SOCIAL EUROPE

Supplement on EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND YOUTH POLICY

GIRLS AND TRANSITION

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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EMPLOYMENT,
SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION

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Introduction

Little has been written about girls' success and problems in coping with the transition from school to working and adult life. Even the European Community Pilot Projects on Transition from School to Working Life, which had this issue as one of its principal themes, produced comparatively little by way of action or results on it.

The article which follows is an abridged version of the Report written by the Commission's Expert Team on Girls' Issues on the basis of experience in the first programme. It deals first with three basic questions:

- Is there a case for treating girls as a special priority group in policies for the transition years?

- Does "Transition", looked at from a girls' point of view, mean something different from what it means for boys?

- How much does the world of work for girls have in common with the world of work for boys?

The second part looks at the implications of the answers to these questions.

- Special help for girls; differentiated careers education and guidance.

- Implications for boys: "de-stereotyping" traditionally female careers.

The article then considers:

- What can we learn from the Community's first transition programme? (particularly for the Second Transition Programme Pilot Projects).

- Positive policies, and special measures, to help girls.

- Particular points for the Community's Second Transition Programme Pilot Projects.

Is there a case for treating girls as a special priority group in policies for the transition years?

In theory, girls have equal access to the same range of education and training opportunities as boys. In practice, girls and women

- are consistently under-represented in certain vocational and professional areas;

- form a greater proportion of the unskilled, low-paid labour force;

- on average, receive lower wages than men.

At the same time, they are over-represented in lower-status jobs in certain occupations - the catering and retail trade, the clothing industries, the "caring services" (e.g. nursing and education), and administration. And, of course, they form the bulk of the domestic labour force.

In other words, the range of opportunities open to women entering the labour market is in practice restricted. To bring about more equal access, positive intervention is needed, to

- overcome discriminatory practices in employment and training,

- reduce the effects of stereotyping on girls' choices of education and training courses, and

- reduce the virtual monopoly by men of the traditionally male occupations and professions.

Does "Transition", looked at from a girls' point of view, mean something different from what it means for boys? Transition to work/or marriage/or both?

Adolescence is a difficult time for both boys and girls, but there is increasing evidence to show that adolescent girls face a more complex transition process, because they have to cope with multiple tensions.

> "These young women are in the labour market, but they are also in the marriage market, and face powerful social and economic pressures to get a job and to get a man. They are caught in the parallel transitions from school to un/employment, and from going around with girlfriends to going out with boys, heterosexual experience, marriage and/or motherhood."

Our culture, has a triple message for them, reinforcing the lessons already learnt from school, in the family and from their friends. They must not only find a job, but must also compete in both the marriage and sexual markets.

The inherent contradictions which arise from competing simultaneously in all three markets can cause understandable tensions.

Work

First, there is pressure to get a job. Women of all ability levels are concentrated in a small range of industries many of which are either already declining (e.g. textiles) or are threatened by the advent of new technology (e.g. shopwork). The other traditionally female areas of employment are extensions of their domestic functions - they service the needs of others through catering, teaching, cleaning, nursing and clothing.

Girls could be encouraged to think of aiming for jobs not simply in non-traditional industries (horizontal mobility) but at managerial levels and above (vertical mobility). The evidence from the EC pilot projects suggests that there has been little impact on girls' aspirations, in either direction and points to the need for more effort.

The pilot projects are not alone in this. Evaluation studies of vocational preparation schemes in the United Kingdom and France suggest that the experience of the trainees closely reflects patterns of participation in the labour market as a whole for young people.

- the typical girl will be on a work experience placement in a shop or office, or will be doing some form of community service;

- the typical boy is likely to be receiving instruction in a training workshop or to be having work experience in a factory.

Some projects made deliberate attempts to break out of such patterns. The German projects "Mädchen in Männerberuf' (girls in male occupations) were successful in helping girls obtain the vocational qualifications required to enter non-traditional areas. Their success was mainly due to the determination of the girls and the expertise of the staff; as actions of this type become more numerous it is to be hoped that regular training bodies and employers will develop an equally positive approach.

Making friends at work

Work often means something quite different for girls because their pattern of social life, as school-leavers is quite different from that of boys.

