



Vocational training



**European Social Fund
Support for
vocational training
in the Member States of the EC**



Vocational training

Bulletin of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CEDEFOP

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EDITORIAL

The annual resources of the European Social Fund, which amounted to approximately 612.4 million European Units of Account in 1977, are effectively integrated with national funds allocated to the vocational training of workers who are either unemployed or threatened with unemployment and to social actions for the benefit of specific categories of persons (handicapped persons, migrant workers, etc.).

Evaluation in both quantitative and qualitative terms of the measures undertaken by the individual Member States in the field of vocational training for workers constitutes the most efficient method of obtaining an accurate appraisal of the degree of effectiveness of the European Social Fund (ESF) in the various regions of the Community. From this type of analysis it is possible to derive important data serving to identify corrections which need to be made in the strategy and the administrative machinery of aid measures being assisted by ESF funds.

Against this background and also for the purpose of further profiling the Bulletin as an instrument of dialogue and confrontation dedicated to the most pressing vocational training problems facing the Community, we have solicited articles dealing specifically with the European Social Fund.

W. Stabenow, Director of the European Social Fund, has contributed the first article, which provides a general synthesis of the entire subject matter.

The second article, prepared by J. A. Agnew, Director-General of AnCO — the Industrial Training Authority, Ireland, deals with European Social Fund intervention in Ireland.

The third article, which reviews the situation in Italy and brings forth a number of proposals, has been prepared by G. Medusa, ex-Director of ISFOL, Rome.

Articles

W. Stabenow

The European Social Fund — its aims and how it works



W. Stabenow,
responsible director
for the European Social Fund.

Scope of the Fund

It is as well to clarify at the beginning that contrary to what the name European Social Fund may imply to some readers, the Fund does not cover the whole range of expenditure facing the European Community in the field of social policy. Nor is it, to counter another widespread misconception, a Fund empowered to step in to meet every kind of social need in cases where other resources, public and private, may be inadequate.

The scope of the European Social Fund (ESF) is, in fact, limited by the Treaty of Rome (Articles 123 and 126) to increasing employment opportunities in the Common Market and contributing thereby to raising the standard of living. This has meant in practice that the Fund has been concentrated on assisting the vocational training and resettlement of workers. An important new dimension has, however, been added to the Fund's role in stimulating employment creation with the adoption by the Council on 27 November 1978, following a proposal by the Commission, of a new scheme to promote the employment of out-of-work young persons.

The Social Fund, set up in 1960, was first reformed in 1971 to equip it to react more efficiently and more rapidly to the requirements of the labour market. It was again re-examined in 1977 in the light of further experience of its operation and the enormous changes in employment since 1971 brought about by the economic recession.

Fund aims

Fund aid is aimed at

- supporting labour market policy measures related to Community economic policy;

- promoting a greater balance between supply and demand for jobs in the Community, and
- combating long-term and structural unemployment and underemployment.

The Fund is designed to assist both workers in the categories experiencing the greatest difficulties in relation to employment and workers in those regions of the Community which suffer most from lack of development or from industrial decline.

The ESF budget for 1979 is as follows:

Social Fund budget for 1979	
	Million European Units of Account (EUA)
Actions in favour of agriculture and textiles	35
Young persons	230
Young persons (new employment aid)	72
Migrants	23
Women	18
Operations in regions, economic sectors, and groups of enterprises	326
Programmes for the handicapped	61
Pilot experiments and preparatory studies	2.5
	767.5 ¹

¹ UKL/IRL 519.9 million.

Categories of persons aided

The categories of persons to be aided have been determined by the Council of Ministers on proposals from the Commission as follows:

- farmers and agricultural workers leaving this sector especially as a consequence of the reform of agricultural structures. Most programmes financed under this heading concern training for the

building and metalwork sectors, but here is also an emphasis on crafts and tourism;

- workers in the textiles and clothing industry forced to move to other sectors or to adapt to new methods of production. These changes in the industry frequently result from competition from imports from countries outside the Community benefiting from the Community's trade policies;

- migrant workers facing problems of vocational and linguistic training to enable them to settle into their new living and working environment or to prepare for return to their country of origin. Children's education qualifies for assistance under this heading;
- physically or mentally handicapped persons requiring special rehabilitation and training to enter or re-enter the labour market;
- workers rendered unemployed or threatened with unemployment as a result of fundamental changes in the production or sales markets of groups of enterprises;
- workers in sectors in which adaptation to technical progress requires substantial updating of knowledge and skills;
- young unemployed persons under 25 years of age, particularly those seeking their first job;
- women over 25 years of age who have become unemployed or who wish to return to work after prolonged absence due, for example, to family reasons.

Young persons make up the greatest single category among the foregoing and accounted for just over 35% of the total ESF budget in 1978. This figure is increased to about 44% with the addition of the new employment aid in the 1979 budget. The number of young persons assisted in programmes approved in 1977 (latest available statistics) amounted to about half a million.

The latest addition to the categories of persons aided is women. Women workers have of course always been eligible for ESF assistance in all its fields of intervention and indeed continue to be eligible. The new specific opening is therefore intended to cope with the fact that women have suffered from relatively higher unemployment than men in the current recession and also with the principal obstacles confronting women in their quest for true equality of opportunity on the labour market. Thus the Commission has expressed a preference for programmes aimed at enlarging the job choice for women, especially those facilitating their access to jobs in which they have been traditionally under-represented.

This new field of intervention for women began in 1978 with a relatively modest budget of 8 million EUA which, it so happened, matched the volume of eligible applications received. This

provision has been more than doubled for 1979, amounting to 18 million EUA. The Commission would like to see a greater volume of applications in this area in contrast to the situation in the Fund as a whole, where demand greatly exceeds the budget. Women's programmes are currently running behind available resources.

As I have already mentioned, this year sees the introduction of another new kind of intervention, that relating to the creation of employment for unemployed young persons under 25 years of age.

Operations eligible for this new aid must involve either (i) additional jobs likely to give young people experience with a vocational content or make it easier for them to find a stable job, or (ii) projects for the creation of additional jobs which fulfil a public need which would not have been met if additional jobs had not been created. In this case the new jobs must be either stable in themselves or afford experience with a vocational content which will help the young persons concerned to find stable employment.

Assistance from the Fund under this heading may be granted up to 30 EUA per person per week for a maximum period of twelve months.

Aid to regions

It will be noted from the foregoing budgetary table that a substantial part of the Social Fund is allocated to training programmes in the regions of the Community which are either underdeveloped or suffering from decline. It has, in fact, been the Commission's policy to increase the regional impact of ESF in recent years. One of the changes introduced as a result of the re-examination of the Fund carried out in 1977 was the introduction of a legal provision that in any year at least 50% of the budget must be allocated to actions carried out in the less developed regions under the headings of regional programmes, actions for the handicapped, and operations related to groups of enterprises and technical progress. Many of the remaining operations of the Fund do, of course, also take place in the developing regions. When these are also taken into account, the proportion of total Fund operations executed in these regions came to 76% in the year 1977 as compared with 73% in the previous year. The corresponding figure for 1978 will be published in the Seventh Annual Report

of the Social Fund by the middle of 1979. Indications are that the regional impact of the Fund will show a further increase.

A major factor in this latest increase in the regional impact of the Fund has been the decision, taken last year in the context of the review of the Fund, to increase by 10% the level of aid to the following five regions recognized as those being in greatest need: Greenland, the French Overseas Departments, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Italian Mezzogiorno.

The increasing attention given to the regions under the Social Fund is of fundamental importance in the coordination of instruments of Community structural policy. This applies particularly to the relationship between the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund. The Social Fund aims basically to train workers whereas the Regional Fund is concerned with the promotion of investment in industry and infrastructure leading directly or indirectly to job creation. These aims are interlinked, and the Commission is currently looking at possible ways in which the degree of integration between both Funds can be increased.

