

STUDY CONFERENCE

OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF

TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR THE

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OF RURAL AREAS

HELD IN DUBLIN ON 23 AND 24 OCTOBER 1978

Ministry of Cultural Affairs,  
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## I. THEME AND ORGANIZATION OF THE CONFERENCE

On 23 and 24 October a study conference was held in Dublin at the headquarters of the Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. The theme of the conference was the assessment of four pilot projects on the development of training programmes to promote the development of rural areas and financed by the European Social Fund.

The conference was organized by the Studies and Pilot Projects Division of the European Social Fund (part of the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs of the Commission of the European Communities). Members of the European Social Fund Committee were invited together with their deputies and also two rural development experts from each Member State.

The conference began with three introductory speeches on the four pilot projects to be assessed. Then three particular aspects were taken and studied in greater detail:

1. Training : The possible application in other parts of the Community of the training programmes and empirical data which have proved their worth in the pilot projects.

2. Pilot projects : The significance of pilot projects for rural development.

3. Information : The need for supplementary measures to be taken at both national and local level to improve the Commission's system for circulating the findings of pilot projects.

Each of these aspects was studied in depth by a working group set up for that purpose. An attempt was made at the plenary closing session to draw conclusions from the working groups' findings and to make recommendations to be brought to the Commission's attention.

## II. THE AIM OF THE CONFERENCE

As already indicated, the intention of this study conference was to assess four pilot projects financed by the E.S.F. and relating to development and training programmes to promote rural development. The immediate aim of the conference was threefold and can be summarized as follows :

1. A comparison of the results of a preparatory study and of three pilot projects set up with assistance from the E.S.F.
2. Consideration and assessment of the possibility of applying these results in other parts of the Community.
3. The formulation of recommendation to be taken into account when deciding future E.S.F. policy on rural development.

### III. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FOUR PILOT PROJECTS

The four pilot projects the results of which were discussed at the conference and on which more detailed information is given elsewhere in this report can be summarized as follows.

1. Muintir na Tire project in Ireland :

Concerned with the selection and practical training of six full-time and twenty four part-time officials as active development workers who should be in a position to back-up existing (non-professional) development work in 200 community councils throughout rural Ireland. The aims of this programme also included the development of projects for these communities.

2. Institute of Public Administration in Ireland :

Concerned with training and further training programmes to improve the effectiveness rural work and to indicate shortcomings in the training programmes for development workers in rural communities.

3. Istituto Regionale Emiliano Romagnolo per il Servizio Sociale (IRESS) in Italy :

Concerned with the training of development advisers in Emilia Romagna and of staff to administer and organize basic local services concerned with social work, health care and family help.

4. Centre de Formation et d'Etude Rurales Appliquées (CEFRA) in France :

A study project concerned on the one hand with listing possible training programmes which might contribute to the structural (social and economic) consolidation of craft and small-scale industry in the Ardèche and on the other to list possible ways of improving the pattern of cooperation in the agricultural sector.

#### IV. A COMPARISON OF THE FOUR PILOT PROJECTS

The four pilot training projects under assessment were very different in character although, broadly speaking, three of them did, have similar objectives. The first project was concerned with the training over a three year period of young but not completely inexperienced men for development work in a voluntary context (MUINTIR NA TIRE). The second project related to the training of experienced officials who had all been employed by the Government on the promotion of economic development (IPA). The third project was remarkable for its unusually good training scheme for young graduates enabling them to cover the whole varied range of social work in a two year course (IRESS). The fourth project dealt with the future training requirements of craftsmen and tradesmen based on the results of academic research into demographic, economic and sociological factors out in the region concerned (CEFRA).