Young working-class men will spend a good deal of time with their male friends as well as beginning to court young women. Such studies as have been made of young women all stress the importance of the best

friend as confidante and companion, and suggest that girls are more often confined to the home, either to undertake a share of domestic work or in the company of their best friend.

Three reasons are suggested for girls staying at home more than boys:

- parental control
- their apprenticeship for domestic life, and
- preparation for marriage.

After leaving school girls become more isolated from girlfriends, particularly if they are unemployed, or have transport problems. (Studies demonstrate that girls are quite prepared to abandon pre-existing arrangements to meet girlfriends if a boy asks them out and this behaviour is expected and accepted.)

Their isolation strengthens girls' desire to find some sort of work, not as the first step in a career, but <u>for company</u>. Many studies emphasise that work is important to girls mainly for the social contact <u>with other women</u>.

Information from the pilot projects confirmed this:

> "The girls want to work with other girls ... For them the peer group is very important ... Many leave jobs because they don't like the other girls ... 'Nice workmates' is high on their list of what they want in a job". (Teacher, Dublin, Ireland)

> "Valerie: We've all been together, together just like a family isn't it;
> Josie: Yes, we all enjoy it, we can talk to the staff and enjoy it.
> Anna: I like it, we're all friends, we can have a laugh together." (Students in the Merthyr Tydfil Industrial Training Unit, Mid Glamorgan, United Kingdom).

Marriage

A comment frequently made by adults is that girls are really mainly pre-occupied with the second transition, to marriage.

As a teacher in one of the pilot projects said, "their ambition is to get married and have lots of babies", - although if one were to ask girls, their view might be different.

Since many parents, teachers, counsellors and employers expect girls' main aspiration to be marriage and see as quite normal that this should guide their choices in further education, vocational training and employment, it is not surprising that some girls come to share the same expectation and behave accordingly.

The unrealistic aspirations of low achieving girls to work in offices rather than factories have sometimes been explained as a desire to find more suitable husbands. Employers are often described as unwilling to take girls seriously. They regard investment in training them as wasteful since girls' will 'only leave to have babies'. This, in turn, colours the views of parents, careers counsellors and trainers, all of whom are influential in young people's vocational decision-making.

The powerful role which parents, counsellors, trainers and employers play should not be under-estimated, but their expectations should not be allowed to go unchallenged.

As long as young women are encouraged, as a matter of course, to view employment as a 'filler in' between school and marriage, vocational decisions and choices are likely to continue to be heavily influenced by stereotypes.

2)

Equality of opportunity in education, training or employment will be an uphill battle as long as girls are conditioned to think that their real fulfilment is to be found in marriage and motherhood, while boys are expected to find it in employment and successful careers.

Sexuality

Girls at school have to learn to cope with conflicting pressures in the management of their sexuality.

> "Learning to manage one's own sexuality in the context of adult scrutiny and suspicion, a double standard of morality and a good deal of hypocrisy, is obviously hard for the adolescent girl ..."

Unqualified girls are more likely to have had some form of sexual experience than those who stay on at school. They are aware that the double standard of morality provides two contradictory routes to marriage: pregnancy or virginity. A young woman has to handle her sexuality in such a way that she will 'catch a man', either by obliging him to marry her, or by being sufficiently attractive and 'good' (which does not necessarily mean being a virgin). Most girls of course try for the latter: being labelled 'easy' can ruin marriage prospects and lose girlfriends as well.

Pressure from parents to 'behave' results in controls on girls' freedom and activities. People express concern about promiscuity in girls, in a way they do not for boys. In staff discussions of students in one of the pilot projects, the 'problem' of girls' sexual behaviour was frequently brought up, but never that of boys.

Summary

There are many basic contraditions and ambiguities about what is expected of girls in competing in the labour, marriage and sexual markets. They do not apply to boys. They can cause understandable tensions.

Girls are expected

- to find a job
- find a husband i.e.
- to make themselves attractive and behave in appropriately feminine ways
- to start heterosexual relationships without compromising themselves.

Being unemployed not only represents failure in the labour market, but it reduces opportunities for socialising with other young women and meeting 'suitable' husbands.

These pressures and tensions make transition a naturally more difficult stage for girls. The temptation for them to be cautious or conservative in their approach to careers questions is the more understandable. When unemployment is added, the difficulties of departing from the traditional mould are still greater.