Financing

The Social Fund can assist projects from both public and private bodies, but all applications must be submitted through Member States. In the case of programmes carried out and financed by public authorities, the Fund contributes to 50% of the cost. Where, however, programmes run by private bodies are concerned, the Fund contribution may not be greater than that of the public authority. Two exceptions must be mentioned. Firstly, the Fund contribution is increased by 10% in the case of operations carried out in the five regions of absolute priority already listed; secondly, in the case of pilot projects there is no requirement of a financial contribution by public authority.

Pilot projects

Pilot projects and preparatory studies are areas of operation by the ESF the importance of which, due perhaps to the modesty of budgetary allocation, is perhaps not always fully appreciated.

The purpose of these studies and experiments is twofold: to guide the Commission and Council in their choice of areas of intervention of the Fund and to help Member States and promoters of training programmes to make the most effective use of Social Fund aid. A number of pilot projects, for example, carried out in the field of women's employment made a valuable contribution towards the preparation of the Council decision relating to the extension of the main Fund to cover this area. Similarly, the decision to bring the self-employed within the scope of eligibility for Fund aid was preceded by a number of pilot projects.

On the question of improving the efficiency of Fund operation it has been noted that at least one-third of the pilot projects financed up to now have had a direct influence on the shaping of programmes subsequently financed under the main areas of ESF intervention. A considerable number of the pilot projects concern 'young persons'. Nine projects are in fact in progress under this heading, some of which deal with the problems of particular groups of young people such

as itinerants, drug addicts, etc., and the special approach needed to bring them to the point where they can fit into the normal system.

The importance of the pilot projects area has been reflected in the substantial increase in the budget for 1979, bringing it to 2.5 million EUA as compared with 1.5 million EUA last year.

Payments

Mention of efficiency of Fund operations brings us inevitably to the question of payments. The time taken to effect payments from the Fund in the past has not been satisfactory. Much of the difficulty arose from the system laid down in the Fund's regulations, which was therefore changed during the recent review of the Fund to permit payments of advances at the commencement of approved operations and of interim payments at the half-way stage. Provision is also made for speedier final payments, with Member States assuming a greater degree of accounting responsibility than heretofore. The Commission will report fully on the application of the new provisions in its

forthcoming Seventh Annual Report. At this stage it can be remarked, however, that after an initial period of adjustment marked improvement is beginning to appear.

Method of selection

We in the Commission are always very glad to supply general information and advice to potential new applicants for Social Fund aid. As, however, applications have to be submitted by governments, applicants should also get in touch with their Department of Employment/Labour.

All applications are examined by the Commission's staff, firstly to determine whether they comply with the conditions of eligibility as prescribed in the legal texts and secondly to classify them in the appropriate priority level in accordance with the criteria set out in the Commission's guidelines for the management of ESF. Some years ago the legally prescribed eligibility conditions were in themselves virtually sufficient as a basis for selection. The volume of applications has since risen dramatically



The ESF aids female access to jobs traditionally done by men.

and is now practically twice as great as the budget. Hence the need for the additional selection criteria is set out in the guidelines. The Commission's general policy has been to favour an active role for the Fund in contributing to the promotion of Community employment policy by favouring programmes with well-defined and clearly visible objectives, initiatives with a promotional effect, and suitable schemes unlikely to have been carried out were it not for the provision of aid from the Fund.

The guidelines, which are reviewed annually, are published in the Official

Journal of the Commission before 1 May of each year for the succeeding three years. Before being decided on by the Commission, the applications are reviewed by the Social Fund Committee, a body made up of delegates from the governments, employers, and trade unions of the nine Member States. There is no quota system distributing the Fund among the Member States. The selection is made on the basis of the quality of programme, and there are consequently considerable variations between one year and another appearing in the percentage breakdown of aid according to the country of origin of the promoter.

The budget of the Social Fund has been growing considerably — it having risen by 424% since 1973 — but it is still a small part of total expenditure in the Community on vocational training.

Nevertheless, it is estimated that 1.25 million people benefited through actions aided on the 1977 budget. Many actions financed could never have been carried out without Fund aid, and the information available from Member States indicates a raising of training standards as a consequence of Fund activity.

J. A. Agnew

European Social Fund intervention in Ireland

J. A. Agnew, Director-General
of AnCO, Industrial
Training Authority, Ireland



Introduction

I am pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the effects of the European Social Fund (ESF) in Ireland. Since Ireland's accession to the European Community in 1973 ESF has proved to be a most valuable stimulant to vocational training. It has enabled major programmes to develop more rapidly than they might otherwise have done, encouraged the development of new programmes, and made for better coordination between the activities of the different agencies, both public and private.

It is important to note that the Fund's intervention is operated in a spirit of partnership for the common good. Conceivably, Community funds could have been substituted for domestic resources, with no overall change in the real level of activity. It is a matter of pride that in five years ESF moneys have helped to increase vocational training activity in Ireland to a level which could otherwise have taken ten or fifteen years to achieve.

To demonstrate this point, I will give only the briefest outline of the overall intervention of the Fund before describing in some detail those activities of AnCO — The Industrial Training

Authority — which gets support from the Fund. The 1972 reform of ESF preceded Ireland's accession to the European Economic Community on 1 January 1973. The reformed Fund suited Ireland's needs, particularly since the industrialization programme of the Irish government required extensive training and retraining of the work force.

The two major criteria under which ESF moneys became available were the continuing movement of workers from agriculture and declining traditional industries into new manufacturing industries and the status of the country as a priority region for development within the Community. Other specific programmes aided such as resettlement of workers, training for higher levels, management training, and training for women returning to work after an absence are smaller in scale but are none the less of considerable importance in their individual sectors.

The total allocation of Social Fund grants to public bodies and private organizations in Ireland amounted to almost IRL 20 million in 1977. Organizations involved include the government departments of education and labour, state-sponsored bodies such as AnCO — the Industrial Training Authority, the Industrial Development Authority, and Gaeltarra Éireann, and a range of other private and public organizations. The activities of private bodies dealing with handicapped people are coordinated by the National Rehabilitation Board.

AnCO was set up in 1967 in order to promote and, where necessary, provide industrial training for unemployed persons who were in need of relevant skills and for underemployed persons whose skills were either inadequate or outdated. Despite high unemployment levels there were skill shortages which threatened to hamper industrial development. Industrial training of the work force was a necessary prerequisite for successful participation in a developing free trade situation in the 1960s. It was even more urgent when

Ireland's accession to the Fund had extensive repercussions on the Irish employment situation and a greatly increased training infrastructure was required to cope. The availability of resources from ESF made the required expansion possible.

AnCO's training centre capacity has risen from 1 800 places in 10 permanent training centres and three temporary centres in 1973 to 3 600 places in 14 permanent centres and two temporary centres in 1978. In addition, AnCO conducts courses on a mobile basis each year in some 30 towns and villages remote from permanent training centres. To counteract very serious unemployment due to the recession in 1974-75, AnCO made use of spare training capacity within industry to train the unemployed and redundant. This training was also grant-aided by ESF.

AnCO's direct training activities in 1977 covered about 1% of the labour force. Demand for training places is still in excess of AnCO's current capacity. This is due partly to the very large number of school leavers who wish to obtain industrial training and partly to the fact that Irish industry, both new and existing, requires skilled people. As part of the Irish government's strategy to eliminate unemployment, AnCO is planning a further major expansion to provide more than 15 000 places by 1983. This target must, however, be seen against the fact that there is an increasing demand from new and existing industries for trained workers and against the following background:

— There are almost 100 000 people registered as unemployed in the country;

- Over 40 000 young persons enter the labour force annually;
- There are many thousands, including married women and young school leavers, who are seeking employment but who do not register as unemployed.