The logical conclusion is that the comparizon of these projects, one with the other, is particularly difficult as a result of these differences, and might even be considered unjustified. Instead of concentrating on the possibilities of comparison attention should therefore be directed towards the extent to which the results of each of these projects can be generally applied.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions drawn during this preparatory conference concerning the significance of pilot projects for the social and economic development of rural areas in the Member States :

- A. Pilot projects have a revitalizing effect on existing policy measures concerning the social and economic development of rural areas. This mainly results from the fact that their small-scale pattern corresponds closely to the every day reality of living and working in the countryside.
- B. Especially in Ireland (where there are no local authorities as such) pilot projects provide a good opportunity for an information comparison of the voluntary work organized by the hundreds of village councils. In this way the most effective elements of the various approaches could possibly be more systematically combined in a development programme.
- C. If the participation and involvement of the local population can be sufficiently emphasized in the planning of the project may provide a structural incentive for them to begin schemes themselves. This became particularly clear in France.

The conference decided on the basis of the above conclusions, to urge the European Social Fund Committee to encourage the development of this sort of pilot project as a matter of policy and to circulate the results more widely.

The conference considered the question of how information transfer must be organized so that as many rural areas as possible can profit to as great an extent as possible from the results of pilot projects carried out elsewhere.

The following conclusions were drawn :

- A. The current information system (see Annex 11) is satisfactory but still open to improvement.
- B. It would be useful if the Committee would provide information and circulate a list of its projects. This would :

- (i) give promoters with common interests the opportunity of contact;
- (ii) help prevent the same work being done twice;
- (iii) give organizers a chance to examine each others research techniques used in the planning of the project;
- (iv) offer a possibility of combining projects, whether they are taking place in one or more Member States.

C. Preparatory conferences of officials employed on the pilot projects provide a good opportunity for the exchange of experience and the transfer of relevant information.

D. On the one hand, the use of specialist jargon should be avoided. On the other hand the recommendation that concepts which have different meanings in different Member States should be explained by means of foot-notes is worth considering.



VI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF E.S.F. PILOT PROJECTS FOR THE POLICY OF THE  
MINISTRY OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS, RECREATION AND SOCIAL WORK

The importance of Dutch participation at a conference of this nature can perhaps be gauged by the question : "What does this have to do with the Netherlands," Attendance at this conference proved that the delegate from one of the smallest and richest countries in Western Europe did not have any real business asking himself such a question. When the delegate is moreover also employed by a Ministry, which, by reallocating resources and manpower, is trying to bring about a more evenly-balanced distribution of welfare provisions, then such a question becomes absolutely humiliating.

The importance of the Dutch Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Work's contribution to this study conference can only be measured on the basis of two questions :

1. Would the countries which benefit the most from the E.S.F. have any use for the wide experience and methods which have been acquired and developed in our country in the field of rural development work ?
2. Would the pilot projects also be of importance in relation to the quality and quantity of development work in the Netherlands ?

We believe that the answer to both questions is yes. As regards the first question it is still a fact that there exists in the Netherlands a lot of knowledge and experience which would be useful to other Member States. (Consider, for example, the idea of a European vacancy clearing-house for development workers). As for the second question attendance at this conference has at least made it clear that when assessing welfare plans it is of great importance to check continually whether these plans are readable and meaningful as regards language and sense in the eyes of the average citizen or welfare recipient for whom they are written. The four pilot projects assessed in Dublin made it clear yet again that one reason for a plan's success depends on the extent to which large numbers of citizens feel that the plan applies to them and can recognize their own needs in it. Moreover, we believe that it is also important when assessing the four projects to question the usefulness of development work in our country and the methodology developed there-for, for example, the Community Development Officers in Ireland.

As regards the relevance of the pilot projects and the E.S.F. policy which underlies them for policy in the Netherlands the C.B.B. organizations spring to mind in particular. It might be an idea to examine to what extent and on which conditions the C.B.B. organizations might be eligible for E.S.F. aid for the establishment of training programmes, for example, for young people from Surinam or Turkish Christians.

Also worth considering is the possibility of applying to the E.S.F. for help, with repatriation programmes foreign workers and Surinamese for example. It seems to us that the results of the Adrèche project in particular could be used, for example, for a group of Turks resident in the Netherlands who plan to establish agricultural co-operation or an agricultural co-operative in Turkey.

ANNEX 1

DESCRIPTION OF THE FOUR PILOT PROJECTS

I. MUINTIR NA TIRE (IRELAND)

The aim of this pilot project was to develop a standard for the training of development workers working for and with a rural community.

