. It already has a relatively long tradition in <u>Dermark</u>, and is strongly reflected in the philosophy of the YTS in the <u>United Kingdom</u> and in the 'dispositif jeunes' (Youth package) in <u>France</u>. In the <u>Netherlands</u>, a decision on the proposed youth guarantee plan is expected to be taken in the near future. A range of programmes have been launched within the Community which reflect this concept:

- in some Member States, e.g. <u>Italy</u>, <u>Spain</u>, forms of "education and employment" contracts are provided on a large scale for 16-18 year-olds who have left the education system prematurely;
- in <u>France</u>, the 'crédit formation' plan provides a new form of more coherent management of training possibilities for young unemployed and for those leaving education with low qualifications or without any;

- in <u>Ireland</u>, the new "Youthreach" programme, set up in 1988, offers up to two years of education and training for unemployed young people who have dropped out of school for six months or more;
- in <u>Germany</u>, the programme for the vocational integration of disadvantaged young people has been expanded during the past years. It now provides vocational preparation or training, and additional social and pedagogical help, for about 43,000 young people with special needs;
- in <u>Spain</u>, the new network of workshop schools ('escuelas-taller') and craft centres ('casas de oficios') provides up to three years' training, involving part-time practical work, for unemployed young people with various levels of ability.

The experience of "youth initiative" projects, run as part of PETRA and largely managed by young people themselves, is of interest for their value as an extension of quidance and training provision.

An important point to be made about many of these programmes for disadvantaged young people is that emphasis is increasingly placed on their relevance to employment, rather than to social care or social policy (though both perceptions are not necessarily in conflict).

#### III. Community-level action

Community action to implement the Decision's objective of adding a Community dimension to the design and implementation of vocational training policies in the Member States include: the creation of a European network of training initiatives; support for innovative youth initiative projects; exchanges of vocational training specialists; technical assistance; collaboration on aspects of research; and the organisation of dialogue and review of the implementation of the Programme, between policy-makers and the social partners.

At the invitation of the Commission, national authorities appointed senior officials, to act as National Policy Coordinators (NPCs), to assist the Commission implement the Programme, and to ensure its integration with the development of national policies and practice.

In 1989, the first operational year of the Programme, PETRA had a budget of 9.5 MECU broken down as follows: European Network of Training Initiatives 4.5MECU; Youth Initiative Projects 1.0MECU; Research Strand 0.9MECU; Technical assistance and support, and conferences 3.1MECU.

#### The European Network of Training Partnerships (ENTP)

The European Network of Training Partnerships aims to stimulate the development of new forms of training which will contribute an increasingly European dimension to national policies for initial training. The Network emphasises the importance of partnership in two ways: the mobilisation of the available resources of the public, private and voluntary sectors at national, regional and local levels; and transnational partnership between training institutions.

During 1988 and 1989, a Network of some 134 Partnerships has been established, consisting of training projects from two or more countries.

These projects reflect certain high priority themes in Member States: the development of better training to meet the needs of disadvantaged young people and disadvantaged areas; training linked to local economic development and the use of education for enterprise; the development of alternance-based training and the use of work experience; the development and use of new teaching methods, especially those using new technology, modular units and individualised training; the improvement of guidance services; and support for the training of girls in technical and scientific fields.

The Commission provides financial support to each training project involved in a transnational Partnership. It is planned to admit about 90 more projects, in a second wave, in 1990, and a further wave in 1991, and to create new Partnerships from them.

The Commission also assists the development of the European dimension, and the transfer of experience to the less-developed regions, by: encouraging the Partnerships to engage in concrete cooperative action, including the exchange of staff and students, and development of joint training approaches; and through, thematic studies, seminars and reports aimed at highlighting forward-looking, European-level, developments in policy and practice, relevant to the thematic priority areas set out in the Decision.

Technical assistance grants have also been made available to the priority regions, to enable them to participate more effectively in the Programme.

## Youth Initiative Projects (YIP)

The purpose of the "youth initiative" projects is to release the talent and energies of young people, by giving them a chance to explore their own ideas for solutions to their problems and needs. Projects based on this approach have been supported experimentally by the Commission since 1986, and, since 1988, support has been given as part of the PETRA Programme.