AnCO's main programmes are for unemployed adults, for young people seeking their first jobs, and for young craft trainees.

There have been significant increases in the numbers trained by AnCO in these categories since Ireland's accession to the Community (see table on page 8).

These figures are significant in an Irish context where the total labour force is about 1.1 million. The threefold increase in both adult and craft trainee numbers between 1973 and 1977 has contributed greatly to the success of the Irish government's industrial development policy and would hardly have been achieved without the help of the Social Fund.



△ Circuit testing instruction.

Painting and decorating — an AnCO training project for women. ▽

AnCO's programmes and ESF aid

Since 1973 ESF has grant-aided over 40% of AnCO's current expenditure. On page 8 is a table of the level of assistance from ESF since 1973.

Resources were, of course, required not only for the operation of the programmes but also for the building of centres and the purchase of machinery and equipment, items which also qualify for ESF aid on a depreciation basis.

There are other programmes organized and carried out by AnCO which the ESF grant-aids. As in other European countries, Ireland has a disproportionate number of unemployed young people under twenty-five years of age. ESF opened up Article 4 to young unemployed first-time job-seekers in 1975. AnCO, in cooperation with the National Manpower Service and the Department of Education, set up special programmes for unemployed young people. One of these is the Community Youth Training Programme. This programme combines in-centre training with on-the-job training and work experience. In 1977, 598 persons participated in the scheme, and in 1978 this number increased to 1 800.

Another programme for young unemployed school leavers is the Career



Unemployed adults and young job-seekers trained					
1972 ¹	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
2 000	3 700	5 300	6 700	9 400	11 200

¹ (before EC membership).

Craft trainees trained					
1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
	360	570	950	915	1 102

Level of assistance from the ESF since 1973		
Year	ESF grant IRL million	% increase on previous year
1973	1.67	
1974	2.47	47
1975	3.50	42
1976	5.10	45
1977	8.00 (approved)	56

Training Programme, which was run in 1976 and 1978 with ESF aid. The programme consists of a short intensive course on career orientation and employment preparation combined with some on-the-job work experience. The Career Training Programme and the Community Youth Training Programme are monitored and where necessary adapted to make the programmes more relevant to the needs of the young people. In 1978 3 800 young persons were trained in the Career Training Programme.

Evaluation of AnCO programmes

Training infrastructure and activity are planned to help meet existing and future needs of the economy. AnCO maintains close liaison with all national agencies involved in industrial development such as the Industrial Development Authority, Gaeltarra Éireann and Shannon Free Airport Development Company. Special liaison is maintained also with the National Manpower Service, which has responsibility for the provision of placement, career information, and occupational guidance services.

AnCO also carries out regular manpower surveys to review the current supply of and demand for skills notably for the

manufacturing and construction industries. A detailed cost-benefit analysis of AnCO's direct training activity has been carried out. AnCO's Curriculum Development Section develops instructional material, manuals and teaching aids and provides source material for trained instructors.

Targets set take account of likely job placements in the future and of placement rates already achieved. Placement rates in the period 1973–75 were in the region of 80–90%. Placement since 1976 has been in the area of 70–80% within three to six months after training.

ESF aid in the field of the handicapped

An example of improved coordination resulting from the Social Fund intervention can be found in the training of the handicapped. Since 1975–76 the National Rehabilitation Board has been processing applications and claims on behalf of statutory and voluntary bodies engaged in the field of rehabilitation training for aid from the European Social Fund. Initially 19 organizations were involved, but by the end of 1978 the number had grown to 37. All the organizations concerned are engaged in the field of rehabilitation and training of

physically and/or mentally handicapped persons for employment.

The following gives the increase in the level of aid received since 1974:

1974	IRL 916 666
1975	IRL 1 125 000
1976	IRL 1 729 969
1977	IRL 3 026 022
1978	IRL 4 461 684

The increased funding has gone towards the improvement of training for the handicapped by improving instructor staff levels, training instructors to deal with the special needs of the handicapped, extending the training to include and cater for a wider variety of skills, and increasing the number of training places within the workshops.

AnCO itself trains instructors for many of the organizations in this field. In addition, it provides training for handicapped persons, side by side with the non-handicapped.

ESF and the private sector of Irish industry

In the case of private companies it is often possible for a training programme to be specially designed to meet their development needs. As the Social Fund criteria allow for private company applications to the Fund, Irish companies since 1973 have applied to an increasing extent for assistance. Private companies must, however, first be in receipt of a national grant for the proposed training or retraining programme which may be matched by ESF if the programme is found to be eligible under ESF criteria. AnCO's Training Advisory Service assists firms in the drawing up and implementation of the training programmes. In 1977, as a result of the growing number of private companies applying to ESF through the Department of Labour, AnCO introduced a grouping scheme for private companies which simplified the procedures for both the company applying to the Fund and for the Fund itself in dealing with the companies. Since 1978, AnCO applies directly to ESF for expenditure incurred in grant-aiding company training programmes which comply with the relevant criteria.

The following figures indicate the extent of ESF aid to the private sector:

Year	Number of companies	Number of workers	ESF grants
1975	21	1 522	IRL 0.5 million
1976	24	3 500	IRL 1.0 million
1977	62	5 325	IRL 2.1 million

AnCO's Training Advisory Service also assists new companies being established

in Ireland in drawing up and implementing training programmes. These programmes qualify for grants from the Industrial Development Authority, which is entitled to reclaim about 50% of the grants from the European Social Fund.

Conclusion

AnCO, in carrying out its programmes and in planning for the future, attempts

to put its resources to their best use. An Expert Study Group on Social Fund Aids, set up by the Social Affairs Directorate in 1975, carried out an in-depth study of AnCO's utilization of ESF aid. The Study Group concluded that the Fund had undoubtedly enabled AnCO to expand at a pace which it could not have maintained in the absence of Fund support and that the absence of AnCO's activities would have constituted a serious gap in Ireland's development effort.

European Social Fund activities in Italy — considerations and proposals

An assessment of the effectiveness of Community aid (ESF) for the vocational training system in Italy is by no means a task of secondary importance. With a peak of over LIT 90 milliard in the 1976 financial year and a yearly average of LIT 45 milliard since 1973, ESF makes an input to the Italian vocational training system that is comparable with FAPL, a State Fund serving as the principal if not the only channel through which public funds are routed to finance vocational training activities.

It is pertinent to recall that the funds channelled to the system through FAPL (not including refunds from ESF) reached an annual level of some LIT 100 milliard over the past three years.

In the extremely complicated structure of Community aid two types of rationale are followed in all Member States:

- on the one hand, “recovery of consolidated costs”: the intent is to recover from the Community source a part of the funds that have in any case been allocated by national public bodies for a specific purpose;
- on the other, “innovation”: the intent is to use ESF aid to promote training measures or socio-political actions which, being ongoing and innovative, call for considerable resources, including funds.

If EC contributions allocated to Italy as grants-in-aid are considered in two groups, namely,

- a) aid falling mainly in the sphere of “consolidated costs” (Article 4, migrant workers; Article 4, young people; Article 4 and Article 5, handicapped persons; the portion earmarked for major public enterprises under Article 5, regions); and
 - b) aid directed mainly at “innovation” (the residual portion of Article 5),
- it can be seen that the conflict between the two rationales shows a measure of inertia intrinsic to all bureaucratic mechanisms that has ended up by

furthering the rationale of recovering what has already been invested (that is, consolidated costs).

The distribution as of July 1977 was in fact as follows:

- EC contribution to Italy = 100%
- consolidated costs = 70%
- innovative activities = 30%.

This type of breakdown becomes a matter of even greater concern if consideration is given to the fact that these figures refer to amounts allocated and not to commitments met.²

Even when the funds become available it is to be feared that the innovative activities made possible by ESF will not become realities, owing to the lack of national resources (for instance in the case of many regional projects) and the slow-moving machinery already referred to.