There is, in short, a genuine special case for treating girls differently at this stage, if they are to approach nearer equality of access to interesting, well-paid and suitable jobs.

How much does the world of work for girls have in common with the world of work for boys?

The world of work is divided into men's work and women's work. Generally, girls are prepared for, and women are employed in, the 'secondary labour market'. This employment is characterised by being often of low status, of low skill content, low paid, non-unionised, often part-time and clustered largely in a narrow and declining range of industries. This is 'women's work'.

The debate about how the future world of work will differ from today's is conducted mainly, if not wholly, in terms of men's work. It starts from the assumption that "normal adult employment" consists of

- permanent paid employment
- a 5 or 6-day week
- continuous employment from youth to retirement.

The possibility that work-patterns in the future may be quite different - indeed not reflect any of these three characteristics - means, among other things, that "men's work" in the future may look more and more like "women's work" does today.

A revealing glimpse into how little this is realised can be obtained by looking at some conclusions reached at a central project team discussion, in the First Transition Programme, in 1980.

"An additional effect of the introduction of new technologies and of new work-organisation seems to be a tendency towards stronger polarisation between skilled and unskilled work. ...A growing number of areas of employment increasingly require only routine activities

which do not make use of the full range of skills of the present job-holders. The feeling of being over qualified for the work and consequently not having to face demands on vocational competency then often results in a loss of motivation and ultimately in a deliberate rejection of the job. ..." (Labour market studies suggest this is the norm for many female workers).

"In all probability, new fields of occupational activity will emerge in which people can find work to earn their living. ... It seems doubtful whether conventional labour-market and employment policies will be able to re-establish full employment ... Peripheral, marginal labour markets are evolving including the provision of casual jobs - sometimes undeclared for tax purposes - with no future for the individual."
(These marginal labour markets have always existed, mainly for women and migrant labour).

"These developments lead to the conclusion that periods of unemployment - better stated as 'periods out of paid conventional work' - not only after leaving school but throughout working life will have to be seen as a real possibility for a considerable number of people, and not as in the past as exceptional cases for those who are caught by economic decline or who lack appropriate qualifications ...."
('periods out of paid conventional work' describes the <u>normal</u> pattern of women's working lives).

"Up to now very little has been done to prepare people to cope with a general uncertainty as to traditional stable employment. To acquaint young people with this situation puts our education system in a considerable dilemma ... Many may find it cynical to argue ... that one of the important future tasks of education should also be to prepare people better to cope with unemployment. Admitting that the start in working life may be a less rewarding job or even

unemployment, and systematically preparing young people for this reality, can make an undesirable impact on their motivation. It may foster the suspicion that something is wrong with the promised rewards for educational performance and thus put into question the significance and appropriateness of the whole educatonal process. .."
(education systems already prepare girls for 'a less rewarding job'.)

"New consideration needs also to be given to the concepts of employment and of unemployment. Part-time occupations, job-sharing, dramatic reductions of working hours, early part-time or full retirement ..."
(these 'concepts of employment' have always applied to women).

"It could be assumed that these developments will not only give a new meaning to the concept of employment (e.g. in terms of being considered less as an inseparable part of the individual's social assets and being less indicative of prestige and success in society) but may also lead in turn to a new definition of the standing of the unemployed ..."
(Will these developments equally lead to a new definition of the standing of unpaid domestic workers?)

Unemployment is making this position worse still for girls. In some of the pilot projects, high local unemployment was seen as a raison d'être to persuade girls not to seek work, to leave the jobs for the boys. Even where such blatant sex discrimination did not exist, youth unemployment was seen to be a seriously inhibiting factor, preventing careers advisers from encouraging girls to make non-traditional vocational decisions. When jobs generally are scarce, the average girl will have a better chance of obtaining a job in a traditional female area than trying for one in a non-traditional area, in competition with boys.

A graphic example was provided by the Luxembourg EC project. A young girl, academically of low ability, left school, became pregnant immediately and had and kept the child. She heard about the Luxembourg project (a vocational guidance/preparation year) and joined one of the project's workshops, determined to become a painter and decorator. In one year she had obtained the necessary qualifications and entry to a 3-year vocational training - and looking after her child at the same time. She completed the training with flying colours, only to find that no employer would take her on as a painter and decorator.