1. Objectives

1.1. The principal aim of this pilot project was to provide vocational training for a group of instructors (6 full-time Community Development Officers and 24 part-time assistants) in the theory and practice development work. The intention was for these officials be trained for development work in the 200 community councils belonging to Muintir na Tire which are mainly situated in the rural areas of the 19 counties of Ireland and although they have no public status carry out the work done by local councils in the Netherlands.

1.2. The working definition of the concept of "Community Development" as adopted by Muintir (and which has been used in the widest sense during its 40-year existence) is as follows :

... the process of combining the effect of people (in rural communities) and the authorities in order to improve the community, integrate it into national life and enable it to provide a valuable contribution to national progress.

1.3. The intention of this project was to set up a Development and Service Unit within Muintir na Tire, through which development workers could provide assistance by giving instruction, advice and information to the community councils affiliated to Muintir na Tire. Development workers would in this way be responsible for preparing, instructing and supporting of local volunteers in Muintir na Tire who are dedicated to realizing the objectives of development work.

This meant that the needs of the local communities had to be defined for optimum use of funds in order to satisfy these needs with additional funds provided by the Government and support from the county or the region in the form of financial measures or advice.

- 1.4. The aim of this development work is to combine the initiatives and action carried out by local communities in the form of social and economic projects with the projects and programmes organized by central government, regional and county bodies.
- 1.5. Community development is considered in this project as an educational process directly aimed at examining the scope for social and economic change in local communities. The constant aim of development work is to bring about a balance between employment opportunities and economic development and to establish acceptable level of social welfare.

## 2. Methods employed

- 2.1. With these objectives and features of community development work in mind and in accordance with the commitments laid down in the agreement between Muintir na Tire and the European Social Fund a model for the training of instructors was established.
- 2.2. The model covered both formal and informal training and was organized in three sections :

1. Preparatory training course for 6 development workers (formal training) + a one week visit to Muintir na Tire centres.

The intention is that all necessary knowledge of the principles and practice of "Community development", the "ideology" and work of Muintir na Tire and the role and function of official bodies within social and economic development should be imparted to the development workers.

II. The actual training courses for development workers and advisers (about three courses per year during this project). There are resident courses lasting between one and two weeks (formal training). These aim at:

- a) realizing the specific objectives arising from the annual agreements and the commitments fixed with the Commission;
- b) discussion and consultation about the progress of the project (with the help of an assessment team);
- c) planning future activities within the framework of the programme.

III. On-the-job training (formal and informal)

- a) Field work with local community councils belonging to Muintir na Tire (advice and information about the projects) and the establishment of new community councils.
- b) Organisation of training courses :
  - 1) at local community level (four to twelve weeks)
  - 2) at Regional Technical College level (one to two years).

### 3. Results and recommendations

3.1. During the last year of this pilot project development workers were involved in the implementation of several core projects concerned with economic development and social provisions for a number of selected community councils; it was found that community development training "paid its way" and that the return could easily be expressed in figures (eg. jobs).

3.2. The training provided can be considered as an essential capital investment which does not produce immediate results as far as community development is concerned, but which does yield visible results in the course of time. Its eventual success is for this reason no less great.

- 3.3. Community development, of which the Muintir na Tire programme is a good example, can only have its full effect as an integrated part of national and regional development projects if the necessary training, instruction, advice and information for voluntary staff from local councils are supplied. In this respect an examination would be useful of the French regulations on the basis of which training and instruction is provided for groups of ten or more adults.
- 3.4. Such training schemes are of great importance for the economic and social development of rural communities. For this reason it is also particularly important that data about the methods and findings of such pilot projects be communicated to pressure groups in other Member States of the European Community. The dissemination of information is necessary to enable all groups working in similar circumstances, especially in socially under-developed areas, to learn not only from the positive experience derived from these pilot projects, but also from the shortcomings and failures.
- 3.5. Muintir na Tire already has a master organization through which development programmes for training and education can be further improved. In this way the 200 community councils could be provided via training programmes with up-to-date information and advice on the details of all legal and administrative provisions which could be harnessed to supplement their local resources, and encouraged to make increased use of public revenue available for national economic and social development projects and programmes.
- 3.6. Such a total use of resources for community development covers not only finance but also staff. This means that local projects which are perhaps not commercially viable but certainly are from a social viewpoint, can be more easily implemented. Mention is made of such projects in the Irish Government's Greenpaper (Development for full employment, June 1978, page 67, paragraph 6.14), as part of a Government supported campaign to create the 65 000 jobs which are necessary to bring about full employment by the beginning of the eighties.