The question therefore arises as to why ESF has not succeeded in Italy in offering itself as a tool for the innovation of the system. The reasons can be sought:

- a) *in the ESF regulations*: In the present Italian economic situation the users of specific aid are either practically non-existent (workers changing over from agriculture to other sectors, unemployed persons entering new industrial facilities in priority areas) or have little political support (handicapped persons who have little or no hope of gaining a foothold in society);
- b) *in the youth-specific orientation of the Italian vocational training system*: Since Italy has no well-organized official adult education system providing vocational training for adults (comparable with the French model), what job-oriented training there is comes mainly under the sponsorship of private enterprise, which receives no special public funding and therefore ends up by having no chance of obtaining Community aid.

The combination of these two factors means only one thing for Italy: only activities coordinated by public vocational training centres can be funded by the European Community.

Furthermore, since these activities, generally basic training for young people, represent the only expenditure valve genuinely operating in the Italian context (being the only ones enjoying public funding), applications for access to ESF are focused on juvenile “priorities” with the result that:

- Italy is prevented from gaining access to other types of aid (hence the meagre flow of global resources from the EC to Italy);
- further development is fostered, thanks to EC funding, of consolidated activities for the basic training of young people which as a matter of fact should be drastically readjusted in many Italian regions.

Obviously a situation of this kind benefits neither the EC nor Italy:

- *EC*: Regulations that in actual fact put Italy at a disadvantage, albeit for reasons having nothing to do with the Commission, are fated to have a short life;
- *Italy*: Failure to put adequate funds to work innovatively is liable to generate even further expansion of the system of basic vocational training,³ which, if anything, needs rather to undergo requalification in terms of what it offers.

³ The rationale of recovery for consolidated activities in favour of young people has produced some untoward effects: i. e., the considerable expansion of regional training facilities which, especially in the Italian Mezzogiorno, has not been attended by a substantial improvement in the quality of training services offered and by better linkage of these services with the labour market. The following figures resulting from a complicated analysis of regional budgets undertaken by ISFOL show that in comparison with an increase of 101% in expenditure for vocational training on average in the Italian regions over the four-year period 1974–1977, the southern regions experienced increases of between 144% and 237%: Abruzzo 237.3%, Molise 145.7%, Campania 203.3%, Calabria 144.4%, Puglia 209.0%, Sardinia 168.5%.

² The gap between EC allocations and amounts actually spent by Italy was on average about 35% in recent years.

¹ Former Director of ISFOL, Rome.

Certainly this is not the proper place to undertake a comprehensive review of the ESF regulations. In the spirit characterizing this discussion opened by the editors of the CEDEFOP Bulletin, I shall rather confine myself to suggesting some guidelines for the strategy of access to Community aid which would enable ESF to exert a stronger influence on individual national policies.

It is my considered opinion that an extensive in-depth technico-cultural comparison in this subject field would offer us all an opportunity to move beyond the practice of merely claiming “allocations due” or “adequate refunds” which is so frequently resorted to by official political bodies.

Italy’s priority rank in the grand total of aid granted is already challenged by the United Kingdom and even France (see table below). It is therefore politically unthinkable to restrict EC aid to vocational training activities designed in terms of employment.

Were this the case, the result would be a further drastic redimensioning of the flow of funds to Italy, a country now in the grip of extremely high unemployment which can certainly not be alleviated by action designed to improve the quality of available manpower (= vocational training).

It is therefore essential that in the medium term measures be adopted to:

- ensure that the Italian regions gain access to ESF for their basic

- vocational training activities, for recent surveys have shown that these are effective adjuncts in the job-oriented training of young people;
- give momentum to EC initiatives in funding activities of a highly innovative nature that can improve the quality of our educational services until such time as a recovered market is able to follow up in terms of sponsoring job-oriented training efforts.

With regard to EC initiatives in funding innovative activities, the list given below sums up the content and operating methods for a possible “specific-to-Italy” action designed to improve the quality of public educational services.

For the reasons given this type of aid should be earmarked for funding the vocational training facilities managed and financed by the regions. This aid should be available for projects designed to expand or strengthen structures and services in the following areas:

- vocational guidance and labour market research;
- leasing equipment for vocational training programmes;
- training-the-trainers courses, including on-the-job training periods in industrial, commercial and services enterprises;
- arrangements with these enterprises to second technical staff to the vocational training centres;
- editorial initiatives designed to modernize teaching materials;

- utilization of mobile teams for on-the-job training and technical assistance to vocational training centres.

A project-oriented approach of this type requires that:

- the relevant EC offices be equipped to undertake an *ex ante* assessment of the extent to which the findings of the project can have an innovative impact on the vocational training system;
- scientific and technical research centres assist in implementing the projects in order to ensure that the projects receive adequate cultural input.

We are not unaware of the difficulties that may arise at Community level when changing over from a rationale of funding based on definite parameters (courses, students, etc.) to funding project innovations, which by their very nature call for evaluation and progress control.

Certainly there is no doubt that if the Community opts for the method of constantly reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of its expenditure, it will sooner or later find itself obliged to coordinate the statements of account now required with factual reports on the effectiveness of the social action carried on. Such a figure-crunching, accountant-type mentality could in the long run clip the wings of all imagination and bar the way to creative project innovation.

Breakdown of ESF aid by promoter country of origin — credits appropriated

Member State	Amounts in million u.a.					%				
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Belgium	7.20	6.54	8.02	7.85	10.65	3.9	2.6	2.2	1.8	1.7
Denmark	5.05	11.97	8.94	10.43	12.65	2.8	4.7	2.4	2.4	2.1
Germany	19.94	27.93	41.73	44.42	56.96	10.9	10.9	11.2	10.2	9.3
France	32.19	49.95	73.83	76.60	130.72	17.7	19.6	19.8	17.5	21.3
Ireland	9.79	16.87	22.57	31.67	47.31	5.4	6.6	6.1	7.2	7.7
Italy	43.70	72.33	95.53	146.46	139.19	24.0	28.4	25.7	33.3	22.7
Luxembourg	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.14	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	—
Netherlands	6.77	6.71	10.94	12.58	11.77	3.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	1.9
United Kingdom	57.40	62.27	110.24	106.39	203.02	31.5	24.5	29.6	24.4	33.2
Total	182.08	254.58	371.83	436.47	612.41	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The figures in this table are given in ESF units of account, which do not tally with the actual ratio of the national currencies to one another. The 1973-77 figures refer to commitments for operations to be implemented each year. Starting from application of the new budget items in 1977, commitments will no longer be restricted to operations to be implemented during each budget year. To allow comparison of the years, the 1977 figures have been computed by deducting the amounts of expenditure after 1977 and adding the amounts of operations in 1977 covered by commitments in previous budgets.

Information

New Chairman of the CEDEFOP Management Board

Ms Maria Weber, Vice-President of the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund — DGB (German Federation of Trade Unions), was elected Chairman of the CEDEFOP Management Board at the Board's last meeting.

Well known for her work and interests over a wide range of social policy matters, particularly with regard to the

improvement of vocational training, Ms Weber has been a member of the CEDEFOP Management Board since its inception.

Ms Weber is also a member of the EC Consultative Committee on Vocational Training and took an active part in the discussions which eventually led to the creation of the Centre in Berlin (West).



Social Fund and training

Initiatives in the Member States

France

Training action for young migrants in Dijon

The project

La délégation académique à la formation continue — DAFCO (group of academic officers in charge of continuing education), a body undertaking to promote the development of adult education in the schools of general education in the district of Dijon, having been requested by the training establishments of the region to initiate steps to establish preparatory training courses for young migrants, submitted a report in February 1977 calling for financial assistance from the European Social Fund (ESF) and, at national level, the Fonds d'action social — FAS (Social Action Fund).