Special help for girls; differentiated careers education and guidance

What we have seen so far can be summed up as showing that:

- **girls' occupational aspirations differ greatly from those of boys;**

- **vocational training opportunities are much more restricted for girls than boys;**

- **all young people in search of a place on a traineeship scheme are faced with the lack of suitable opportunities, but on top of this the girls are faced with competition from the boys;**

- **whereas boys identify with the vocational training they hope to enter and their future career, these aspects are of only secondary importance to girls, who have frequently been directed towards their future as girlfriend, wife, housewife and mother.**

However, when it comes to dealing with sexism and overcoming stereotyping in careers guidance and advice teachers and counsellors are faced with a dilemma. Should effort go towards helping girls (and boys) get onto an occupational ladder, at some point, even if it is in a traditional occupation area? Or should it go towards encouraging them to consider trying for a different, non-conventional field where the job may require personal and social resources the young girl - or boy - may not have? Many would, understandably, refuse to raise the expectations of individual girls of obtaining a non-traditional job when their chances are even slimmer because of high unemployment.

However one answers this is an individual case, careers education and guidance which makes no differentiation between the sexes is a form of indirect discrimination. Schools and vocational preparations schemes have an important responsibility to advise, encourage and motivate girls to make vocational choices beyond the narrow range of traditional female occupations.

By not raising the gender issues, stereotyping is quietly allowed to continue.

Young women and men need

- to be able to recognise 'objective factors' over which they have no control and those factors they are in a position to influence and how they can do so.

- to find out as much information as they can about various career opportunities and requirements, so they can assess their own skills and find out jobs which will utilise them. Preparing young people for occupational choice means helping them find out.

- why boys attribute to themselves different skills from girls; and

- why boys and girls traditionally consider themselves suitable for different kinds of jobs.

Careers Information

School text books and teaching aids are one source from which young people acquire vocational information. So it is important that they should be free from sex stereotyping.

3)

- They should not orient boys towards careers and girls towards domestic labour;

- Men and women should be portrayed in equal numbers and as equal beings;

- Women should appear not only as housewives and mothers, but as working women;

- The role of women in politics should be shown;

- Divorced parents and unmarried adults must also find a place.

The stereotyped family - with mother as a housewife, father busy with his job, the son interested in his school-work and his future career and the daughter with nothing in her head but clothes, makeup and dating -is not the only acceptable way of life. In fact it is far from the reality of most family life.

The German projects report demonstrated how careers information material can (sometimes unwittingly) re-inforce stereotypes, and suggested how to overcome it:

- at the outset, occupations should be classified as open to men and women;

- statistics should show the percentage of men/women working in a given field, along with promotion prospects of both sexes in that field;

- visual and audio-visual materials should show an <u>appropriate</u> balance between males and females in the occupation, not only numerically but in level of responsibility;

- the printed material should then pinpoint the difficulties which young women are likely to face and how they might be overcome. Attention should be drawn to relevant legislation (e.g. prohibitions such as night-work which relate to women only) or lack of organisational facilities which could prevent the employment of women (e.g. toilet and changing-room facilities).

Careers Exploration

As important as the material information presented to young people to help them in vocational decision-making are the practical experiences which are organised for them, such as

- visiting speakers from local firms,
- school/industry liaison schemes,
- observation visits to different workplaces and periods of actual work experience,
- the establishment of school-based mini-companies
- non-school youth co-operatives and enterprises.

All these experiences involve the real world. This means problems for young girls 'exploring' jobs in non-traditional areas:

> "One girl was particularly anxious to visit one such location (a garage) but her tutor dissuaded her - she felt that there was a danger that a young girl might be molested in an all-male work situation."

Teachers and tutors organising work experience are in a difficult position, even if they are aware of the need for girls to explore non-traditional jobs:

"From the reaction I received from employers, I learned that it isn't practical to engage women to work in male dominated jobs. A mechanic would take a girl on if she was really interested, but not a girl who had little or no interest because he says that women don't like being covered from head to toe in grease and oil and that the work place is too cold for them. A painter said that he wouldn't employ a girl even though they get the same training as men and are probably neater."