- 3.7 An additional advantage is that these development work projects which are not directly viable can be used to further the development and realization of the government's economic and social objectives as set out in the Irish Government's Greenpaper and bring them within the social and economic framework.
- 3.8 As regards the training of development workers in Ireland the following provision is made :
- a) use of the expertise and experience of the Muintir na Tire personnel in the community councils;
  - b) possibilities of using Regional Technical Colleges for particular training needs, especially for administrative duties;
  - c) development of cooperation and consultation between official bodies and the local voluntary community councils in Muintir na Tire. Much closer cooperation is necessary between local community organizations and official bodies like, for example, the County Development Teams, the Industrial Development Authority, the Regional Health Boards, etc.
- 3.9 From the Muintir na Tire pilot project it is clearly evident and the figures prove that, development training and up-to-date information and advice of a local social and economic nature given to local voluntary personnel and based on the motivation of the local community, is at least one way of encouraging the change in mentality necessary in the fight against unemployment.
- 3.10 The results of this pilot project must be seen within the framework of the establishment of more general training programmes in this field in Ireland and in other parts of the Community.

## II. INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (IRELAND)

Set up as a test project this pilot scheme was established to provide for the training of personnel from governmental departments in "under-developed" rural areas of Ireland.

### 1. Objectives

This test project was intended in the first place for County Development Officers, that is officials representing County Development Teams. They are concerned with the promotion of economic development, including the establishment of new industry in about 13 western counties in Ireland.

The project's programme has the following objectives :

- identifying and developing social skills necessary for the effective implementation of the task involved;
- identifying and transmitting the knowledge and expertise necessary in this field;
- determining the most essential sections of the training programmes for County Development Officers;
- determining the sort of support, apart from financial support, most needed to facilitate the establishment of industry in under-developed areas as well as identifying the training elements needed to increase the effect of this support.

### 2. Methods employed

The programme was implemented from January to November 1978 and included detailed research into the training requirements of the personnel concerned and the elaboration and implementation of a training programme to meet them. The research included, moreover, structured interviews with all County Development Officers, with all but one of the Chairmen of the County Development Teams, with a representative group of other team members, with Regional Development Officers, with executive officers from governmental bodies whose responsibilities and activities are connected with the development of the regions concerned, with the Chairman and officials of the Central Development Committee for whom the teams must produce a report, as well as with executives from a number of industrial undertakings which have been established in the western counties over the last few years.



The project also included research into the roles of the County Development Team and the County Development Officer and into their links with other organizations concerned with the development of under-developed areas. The latter research was concerned with defining the responsibility and duties of the various parties and with defining the function of the County Development Officer as clearly as possible. In order to illuminate the existing interpretation of the role and to ascertain what scope there was for revising the current role of the County Development Officer, fieldwork was preceded by a two day study discussion on the development of under-developed areas, attended by a representative group of staff from all bodies concerned with regional development.

### 3. Results

The results revealed a great deal of unanimity between the team chairmen, the County Development Officers and other members of the teams with regard to the range and scope of the roles of the team and the County Development Officer. Most people thought that the role of the team needed to be wider and to include more than it does at present. There must be consideration given to assigning the teams a more positive role in community development work and to involving them more in the development of welfare, recreational and cultural facilities. There was general agreement as to the need to make the coordinating functions of the role more efficient. The team must also be more active in other fields than industrial development as, for example, agriculture.