This report proposed that preparatory training courses be set up for young migrants who had arrived in France in recent years and who had a low level of education and hence were faced with problems of integration into their new social and working environment. Such preparation would constitute a first step towards the vocational training of these young people, a step which was absolutely necessary in the light of their disadvantaged situation.

The joint financing by ESF and FAS was agreed to by FAS on 15 May and by ESF on 10 June 1977. Since the project was to run for three years, the teaching staff could maintain ongoing reviews in the interest of undertaking course redesign where necessary.

As proposed by DAFCO, the recipient groups comprise both public and private training establishments (Association pour l'enseignement des étrangers — AEE (Association for the Training of Foreigners), Centre pour la formation des travailleurs migrants — CFTM (Centre for the Training of Migrants)). Work inspectors, employment specialists, employers, trade union representatives, psychologists, and continuing education counsellors are all actively engaged in this project.

The following criteria govern the training measures:

- The course is open to young people 16 to 18 years of age. This restriction ensures that the trainees all have approximately the same level of maturity and opens up the way for post-course continuation of training via apprenticeship and pre-vocational training;
- All costs of instruction, accommodation and board, and transport are covered;
- Both boys and girls are admitted. In the early stages of the project, however, the majority of the trainees were boys. If there had been a majority of girls, who are more severely disadvantaged than boys with regard to finding employment, there would have been the risk of

compromising the development of the project by a setback at the very start.

The content of training should correspond to the general objective, which is the integration of young migrants of compulsory schooling age into their social and working environment: instruction in the French language and in numeracy, increasing contact with the working world, and instruction serving to instil confidence regarding occupational possibilities.

Comprising 30 to 40 hours a week for from 20 to 25 weeks (*circa* 800 hours), the courses provide periods of instruction in general subject matter alternating with periods of practical experience in the working world.

The number of participants is to increase each year in accordance with the three-year plan of the European Social Fund. Starting with 45 young migrants in 1977, the number is to increase to 90 in 1978 and to 155 in 1979. One half of the expenses are being carried by ESF, the other half by FAS. FAS has agreed to advance, when necessary, the funds being contributed by ESF, since ESF payments are often delayed.

Progress of the project

In 1977 twenty-eight young migrants completed the course and four dropped out. At the close of the course 71% of the trainees decided to carry on their training (43% entered courses being run

by the Association nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes — AFPA (National Association for the Vocational Training of Adults), 14% started prevocational training, and 14% entered the 1978 course). 11% entered the working world and 18% neither continued training nor took up a job (most of these young people were girls whose parents did not want them to take up any occupation).

After a very difficult start, due to financial uncertainties and an unfavourable launching date (June, the end of the school year), the teaching staff overcame a number of problems very successfully: heterogeneity of educational and maturity level, great variety of nationalities, reticence on the part of parents to allow their daughters to undergo training, and the strong preference of the trainees for "noble" occupations.

A working group composed of representatives of the Agence nationale pour l'emploi — ANPE (National Employment Agency), DAFCO employers, and trade unions as well as psychologists, etc., undertook to analyse the progress of the course. The working group and also the course psychologists and teaching staff found that the trainees had become increasingly aware of the realities of social and working life. The initial idea of providing a form of preparatory training for young migrants thus proved to be a justifiable one.

In 1978 four groups of young migrants (38 boys and 16 girls) underwent preparatory training in the course. It is too soon to be able to accurately identify the activities pursued after completion of the course, but it appears that most of the trainees intend to pursue their training in other types of courses or enter an apprenticeship. A minority group, comprising only 18% and probably representing an irreducible core, either intend to repeat the course or have already dropped out.

DAFCO has called for the financing of five courses in 1979, the third year of the project, instead of the nine courses originally envisaged.

Comments by J. Rossignaux, member of DAFCO of Dijon

Financing over a period of three years is more advantageous than short-term financing, since short-term financing does not enable the teaching staff to maintain a constant monitoring of the project in the interest of correcting and

making adjustments in course design. Nevertheless this type of bipartite financing (FAS and ESF) does pose two problems:

- ESF payments — and this fact is too well known to warrant emphasis — arrive with such delay as to greatly inhibit the financing process, thus placing great strain on the financial resources of both the associations and the public institutions involved;
- The range of action of the project is limited not because the number of applicants is too small but because of financial problems experienced by FAS. The uncertainty which prevails from one year to the next has a dampening effect on the project.

Contact with the working world has been very limited. For the most part the stages of practical experience in the firm have not taken place. The increase in the number of in-firm measures aimed at young people has greatly limited the capacity of the firms to also take on young migrants and so this approach could not be adequately activated. Nevertheless, the young migrants have been familiarized with technical and technological operations in the firm and introduced to relevant occupations.

It is important to emphasize the role played by the vocational counsellors of the regional psychotechnical centres. The progress of each group of trainees has been very carefully monitored, and this has greatly improved the quality of the guidance provided.

To sum up, I would say that certain imperfections in the implementation of the project have already manifested themselves. It has become evident during the first two years of the project that if a population of young migrants exists, it is, so to speak, dismissed from view. It is necessary to make very judicious inquiries and practically "discover" these young people one by one and try to convince them and their parents (above all parents of young girls) of the value of the course. In other words, the development of a network of relations is very necessary, even though time-consuming. The best way of informing the marginal cases is by way of the migrant milieu itself. An interruption of training, once it has begun, would not only be disadvantageous for the project itself but also undermine the efficacy of the funds which have been allocated.

Source: Inffo, Paris.

Training for rural occupations in the Ardèche

The Ardèche is part of the Rhône-Alpes region. Its physical characteristics, demographic structure, and economic conditions (rugged mountains forming the south-east of the Massif Central, average population density of less than 50 inhabitants per km², only one town having a population of 20 000 inhabitants, predominance of forestry, orchard fruit growing, vine cultivation, and tourism during the summer months) render the Ardèche one of the most rural and least prosperous areas of France.

For this reason, continuing vocational training is necessary and at the same time more problematic here than in other areas.

Origin of the training project

In view of the situational disadvantages of the Ardèche, the Prefecture of the Ardèche and the Regional Commission for the Rhône-Alpes decided early in 1976 to initiate a training project which would take into consideration the full range of local needs and difficulties. The Centre d'études et de formation rurales appliquées — CEFRA (Centre for Applied Rural Studies and Training), an association affiliated to the University of Lyons II, was commissioned to conduct a study towards this end.

On the basis of the conclusions and recommendations elaborated in the CEFRA study, the administrative and financial framework for the project was finalized between the summer of 1976 and September 1977. The European Social Fund (ESF) undertook to assume responsibility over a period of three years for 50 % of the costs, not to exceed FF 3 million per year. Training began in October 1977.

Objectives and principles

In accordance with the findings of the CEFRA study, the project was to pursue three objectives:

- to provide training to upgrade the occupational skills and abilities of farmers and craftsmen so as to enable them to remain on the land instead of being swept along in the rural exodus;
- to prepare individuals for occupations which are little known or unknown to the population but for which local demand is likely to increase;

- to render the concept of training more familiar to individuals who, because of their occupational situation, level of education, or age, regard continuing training as an inaccessible luxury or privilege.

Similarly, the project was to be based on three principles:

- concentration of training activities in selected priority areas and avoidance of undue scattering;
- maximum involvement on the part of local institutions and other interested bodies (chamber of agriculture, chamber of handicrafts, general council, local government bodies, associations);
- promotion by virtue of this broad involvement, together with the training of trainers, of the local training potential so that training activities at present incumbent on an external agency (CEFRA) can be taken over without difficulty in 1980.