The compulsory or optional issue is relevant for the organisation of careers explorations. Many staff throughout the pilot projects reported that girls rarely expressed an interest in traditional male jobs.

".... perhaps we should have made a greater effort to include traditionally male jobs. Students were informed that if they were interested in traditional male jobs, every effort would be made to find suitable placements."

Work exploration which is specially designed as part of a vocational preparation programme - for example, mini-companies, or placements where the whole class work together in the same workshop - can avoid some of the problems and help to break through sexist prejudices and demonstrate to girls that they can be just as skilled as boys. However, this only happens where de-stereotyping is planned into the programme. If it is ignored, the work experience becomes an unwitting vehicle of stereotyping:

"One example is the Work Experience Programme in Dublin, conceived, designed and implemented by males: with the majority of students participating being female. The girls worked on a production line basis; this was their preparation for the sort of work they could expect after leaving school; 'the programme' they said 'would help us in what we'll be doing afterwards'."

Student choice, just as much as teacher organisation, is subject to sex stereotyping. As long as different occupational aspirations are accepted without question for these types of work experience, no-one - neither the girls, nor their teachers, nor training personnel, nor employers - will ever discover whether or not girls might be suited to a job other than one which is typically female.

Implications for boys: "de-stereotyping" traditionally female careers

Equality between the sexes involves releasing not only girls from their stereotypes, but boys too. Rigid expectations of what boys and men can and should do maintain the barriers to change as much as female stereotypes.

One aspect of adult working life which, at most, gets a fleeting mention in careers education is that part of adult working life not spent in the workplace, but in the home. Much of the responsibility for the planning, management and execution of this work both traditionally and in actual practice, is undertaken by women - whether or not they also have responsibilities in paid employment. The expectation that it is women who are, and should be, responsible for this type of work is conveyed in many ways to both girls and boys as they prepare for adult life.

Both boys and girls should be prepared for adult life with the expectation that domestic tasks and duties, as well as parenthood, are shared responsibilities. Both need to be helped to acquire the appropriate competencies.

On the one hand, boys have been badly served in the past with opportunities to develop important interactive, communication and listening skills. On the other hand, because of the process of stereotyping, girls tend to have highly developed skills in these areas, but lack opportunities to develop assertive and leadership skills.

What can we learn from the Community's First Transition Programme?

Few of the projects in the first Transition Programme faced the issue of sexism and de-stereotyping. Rarely was the issue on the agenda at all. Even more rarely did projects manage to develop strategies or organise activities to deal with it.

What does this teach us?

First, the extent to which the programme of a project - overt or hidden - took account of the issue depended on several factors:

- Where the project was largely or wholly a modification or extension of what already existed, the issues were most unlikely to be on the agenda. The existing norms for the institution continued to exert their influence.

- Schools based projects, for example, were largely prevented from making even modest changes in the curricula offered to girls - even if the impetus existed among some staff - by constraints of time-tabling and other institutional factors.

- Where the project was a self-standing innovation such as a new course, especially if it was outside the mainstream of provision, the possibility existed to giving some attention to the issue. Whether or not it was grasped depended on

    - staff interests,
    - the complexity of other objectives,
    - the nature of the target group and
    - the local community context

- Stereotyping might be raised as an issue by students where the project's target group was the 'average student' - educationally and socially. Since the majority of project pupils were selected from the lower strata of their educational systems, characterised by educational, social, personal and/or economic difficulties, they were the least likely to be aware of disadvantages from sexual stereotyping and not likely to demand change. So generally it was up to teachers and other project staff to identify the issues and deal with them.

- Staff awareness and commitment were the main determinants. Where issues of sexism were tackled, staff had already thought about the issues and their actions were beginning to be influenced by their attitudes. It is interesting to note that these staff were often (but not always) women at a lower level of responsibility within a project, who were in some key position in curricular planning and decision-making. It needs to be said however that awareness was not sex specific - several male pilot project directors played an important role in dealing with sexism, and not all female staff grasped the issue.

Obviously such awareness cannot be taken for granted, even in those countries which have begun to move along the road towards equal opportunities. There are many people (of both sexes) who are simply not aware either of the issues involved or of their impact on the lives of individual girls. Where awareness does exist, a general feeling that equal opportunities is a 'good thing' may not necessarily influence daily teaching or other actions.