A very detailed description of the duties of a County Development Officer was worked out. This also formed the basis for a detailed profile of the training needs of a County Development Officer. This profile identified the types of knowledge and abilities which a County Development Officer requires in order to be able to carry out his duties in the best way possible. It also gave a list of the areas and items of knowledge and abilities which according to County Development Officers were lacking or completely absent from their existing qualifications.

On this basis it was decided to draw and introduce a suitable programme for members of County Development Teams. This programme would be established to promote team understanding and also to develop greater agreement with the team as regards external dealings.

It was held that the profile of the training needs of a County Development Officer would probably also be appropriate for officials with more or less similar duties in other Member States. It was suggested that it would be useful to carry out a further study in order to determine whether this conclusion has any basis in truth.

A part of the non-financial assistance for the establishment of industrial concerns was used for the provision of infra-structure facilities. This includes: housing for staff, good road links, well-situated sites (in some cases an experimental factory), adequate telephone lines and energy facilities. Other forms of support were: efficient co-ordination at local level of the work of governmental and semi-governmental services, suitable local information facilities, assistance, encouragement, etc. The County Development Officer was considered the right person to render this last sort of assistance and to facilitate integration into local society which had proved very important. In many cases industrialists were convinced of the need for information on industrial life to be given to schoolchildren, to their parents and to school teachers. The knowledge, abilities and attitude required of the County Development Officer in order to provide these forms of assistance, as indicated by industrialists, are also fully discussed in the report on this project.

### III. EMILIA ROMAGNA (ITALY)

In the Emilia Romagna region a project was carried out by the I.R.E.S.S. (Istituto Regionale Emiliano Romagnolo per il Servizio Sociale) of Bologna on the training of social workers for bodies concerned with social work and health care in the Emilia Romagna region.

#### 1. Objectives

This project was intended as a preliminary activity in the field of training with a view to anticipated new requirements in this field in the Emilia Romagna region following the establishment of local and provincial bodies to deal with social work and health care, the launching of a regional institute for this purpose and the introduction new powers in the field of family help, social work and health care (1975-1977). It was primarily a question of training a group of social workers in new duties in the administration, organisation and programming of social work, health care and family help services with the above bodies ("ConSORZI socio-sanitari").

The particular aim of this initiative was the establishment, trial and testing of a "training model" which could be used, both as regards method and content, for the training of this sort of social workers.

Since the project is spread over two years an additional interim aim has been set of training personnel for the administration of basic social work and health care services in new districts. This appeared useful as is further explained in the conclusions (1).

#### 2. Methods used

Thirty young people were concerned in the project which ran from the end of 1975 to September 1977, they were chosen after preliminary "ad hoc" discussions aimed either at bringing into line the basic training, which the candidates are assumed to have completed, or at further motivating candidates with a view to this social career which is new to Italy.

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(1) Like Emilia Romagna nearly all the other regions of Italy, although not all at the same time, have split their areas up into districts with equal powers (in many cases Emilia Romagna serves as a model). The proposal is therefore also of importance for the other regions, as the final paragraph will show.

The following phases of the educational and training model were decided for purposes of implementing the project.

- Practical training

Small groups of students were introduced into branches of the social work and health care organizations already mentioned and took part in the establishment and administration of various initiatives on a full-time basis. They co-operated on an equal footing with the social workers on the spot. The aim here was for them to master the necessary professional skills directly, but not only by imitating the professionals.

During this phase three whole days a week in the first year of the course and four months in the second year of the course were worked on a full-time basis. During this time the course members were able to change branch according to the specific activities involved and their training needs.

- Theoretical training

During the first year of the course the remaining two days a week were devoted to a fixed programme analyzing the assimilation process with all attention turned to assessing the motivation, mentality and capacities which were necessary for a total reform of the services.

During the second year of the course three months were devoted to seminars, group discussions and theory classes on the following subjects: social work and health care services in Italy, opportunities for reform given the current economic, social and political balance, possible plans for organizing services on different lines, all according to the impulses and needs demonstrated by the population at large.

### - Conclusion

Group reports and an individual final paper were part of the first year programme, whereas second-year students had to prepare a model project concerned with the planning of services in the branches where they had worked for the previous four months. This piece of work was one of the qualifications (together with satisfactory marks in the previous two phases) required to obtain the social worker diploma (administration, organization and programming of social work and health care services).