Measures

In the final term of 1977 a total of 75 training courses and training sessions were attended by 1 800 trainees for a total of 3 500 hours:

- training for occupations in the agricultural sector, which accounted for approximately 50% of all training activities: courses of 120 hours on the techniques of adapting land structures to more rapid agricultural development, agricultural welding and mechanical engineering, greenhouse cultivation, and research on new productions; sessions of some 20 hours' duration on a variety of subjects ranging from hill-side irrigation techniques through management of agricultural cooperatives and taxation in agriculture to oral expression and the chairmanship of meetings. More than 1 000 trainees participated in these activities;
- training for occupations in animal husbandry: a total of ten training courses and sessions attended by 140 persons provided instruction primarily focusing on sheep husbandry;
- training for craftsmen: these activities, attended by a total of 150 trainees, focused on a 600-hour course on techniques of maintenance, preservation, and restoration of the traditional rural environment;
- training for occupations related to the development of polyvalent and

integrated tourism, which according to economic forecasts will be the key to the future of the Ardèche: ten courses, including two each of 200 hours' duration, attended by a total of 220 trainees and serving to prepare these for work as tourist guides on water sport, skiing, and walking excursions and to instruct them in receiving tourists on local farms;

- training for occupations in the public health sector and in local authorities: four or five courses were organized for each sector, providing training for hospital staff and domestic helpers for senior citizens on the one hand and training for public officials on the other, including a course of 300 hours' duration in forecasting techniques and planning of local development.

The programme of activities for 1978 is significant firstly in that it has increased in volume: 150 training courses and sessions having a total duration of 12 500 group/hours (assuming an average of 20 trainees per group, this figure represents a total of 250 trainee/hours), and secondly in that it consolidates and intensifies the activities begun in the previous year, with the emphasis remaining on the same priority areas. The agricultural sector has again been given highest priority for training measures, almost one-third of the activities planned (a total of 42 training courses and sessions) being devoted to this particular sector. A number of the training courses conducted in 1977 and found to be entirely satisfactory are being continued without modification and extended to other parts of the region. These include training courses in welding and agricultural mechanics, on-site courses in restoration of the traditional rural environment, and courses serving to train domestic helpers and tourist guides. Others which had served as introductory courses in 1977 (in particular courses on goat and sheep husbandry) are being extended.

The 1978 programme introduces new important aspects: training of rural development counsellors, greater emphasis on general courses destined for a wider public (practices and procedures of local authorities, oral and written expression, and rural architecture), diversification of training activities involving occupations in the tourist sector (for example, courses on the care and entertainment of children on holiday, and training of guides for pot-holing expeditions), and training of

trainers (courses of between 120 and 200 hours).

A total of FF 2 600 000 have been committed to the project for 1978, of which FF 1 300 000 fall to the European Social Fund. It is estimated that FF 8 000 000 will be invested in the project between October 1977 and June 1980.

After an initial period during which the rural population and the various institutions and other bodies maintained a benevolent yet reserved posture with regard to this project, there is now evidence of a general interest in project activities, discernible among potential trainees, who no longer show reticence in participating in training courses, and also among the various institutions involved, which are proving to be increasingly willing to render their support to the project.

Source: Inffo, Paris.

Ireland

ESF pilot projects

In an era of rapid economic and social change, two European Social Fund projects in Ireland are concerned with the implications of some of these changes for vocational training. One project is concerned with the training implications for managers of professional obsolescence, or the decline in the relevance of acquired skills over time. The other is investigating the training aspects of the development of low-capital producer's cooperatives as a form of organization increasing in importance. In both studies it is felt that the results will particularly benefit small-scale organizations in Ireland and elsewhere in the Community. The smaller private business is more likely to be adversely affected by the professional obsolescence of its employees, while the cooperative project is expressly concerned with smaller enterprises.

Professional obsolescence

The existence of the "obsolete" manager was highlighted during the economic recession of 1974-75, when many managers lost their jobs. AnCO — the Industrial Training Authority — organized new training programmes on an interactive basis with groups of managers involved and management training organizations: This experience emphasized the dependency on outdated skills of many

managers and technical workers, thus leading to the current project. In the project occupational obsolescence is defined as the extent to which an employee's skills, knowledge, and attitudes have failed to keep pace with the current and likely future requirements of his occupation.

The project was organized in two phases. First of all, a sample of managers from different specialities and organizations were selected and studied. The study set out to determine both the degree of professional obsolescence and its relationship to such task-related factors as the work engaged in and the climate of the employing organization, in addition to personal factors such as age and use of training and updating programmes. The second phase of the project was a practical trial of strategies for correcting or arresting occupational obsolescence among small groups of managers.

Preliminary results indicate that "up-to-date" managers are working in situations which they find challenging and make good use of their abilities, which are directly concerned with results and which are influential within their organizations. In addition, the individuals perceive themselves as having a higher ability to acquire work-related knowledge and to enjoy doing so. By contrast, such factors as age, education, formal position, length of time working, and formal company policy appear to be similar for both up-to-date managers and those suffering from occupational obsolescence. In layman's terms, it appears that personal commitment and compatibility with a job is most effective in keeping people up to date, while formal company policies and previous job history do not affect the matter one way or the other. However, one age-related factor had practical implications: younger managers had higher perceptions of their own ability to learn new knowledge or skills.

Following on the study phase, a short intervention package for managers was developed and tested. For practical reasons, the intervention was limited to one day. The aims of the activity were:

- to create a greater awareness among managers of occupational obsolescence, its likely causes and consequences, and in particular the key role played by the individual in combating it;
- to provide the individual manager with a basis for self-appraisal and the planning of further self-development.

The preliminary evaluation by managers who participated in the project suggests that such an exercise has a useful role to play in combating occupational obsolescence.

An overall conclusion from the project is that organizations should, in order to maintain a high level of managerial up-to-datedness, make greater use of individual career planning, challenging job assignments, planned problem-solving on the job, and meaningful participation in important decision-making and concentrate less on general, across-the-board training policies and programmes.

Training for cooperatives

AnCO is conducting a European Social Fund pilot project to see how the training needs of cooperative enterprises might best be pursued. This involves investigating the training needs of managers of cooperative enterprises with the advice of the Department of the Gaeltacht (Gaelic-speaking areas) and the Gaeltarra Éireann (Gaeltacht development agency) in relation to the peripheral economic regions of the Western seaboard and The Irish Agricultural Organization Society in relation to the experience of existing agriculturally based cooperatives. Following on this study, it is intended to conduct a pilot project in training workers, preferably in a newly established cooperative.

While the tradition of cooperatives in the agricultural sector has been strong in Ireland, at present there are only five industrial cooperatives in the State, the largest of which employs less than 50 people. Surveys to date indicate that most people involved in the cooperative movement believe that units must remain small if the benefits of commitment to the cooperative ideal are to be realized. On the other hand, a major difficulty in the establishment of cooperatives is the raising of capital, since there are no specific institutions for the development of these enterprises. This situation may be affected by a study currently being carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute, Dublin. This is a review of Irish and international experience in the area of worker industrial cooperatives and an assessment of the potential in Ireland for new enterprises based on a cooperative structure. The Industrial Development Authority is sponsoring the study and the results will be used in the formulation of industrial policy for cooperatives.

Certain working hypotheses regarding training needs have been elaborated in the course of the study. In brief, the training required by cooperative workers is thought to vary with their responsibilities. For example, a manager or administrator will need specific technical skills which may be unique. In general, all members will need training in the principles of cooperation and in the interpersonal skills area. Since the cooperative organization aims at involving all members in important decisions, it is essential that personal or social frictions be reduced as much as possible. The other major area in which an overall knowledge seems to be necessary is in financial and accounting skills. The technical and production skills required by workers are determined by the particular activity engaged in.

Further information

Anyone interested in finding out more about these projects or in a direct exchange of views and opinions should contact Research Liaison Unit, AnCO — The Industrial Training Authority, PO Box 456, Dublin 4, Ireland.