In 1988, 475 applications were received and 191 projects were offered finance (i.e. a small non-renewable grant). Most of the projects accepted were in the field of youth information but initiatives aimed at job creation, training, and social and cultural activities were included. In all cases the main criterion for support was that the projects should be managed and controlled mainly by young people.

International networking of these projects has been a feature of the Programme, and the first major international conference to review their work took place in Bonn in September 1989. 18 projects have also been chosen to take part in a two-year transnational evaluation of the youth initiative approach, developing and studying its impact and potential value in different thematic areas.

#### Exchanges of vocational training specialists

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training has been involved in all major policy discussions on the implementation of the PETRA Programme, and is responsible for the administration of the European Community Study Visit Programme for Vocational Training Specialists. The theme of "Youth training aimed at innovation and employment" was included as a priority focus for study-visits in 1990.

#### Research cooperation

The main aim of the research component is to stimulate cooperation between research institutes on issues concerning the effectiveness of vocational training in Member States. A number of research partnerships have been set up, on five themes. The first concerns national processes for responding to changing needs for vocational skills. The second concerns approaches to monitoring participation trends in vocational training. The remaining three themes relate to the improvement of prevocational training for those who leave school with low or without qualifications; the training of training staff; and the development of new models of vocational quidance.

#### IV. Conclusions and priorities for the future

The main purpose of this report has been to focus attention on national and Community-level action designed to lead towards achieving the two main aims of the Decision under which the PETRA Programme was set up, namely ensuring that initial training of high quality is available for all, and, secondly, giving it a European character. From such a stock-taking, it is desirable that conclusions should be drawn about priorities for future action. These are grouped in two parts.

#### Initial vocational training for all

- 1. The disparity between Member States' situations in regard to achieving the basic aim of the Decision, and the need for partnership at all levels in order to do so, suggest the desirability of establishing targets, in terms of the number of people entering, or continuing in, the education and training system, and (more importantly) in terms of the percentage successfully completing training.
- 2. More attention should be given to improving the quality of training, so as to raise its status, attractiveness and coherence with other stages and forms of education and training.
- 3. Member States undertaking strategic reforms of their initial training should publish more material in a form suitable for international study, so as to develop greater mutual awareness of each others' policies and facilitate debate.
- 4. Partnership between education/training authorities and industry should be developed at national and regional/local levels where they do not already exist. Action at Community level should be taken to stimulate and support this process.

- 5. Community-level dialogue on the development and evaluation of approaches to meeting the needs of disadvantaged young people, for initial training, should be continued.
- 6. The contribution of youth-led (youth initiative) projects is likely to be of particular value in regard to disadvantaged young people. As results become available from such projects, they should be studied by those responsible for evolving transition strategies between education, training and employment.

## The European dimension

- 1. The PETRA Programme should be seen as being able to make an important contribution to reducing regional disparities.
- 2. Access to the PETRA Network of Training Partnerships should be widened to include all training actions financed by the European Social Fund under Objectives 1, 2 and 4, provided that they reflect the policy criteria set out in the Decision.
- 3. Even this widening of the ambit of the PETRA Training Partnership Network will still exclude participation by training institutions and authorities in the mainstream of training in all those regions/Member States not eligible for support under the European Social Fund. Consideration must therefore be taken to widening the extent of PETRA's own funding in order to permit them also to participate as soon as possible, provided that they, also, meet the PETRA policy criteria.
- 4. While the PETRA Partnership Network is likely to prove an effective vehicle for promoting contact, cooperation and twinning between training institutions, the funds available to such a partnership are limited in scale and duration, as befits a developmental purpose. They do not, in any sense, touch the wider and deeper question of offering equality of access to students in initial vocational training to study and experience abroad in Europe, in the same way as it is becoming

available, with Community support, under the ERASMUS scheme to students in higher education. Attention must be focussed on experience so far with student exchanges, joint programmes, etc. in the initial vocational training field, so as to identify the most appropriate forms of such exchanges, and the problems, solutions, and unresolved needs pertaining to this area of European action. A preliminary survey, to be followed up by a more specific study, has been undertaken as part of PETRA support work, and proposals arising from the results of this work will be brought forward in due course.

- 5. Consideration should be given to the development of European training modules, of a standard size, which would be suitable to form part of national/regional training courses.
- 6. The participation of multi-national and large national firms, and trades unions, in the PETRA Programme should be encouraged.

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