Briefly summarized, the methods used, which were continually checked by lectures, students, coordinators (of a training field or of a group of students in one branch) and social workers (who were already employed in the district where the occupational assimilation period took place), can be classified as follows :

- interdisciplinary study meetings;
- awakening of group spirit;
- guided exercises leading to the acquisition of specific technical skills;
- group discussions;
- individual pieces of work.

For the administration of a similar training programme the IRESS made use of :

- a group of experts from various fields who were concerned with coordinating theoretical activities (in the branch) or the practical exercises;
- a staff of university lecturers who directly supervised the project;
- advanced apparatus (video-tape, audio-visual equipment, up-to-date reference bodies and documentation on specific subjects).

### 3. Results

The pilot project achieved important positive results, both through the example given here, and because of the training provided and the interest shown by the students.

Two facts must be considered with regard to the project's repercussions, one of which applies at interregional level, the other more at regional level.

At interregional level various regions, training institutes and institutions have shown an increasing interest in the IRESS project. The project has also encouraged a more detailed exchange of views. An American group and a Swiss group have visited the institute in order to pursue the matter further.

There is general agreement that the training plan is not only effective on a regional level but can also be adopted (as has, on occasions, already happened), with any necessary adjustments, for other kinds of training. This type of training is therefore intended on the one hand for group leaders and organizers of "basic services" and on the other hand for researchers and programmers. The former operated at district level, the latter on a larger scale. The interdisciplinary approach and a combination of theory and practical work have, despite practical difficulties, opened up amazing innovative possibilities for this sort of training.

Finally, developments in the regions have confirmed the original impression that a new kind of district worker is necessary because of the expansion of the social "Consorti" to cover nearly all Italian regions and their continually pressing demands for staff trained according to the new objectives.

This pilot project has thus found a temporary, not clearly anticipated, use, in that the proposed training model can be used for the retraining of personnel from different institutions, who require such retraining, in social work and health care bodies, as laid down by recent Italian laws (as a result of the suppression of numerous national institutions, law no. 382 of July 1975 and subsequent decrees nos. 616 and 617 from July 1977.

IRESS has furthermore outlined a follow-up on the basis of which the following can be closely studied for evaluation purposes in relation to students and other personnel:

- . the sort of work in which students receiving the diploma actually find employment;
- . the effectiveness of the model (methods, context and instruments) in everyday practice;
- . the result of the assimilation of personnel holding particular qualifications as regards the organization of work and practical methods.

On the light of examination it should become apparent whether the training methods set forth can also be used in sectors outside the social field.

#### IV. ARDECHE (FRANCE)

An inquiry was organized by the Centre d'Etudes et de Formation Rurales Appliqués (CEFRA) in the Ardèche rural district into training measures for the population within the framework of the project :

"Contribution of vocational training to the development of the Ardèche".

The first part of the inquiry was especially concerned with careers within the craft sector and in light industry. The second part was particularly aimed at cooperation within agriculture.

#### A. CAREERS IN CRAFT INDUSTRIES AND IN MICRO-INDUSTRY

(Part 1)

##### 1. Objectives

It was hoped with this research to first of all provide the originators of the "Training programme in aid of the rural population of the Ardèche" with data by means of which they could visualize the critical situation in which most craft and industrial firms in the department find themselves and then to supply concrete suggestions about the rôle which training could play within the framework of a plan to combat this situation.

A pragmatic approach was followed in analyzing the current situation. It was not a question of making yet another analysis of the situation of the industrial and craft sectors but of exposing the forms and the origins of the current depressed situation which might be suitable subjects for a training course.

After an accurate identification of the fields in which training could successfully be undertaken "outlines" were provided on the basis of concrete suggestions as to which activities could preferably be concentrated on activities to be stimulated and relevant training schemes; structural modifications and relevant training schemes still to be planned; the timetable, general conditions for the success of the training plan and the various proposed phases.