New training centre opened

A new training centre for AnCO, the Irish Industrial Training Authority, was officially opened in Athlone, Co. Westmeath, by Mr Gene Fitzgerald, Minister for Labour, in November 1978. Athlone is the principal town in the Midlands (central) region of Ireland, with an estimated population of fifteen thousand.

The Centre provides 72 places for first-year, off-the-job training of apprentices and 112 adult training places. The building covers 3 500 square metres and the cost amounts to IRL 500 000: approximately half of this cost is supported by an annual rent subsidy provided by the European Social Fund, which also grant-aids the running costs.

Before the construction of the permanent premises, AnCO had already trained over 2 000 people in temporary premises in the town. During that time the numbers of trainees and courses at the temporary centre were steadily expanded to meet the needs of the people and of the industries of the area. It is a measure of how well those needs are being served by the AnCO centre that more than 90% of the people who completed

main courses there this year were placed in employment immediately on leaving.

The new centre incorporates several innovative design features based on the study of training centres in operation in Ireland and elsewhere in the European Community. Particular emphasis has been laid on energy conservation in the building, while a modular design facilitates changing the use of areas as particular activities expand or contract. From the training standpoint particular emphasis has been laid on safety in all the industrial operations, and a detailed statement of this policy is prominently displayed. The new centre has also been designed to aid the handicapped in accordance with the AnCO policy of integrating the handicapped with the able-bodied in its training courses.

Athlone is the fourteenth centre to be provided in the nationwide network of permanent training establishments which has been set up by AnCO in Ireland.

Belgium

Pilot projects of the ESF

With an unemployment rate among women representing 15% of the working population (as opposed to 5.5% among men), Belgium has the highest female unemployment of all the EC Member States (statistics as of September 1978). In view of this fact the authorities responsible are seeking suitable measures to promote the employment of women. The two pilot projects described below have been implemented in recent months at the request of the Commission on Female Employment of the Ministry of Employment and Labour and are being supported by the European Social Fund (ESF).

Training of women for occupations in the weaving industry traditionally reserved for men

Women find their employment possibilities in the weaving industry restricted by their lack of appropriate training. Trained female workers account for only 15.4% of the total labour force in the weaving industry in Belgium, and no job in this industry requiring specific knowledge of machinery or supervisory skills is held by a woman. This results firstly and primarily from the fact that schoolgirls opt for subjects other than those which would prepare them for a skilled occupation. No girls are being trained as weavers within the framework of vocational or technical training at lower secondary level, and, furthermore, instruction in weaving is not provided in

the training centres run by the Office national pour l'emploi — ONEM (National Employment Office).

The shortage of young women in this type of occupation seems also to be the result of the complex interplay of supply and demand and of social resistance on both sides of the labour market. It is by virtue of all these reasons that the textile industry in Belgium remains a strictly male domain.

The purpose of this pilot project is to foster the development of a mixed working population and at the same time train women for more highly skilled jobs in the weaving industry. Four steps are involved:

- (1) analysis of the reasons by virtue of which women do not take up the occupation of weaver,
- (2) identification of methods which would help overcome the negative attitude of employers and female job-seekers *vis-à-vis* the practice of this occupation by women,
- (3) inclusion of women in in-firm training activities,
- (4) publication of a monograph on the results of the project with a view to rendering attitudes more objective.

This pilot project consists in part of a scientific evaluation of the problems of female employment. Objectivity in the evaluation process is guaranteed by the fact that this pilot project forms an integral part of a training project aimed at fostering a mixed working population.

The pilot project differs from the normal run of training projects in that it provides for research and evaluation alongside training activities as such.

Upon completion of the project the group of researchers who are supervising training will prepare a monograph on the results of the pilot project.

Experimental training project on the training of women for occupations traditionally reserved for men being conducted in two subregions

The pilot project was launched at the initiative of the Commission on Female Employment of the Ministry of Employment and Labour, created in 1975.

The pilot project is being carried out in two subregions in which the rate of female unemployment is high and where at the same time employment possibilities exist. Training will be provided on an experimental basis for women in order to enable them to take

up occupations traditionally reserved for men. Every effort will be made to ensure that these trainees are subsequently able to find employment, either in private enterprise, in the public service, or within the framework of new services to be provided for the population.

Two teams, each composed of women (three of whom are university graduates), have been set up and commissioned to conduct an action-survey in the subregions selected, the one team in Charleroi and the other in Hasselt.

Each team began preparing the experimental training project early in 1978 by carrying out an in-depth analysis in its respective region, taking into consideration the economic situation, the employment market, the unemployment rate, and the vocational training opportunities available.

Having thus gained an insight into the situation prevailing in its region, each team is now conducting an enquiry covering firms and unemployed women in order to identify the types of training which, in the light of the labour needs indicated by the employers interviewed, are worthy of promotion.

The second phase of the project, the experimental training itself, will commence as soon as this preparatory work has been concluded. The teams will each select a group of interested and suitable female job-seekers and inform them objectively of the employment possibilities open to them.

The work of the two teams is being coordinated by the Secretariat of the Commission for Female Employment. Each team is working in close cooperation with the regional office of the National Employment Office (ONEM) and is being supported by a group of experts composed of members of the respective Subregional Committee for Employment. These committees, advisory bodies affiliated to ONEM, carry responsibility for monitoring the employment situation within their respective areas of competence.

Source: ONEM, Brussels.

Italy

A pilot project in the field of didactics

During the triennium 1975-77 the European Social Fund financed under Article 5 a pilot project in the field of basic vocational training implemented in

the ten regions of southern Italy. The project involved 100 courses conducted at 60 vocational training centres by 180 teachers for trainees.

The project, proposed by ISFOL and the Minister of Labour, was managed with public funds by public and private training institutions, with the European Social Fund covering 50% of the total costs.

The purpose of the pilot project, entitled "Progetto Mezzogiorno — Fondo Sociale Europeo (Southern Italy — European Social Fund Project) was to reorient the training structures via a number of innovative objectives:

- reorganization of courses on a modular basis;
- insertion of a period of training in a company workshop;
- gearing vocational training to qualification levels;
- provision of continuing training for teaching staff;
- introduction of joint management.

An effort was made with this pilot project to deal with the problem of the tangential output of courses conducted by the State schools and the problem of continuing training of workers by breaking up the two-year rhythm of the courses and providing instead training modules of varying duration, preferably in semester rhythm, constituting autonomous stages in the acquisition of qualified vocational skills.

The second objective, that of providing a period of in-firm orientation, was aimed at oiling the machinery of access to the labour market by ensuring advance familiarity with actual working conditions.

With the gearing of vocational training to qualification levels an effort was to be made to restructure course curriculum by replacing the concept of the occupational profile (involving a fixed group of tasks) and that of providing occupation-specific subject-matter content by the concept of interdisciplinary course content.

The objective of providing continuing training for teaching staff was the direct result of introducing a modular approach to course structure, the purpose being to involve the teaching staff directly step by step with the implementation of the project. In fact, all the teachers moved from course to course in the various regions at all stages. Above all, they each spent a certain period of time in training firms in order to prepare the in-firm training stages for the trainees.

With regard to joint project management, the promoters of the project, the regions concerned, the training institutions involved, the social partners, and certain peripheral groups all participated at regional and central level. Representatives of various local organizations were also enabled to follow the progress of the project.

In general, the results of this operation were positive. This is confirmed by the fact that subsequent to the implementation of this pilot project the regions of southern Italy and certain regions of central Italy decided to adopt the model as a basis for all their training activities. Also, the European Community has adopted this type of project as a sort of yardstick serving to measure the quality of projects applying for ESF aid under Article 4, young people.

In the triennium 1977-79 the project "Alternanza scuola-lavoro" (alternating schooling with work), the new name for this type of initiative, will serve 35 000 young people throughout Italy, and all the subprojects have been approved and financed by the European Community under Article 4 of the Social Fund.