Whilst staff may not consciously discriminate against girls, their own stereotyping plays an important part in the way in which they organise activities, in their teaching strategies and in the 'hidden' messages which convey to girls and boys the different roles and behaviours which are expected of them.

Secondly, then, education on sexism is clearly needed at least as much by staff as by students if any progress is to be made.

Thirdly, it is the compulsory/optional issue which brings the question of stereotyping most sharply into play in a project's programme, i.e. the decision whether particular course components should be compulsory or optional for girls.

It arises

- in careers education programmes,
- in the organisation of vocational tasters,
- in visits to firms and industrial sites, and
- in placements available for work experience.

In the projects, the choice facing staff was clear. If the desire was to expose all the students in a project to non-traditional areas by means of careers education/vocational tasters, they could make attendance compulsory. The difficulty in this was that it might not appeal to the client group, most of whom were already disenchanted with authoritarian teachers and who were extremely unlikely to see compulsion in terms of broadening their horizons! On the other hand, if free choice were allowed, students would tend to opt only for traditional areas for their sex. The impetus to do so was strong: peer group pressures and the desire to go for the known rather than the unknown.

Where compulsory allocation was adopted, usually consciously for de-stereotyping motives, there were additional problems related to specialist staff. Many of the traditional male areas were staffed by male teachers/tutors whose professional experience was with all-male groups. They had no experience of teaching girls and sometimes lacked an understanding of the difficulties faced by girls who did not have the same basic knowledge in the subject as their male peers.

Fourthly, projects <u>can</u> be instrumental in developing positive actions for girls and provide a 'testing ground' for new ideas and strategies.

When the Danish projects were being established in 1977, alongside similar measures to combat youth unemployment, the Council on Sex Roles and Education made the following recommendations to the Ministry of Education:

> "the Ministry's approach to project proposals required that they contain elements directly aimed at improving girls' equality of opportunity in education and work. All projects had as an objective to improve the preparation of young people for work and to facilitate their transition from education to working life; but a special effort was to be made for young people who belonged to, or ran the risk of belonging to, the educational also-rans".

In examining project proposals, the Council noted there would be possibilities for testing some of the measures intended to reduce sex inequalities in education and the labour market, such as

- quota restrictions according to sex,
- instruction in problems of sex-role, and
- other measures.

The Council therefore strongly recommended that the Ministry should require projects to:

- state explicitly in the general objectives of the projects that special efforts were to be made for girls;
- offer instruction in sex roles on courses aimed at young people and counselling staff;
- take initiatives to establish projects in areas traditionally not attracting girls;

- reserve a certain number of places to the under-represented sex, and to develop appropriate active recruitment policies with this aim in mind;

- to draw attention to the need for counselling staff to be equally distributed according to sex.

Positive policies, and special measures, to help girls.

The experience of the first Community Programme and evaluations of similar initiatives in Member States have helped to identify some positive policies which can help to overcome the obstacles in this area.

- good practice - concerned with the gradual improvement of education and training provision: and
- special intervention measures.

These are outlined in the following sections.

Policies which support good practice

1. The existing trend towards co-education should be encouraged provided that attempts are made to avoid importing biased practices into co-educational schools and that the possibility exists for single-sex teaching within a school.

2. There is a need to ensure more equal sex distribution of posts of responsibility as Heads, Principals and Heads of Department. Recruitment of staff to 'traditional areas' should be concentrated on the other sex, i.e. women as maths, physics, craft teachers; men in office studies, home economics and catering.

3. To give girls more flexibility in curricular choice, careful attention needs to be paid to the organisation of the curriculum as well as to the educational guidance which is offered in the school. Traditionally 'female' subjects should not be timetabled against traditionally 'male' subjects (so requiring students to choose between home economics or woodwork, but not able to take both) and efforts should be made to encourage girls and boys to choose non-traditional subjects.

4. Curriculum materials - text-books, films, posters, worksheets and training packages, should be examined for any sexist images, attitudes or information which they convey. The gradual elimination of sexism from curriculum materials is an area which should be tackled at every level of the education system.