## 2. Methods used

In defining the situation in the craft and industrial sector, they began first of all with a critical examination of available statistics which proved themselves time and again to be inadequate or unreliable. Consequently supplementary figures were collected at first hand and sources which are usually rarely accessible or little used were also consulted for new data (fiscal data).

Use was also made, of the cooperation of various government services, chambers of commerce and professional organizations which are in charge with the department of monitoring and checking the development of full employment and industrial and craft activities. Thanks to their cooperation and the cooperation of a number of representatives from the craft sector and heads of small firms, existing knowledge of the situation within the sector was extended.

Active consultation with persons at present seeking employment or likely to do so also contributed to the development of projects in the training field.

## 3. Results

### The current situation

Mention is made in the report of the dependence on external decision-making centres of the industrial and craft sectors which has been increasing since the end of the last century; this lays the emphasis on the influence of exogenous factors and on the united powers of specifically local groups to channel industrial development along fixed lines.

Demographic decline as a result of the depopulation of the countryside, the ageing of the population, the decreasing inclination to show initiative, the ephemeral nature of productive structures (textiles, construction industry, etc.) have a restraining effect on the development of new activities, which are none the less necessary considering the enormous reduction in employment in agriculture (a fall of 40% between 1968 and 1975).

Mention is also made in the project report of the deplorable fact that production in the field concerned (i.e. agriculture, stock-breeding and forestry) is not yielding the results it might. The report also mentions the loss which the department has to bear because of the inadequate use of available material and human resources.

Mention is also made in the study of deficiencies in the educational and training process, which do not so much give rise to insufficient schooling as to the wrong sort of schooling, in other words an insufficient balance between the training provided and real needs (needs which are for that matter difficult to define considering the unpredictable part of short-term economic trends).

The tables included in the report, are mostly concerned with the tertiary sector of the Ardèche economy and the small size of craft and industrial firms (on an average 37 employees per firm).

The rapporteurs also point out the vulnerable position of firms as a result of this and also their low economic return.

From a production point of view it is not the numerous small firms which are top of the economic league in the Ardèche but rather the textile industry, engine-building industry and the automobile industry; these activities are, however, directed from outside the department and are exposed to the uncertainty of short-term national, European and world policy.

#### Fields in which a training scheme could successfully be applied

In the project report a few existing industrial and trade activities were mentioned which could be reinforced with well planned training and even extended; for example in the wood industry, craft careers in the building industry, particularly the renovation of old houses, as well as careers in micro-industries, the food-stuffs industry, the leather industry and a number of marginal sectors of the textile industry.

It was pointed out in the study that a general attempt must be made to improve training and the internal organization and administration of individual small undertakings.

It was further argued in the project report that new life must be infused into the cooperation structures in the craft and micro industrial sector and that in the past mutual aid and collective action was much more extensive within the department. As in the conclusions of the second report (cooperation in the Ardèche) the present shortcomings in cooperation projects in the Ardèche were pointed out in this report.

It was moreover indicated that it would be a mistake to establish training schemes for the acquisition of excessively specialized trades. Vocational training in the Ardèche must not be too strictly orientated towards just a few trades but ought to include as many different crafts as possible; in this lies the best guarantee of income and employment for the working population in the region concerned.

Training aims which must be encouraged :

Training schemes to combat the inadequate returns of most existing firms; improvement of administration, research into the optimal size of firms; training schemes which must contribute to the regrouping of craft or micro-industrial activities by way of associations or cooperatives in the field of production and services, training schemes to prepare students for the practice of several trades in group workshops or as part of associations spanning more than one local authority. What is in mind here is the best possible processing by craft firms or small rural firms of production in agriculture, forestry, stock-breeding, etc., and increased use of the free time and energy of the rural population in times of real or concealed unemployment.

Training schemes which aim at increased information and extra-training for persons employed in the craft sector, in company management and by local administrative bodies in order to break with the obsolete ideas, scepticism and dependence which results from inadequate information.

Training schemes which are set up to consolidate small and medium-sized firms with a work-intensive character.

The training programme which is proposed at the end of the report contains no less than :

- 14 projects under the heading "training schemes to arouse interest"
- 4 " " " " " "training schemes to encourage creativity"
- 8 " " " " " "specific, technically-orientated training"

B. AGRICULTURAL COOPERATION IN THE ARDECHE (PART 2)

1. Objectives

The original aim of the investigation was to draw up a balance-sheet of cooperation between the various branches of industry in the Ardèche. The investigation itself, however, only referred to cooperation in the field of agriculture (after establishing that this cooperation is really important in the agricultural sector but is only symbolic or even not found at all in other sectors).

The inquiry was set up to illustrate the most important problems evident in this field as were as the policy measures worth developing.

2. Methods used

When drawing up the outline to provide a picture of the situation in this sector, an enquiry was first of all organized into the principal characteristics of cooperation in the field of agriculture. Then a further outline was produced of cooperation within the specific fields of fruit-growing, viticulture and stock-breeding.

In reply to a lot of questions drawn up by the Ministry of Agriculture and the regional federation of cooperatives two inquiries were held within the framework of the investigation. One of the inquiries was held amongst people in charge of the various cooperatives, the other amongst a number of members associated with the cooperatives.

### 3. Results

In the report on this part of the project it was first of all pointed out how fundamental cooperation is for the continued recovery of agrarian activity, which constitutes an essential part of the rural economy in the Ardèche.

Mention was made in the inquiry of two kinds of cooperatives which have a very specialized character : cooperatives which are organized on a rural level and cooperatives which cover a whole department and are subdivided into sections. Hence the observation that "cooperative awareness appears to be higher in small local cooperatives than in the larger cooperatives which are regarded more as an industry of which agricultural firms are the supplies

In the report it was further observed that in each of these cooperatives a strained relationship was observed between two groups of cooperative members, one of which would be more dynamic and socially progressive and the other more passive or even obstructive.

This strained relationship is made worse by the fact that during the manufacture and sale of products special demands are made which are frequently seen as arbitrary and as imposing on the members of the cooperative. (The description and analysis of such a relationship in fact depends closely on the French approach to this sort of problem in general).

From the investigation it seems, first of all, that cooperatives are faced with productivity and economic efficiency demands which at first sight are difficult to combine with the struggle;

- (a) to contribute to the development and progress of agriculture industries as a whole;
- (b) to assimilate agricultural development into the over-all development of the region concerned.

It is important in this connection to check which indicators were used in order to be able to form an opinion about the administration and economic efficiency of cooperatives and about the quality and efficiency of the service to associated members as well as the cooperatives' contributions to the economy of the region concerned.

It is established in the report that cooperation in viticulture and fruit-growing had contributed in an efficient way to profitable production in the Ardèche, but that, on the other hand, it was not successful where stock-breeding was concerned (milk and meat) in reducing the degree of economic dependence in this department; this dependence seems if anything to be on the increase.

The processing of, for example, milk and meat is steadily moving outside the department which results in a considerable fall in yield from value added tax and in employment.

With the disappearance of agricultural cooperation in the Ardèche the "colonial" character of the economy in this region would again be strengthened its dependence increased and every attempt to reverse present developments, particularly in the rural areas, foredoomed to failure.

All things considered this two-part study financed by the E.S.F. has made the gradual implementation of training measures and of the "training for the rural population in the Ardèche" programme possible. Some of these measures are still in course of completion. A series of courses specifically intended for women was also organized within the programme framework.

Annex II

E.S.F. INFORMATION EXCHANGE SYSTEM

The present-day system for the exchange of information concerning the results of pilot projects is organized as follows.

1. It is laid down in the basic agreement between the project organizer and the E.S.F. that at the end of the project a complete project report will be compiled together with a summary of 3 to 4 pages. This summary is forwarded by the Commission to the Ministers in the Member States responsible for employment, to the E.S.F. Committee Members, to Government representatives, to employers' organizations, to workers' organizations and to interested parties.
2. The Commission is provided with full particulars of projects subsidized by the E.S.F.
3. The E.S.F. Committee itself organizes seminars about particularly important themes connected with the results of pilot projects.