5. Careers materials and careers advice should present girls (and boys) doing a range of jobs, instead of the doctors always being male; nurses female, bricklayers male and shop assistants female; this will help to balance the images conveyed from other parents, friends and the media.

Similarly, 'preparation for working life' courses should stress the importance of domestic skills as essential for adult working life, and boys should be encouraged to undertake community service projects in the 'caring' professions. Work experience schemes should provide at least one period of work, or work observation which is 'non-traditional' for girls and for boys. Within work experience or school/industry liaison programmes, students should be able to visit and talk to men and women in non-traditional jobs.

6. Each educational establishment/vocational preparation scheme should aim to eradicate direct and indirect discrimination and to compensate for past discrimination by developing an equal opportunities policy.

Such a policy should consist of 3 main elements:

- a statement of commitment to the development of equal opportunities;

- a statement how the institution intends to achieve its aim (whether reform of existing provision, introduction of new measures or a combination of both);

- a statement of the specific actions to be undertaken and their timetable.

The appointment of local equal opportunities officers/advisers to help develop and co-ordinate equal opportunities policies and to encourage co-operation with other agencies - careers services, employment agencies, welfare agencies - has already been implemented in local regions in some countries.

Special Measures

In both secondary education and vocational training, special intervention measures can prove extremely effective.

Such measures take two forms:

- de-stereotyping measures
- compensatory measures aimed exclusively at girls

De-stereotyping

The fact cannot be ignored that sex de-stereotyping is a radical measure; it challenges long-held assumptions of society and of the women and men in it. Therefore it is important to hold de-stereotyping workshops which are well planned and organised, with plenty of background information and materials, using people with knowledge and experience in the field.

De-stereotyping measures include:

- workshops/seminars for teaching and training staff on sex role stereotyping, discrimination in education and training and strategies for overcoming them;

- including the issues of sexism and sex discrimination in the normal school curriculum (for boys as well as girls);

- workshops/discussions in local communities with parents groups, youth worker and voluntary agencies on issues of stereotyping and discrimination.

Compensatory measures aimed exclusively at girls

1. Special counselling as part of educational and careers guidance for girls, to make them aware how their own and other people's stereotyping restricts their life chances and to help them broaden their horizons.

2. Provision of single sex teaching, particularly in areas where girls under-achieve or are under-represented (e.g. mathematics, physics) or where they are being introduced to, for them, new and non-traditional skills (e.g. metal work, basic electronics).

3. Special information materials for girls on a range of topics relevant to life as an adult woman - personal relationships, financial matters, legal rights and responsibilities, insurance, health and safety, training and retraining, employment rights and responsibilities.

4. Increased provision, both within the curriculum of compulsory schooling and in part time/continuing education, of women's studies courses (e.g. the history of the Women's Movement, the campaigns for legal, political, educational and social rights, the contribution of women to scientific and technological development).

5. Educational and training provision which is not compulsory, e.g. continuing education, special projects for unemployed young people, and specialised training schemes, should develop positive recruitment policies aimed at encouraging girls and women.

Particular points for the Community's Second Transition Programme Pilot Projects.

The second series of pilot projects on transition, which began in September 1983, offers an opportunity to move further towards equality of opportunity.

They should take advantage of the key lesson learned from the first: to remain neutral is sexist; positive action is needed.

They should also keep in mind these points:

1. Programmes should be designed with the issue of equal opportunities on their agenda, and with a commitment to de-stereotyping.

2. Thought should be given to female-only pilot 'sub-projects'

3. In appointing staff, an attempt should be made to provide some role models of women in (a) authority and (b) traditionally male areas of work.

4. Briefing sessions for staff at all levels should include a component on de-stereotyping.

5. In the ideal world, all textbooks, audio-visual materials and other teaching aids would be non-sexist. Replacement of non-satisfactory materials will inevitably be a long, slow and expensive process, but the sooner a start is made, the sooner the objective will be reached. Certainly, all materials, developed within projects funded by the EC should reflect the non-sexist aims of the Programme.

6. There is a clear need for more and better information on non-traditional occupations to be made available to both boys and girls, in careers education programmes, as a first step towards de-stereotyping.

7. There should be specific monitoring of equal opportunities actions in the projects.

8. Projects should be encouraged to develop contacts with national equal opportunities organisations.

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