Source: ISFOL, Rome.

United Kingdom

ESF activities

Young people in the United Kingdom are to receive the lion's share of the first 1978 instalment from the European Social Fund to support vocational training activities in EC Member States. A total allocation of UKL 16.5 million has been made to the UK for vocational training activities. In terms of European units of account: (1 EUA = 67 p.), the total grant has been divided as follows: retraining of agricultural and textile workers, 5.85 million EUA; migrant workers, 0.44 million EUA; young people, 9.48 million EUA; handicapped persons, 1.95 million EUA; unemployed workers in the regions, 6.73 million EUA; and technical progress, 0.18 million EUA. This brings the total to 24.63 million EUA.

The grants for training activities involving young people, excluding Northern Ireland, have been allocated as follows:

- training of some 570 young sponsored apprentices at government training centres. Grant: UKL 692 398;

- special training courses at government training centres for 1 360 unemployed young persons under 18. Grant: UKL 411 411;
- apprentice grants (capitation, special capitation, premium grants) for 1 130 young persons. Grant: UKL 521 890;
- training of 1 000 young persons under the attachment training scheme. Grant: UKL 308 407;
- various new initiatives in work preparation units. Grant: UKL 353 375.

Besides allocation to the young trainees, three other categories are also to receive considerable funds. These are the handicapped, unemployed workers in the regions, and workers in the textile industry and in agriculture who require retraining. Together, these grants amount to 14.54 million EUA.

Programmes using Social Fund grants for the handicapped involve rehabilitation of handicapped people in Northern Ireland aimed at returning them to open employment (grant: UKL 1 009 952), long-term changes in facilities and assessment, and pre-employment training for 122 young physically and mentally handicapped persons at St. Loye's College, Exeter, Devon (grant: UKL 90 999).

Northern Ireland will also receive a substantial proportion of the cash for young people. The largest programme will spend UKL 719 202 on training non-sponsored apprentices aged less than 18 at government training centres. Nearly UKL 25 000 will be spent to support the basic training of 60 young persons as motor mechanics. Again considerable cash grants will go towards aiding the unemployed in Northern Ireland. The largest single grant goes to the training of 2 516 unemployed persons under the attachment training schemes which are in operation.

Pilot training projects

In addition to this allocation from the Social Fund for retraining purposes and in areas of vocational training where there are structural problems caused for instance by technical progress, the United Kingdom has also been awarded grants totalling about UKL 105 000 for pilot projects. The money will be used to support specialized training in the UK in schemes which are designed to work out

prototype training programmes which then have wider application in the industries concerned.

Four schemes will receive grants, one of which concerns the textile industry. Here UKL 26058 will be spent developing multidisciplinary training programmes at a factory at Chapel-en-le Frith, Derbyshire, for trainers and workers threatened with redundancy so that workers will have the opportunity to upgrade their skills through group working. At the same time the problems of repetitive low-skill tasks and the need for excessive overtime at peak periods which arise from a one-man, one-machine method of working can be overcome. The money goes to the Cotton and Allied Textile Industry Training Board, which is administering the scheme.

Another venture involving a training board, and in conjunction with the Manpower Services Commission, aims to demonstrate the possibilities of training women as technicians in the engineering industry. It is confined to women over 25 who have no or very limited qualifications and have never worked or are returning to work after a long absence. To qualify for assistance, training courses must be at least partly financed by public funds. They must include elements of both vocational training and work preparation, ranging over such matters as life in a workplace, trade union activities, insurance, and so on. There must also be some commitment to finding jobs for those completing the course. Applications for assistance are screened in this country by the Department of Employment, Overseas Division.

If an application is approved, the fund will meet up to half the cost of the project if it is being financed out of public funds. On the other hand, if it is a private project the Fund will match the amount being provided out of public funds up to a maximum of half the cost of the project.

The grant of UKL 34 860 goes towards the second phase of this project, where trainees will work in engineering companies, taking block release for further education.

Another UKL 12 500 goes to a project to provide the skills training necessary for building up new enterprises in rural areas of Wales. The scheme is being operated under the aegis of the Development Board for Rural Wales.

The remaining project has to do with the meat industry and the development of techniques to retrain workers to cope with the new technology being introduced. Canvin International Limited, Cardington, Bedfordshire, have been awarded UKL 32 036 for this task.

Source: BACIE, London.

New training facilities

Major proposals for the future development of the Training Opportunities Scheme, which serves as a form of permanent vocational education, were published in November 1978. TOPS has been in existence since 1972, when control of training was in the process of being transferred from industry to government and aimed to provide individuals with "training on demand". The scheme was successful in meeting its original objectives, but a rapid expansion had created some problems, for the government's original target of 100 000 trainees set up in 1972 was nearly reached in 1976, and the scheme was not without its critics. Massive financial support was necessary, and in 1977 a subsidy of UKL 34.6 million came from the Social Fund.

In 1977 it was decided that it was time for a review using the following terms of reference: to consider and report on the future role, scale, and balance of adult training under the Training Opportunities Scheme up to the mid-1980s, taking into account current and prospective labour market demands, economic and social aims, other training and education provisions, and maintenance of appropriate training standards.

The main proposals include a strengthening of TOPS' relationship with other parts of the training system, an expansion of higher level training, provision of basic work preparation for unemployed people, development of facilities for groups with special training needs, and some alteration in the regulations.

Source: Training Services Division of the Manpower Services Commission, 158-162 Regent Street, London W1R 6DE.

Training Developments

France

Reform of legislation governing educational leave and the remuneration of employees undergoing continuing vocational training ¹

(Law No 78-754 of 17 July 1978)

In July 1978 the French Parliament passed a law revising a number of important aspects of the law of 16 July 1971 governing continuing vocational training.

The law of 17 July 1978 was adopted in response to demands made by the social partners who, in signing on 9 July 1976 an agreement to complement the agreement on vocational training and advanced vocational training of 9 July 1970, had called for intervention on the part of the legislative bodies to supplement a structure which they considered still to be inadequate.

While consolidating some existing contractual provisions, the most recent piece of legislation also introduces a number of new aspects into the continuing vocational training system.

The provisions of the law of 17 July 1978 focus primarily on educational leave. Although the right to educational leave was instituted by the 1971 legislation, very few employees have taken advantage of it to date (48 000 in 1977). The principal reason for this reticence was that in the majority of cases the employer was under no obligation to continue making wage payments to the employee during the period of leave. In addition to consolidating the existing contractual provisions, the new legislation places the employer under an obligation to maintain wage payments:

- for the first 160 hours of training if the total duration of the course does not exceed 500 hours,
- for the first 500 hours of training if the total duration of the course exceeds 500 hours,

on condition that the training course undergone is one which has been approved by the State.

However, any request for paid educational leave may be deferred by the

¹ See also Bulletin No 4, 1978.

employer if the percentage of employees absent on educational leave at the time in question would otherwise exceed 0.5% of the total staff.

Moreover, under the new legislation an employee may apply for educational leave for the purpose of preparing for and taking a professional examination. The maximum duration of such a preparation period may not exceed 24 hours per year.

Finally, the new law increases the duration of special educational leave to which any young worker between 16 and 20 years of age with no occupational qualification is entitled from 100 hours to 200 hours per year.

The law of 17 July 1978 also legalizes the right to leave of absence to provide instruction which was introduced by the agreement concluded between the employers organization and the trade unions on 9 July 1970. Workers who have been in the continuous employ of a firm for two years have the right to take leave of absence to give full-time or part-time technical instruction in a subject relevant to their occupation. Requests for such leave of absence may be deferred by the employer if the percentage of workers absent by virtue of this type of leave at any one time would otherwise exceed 1% of the total staff.

The remaining provisions of the law of 17 July 1978 mainly constitute amendments to the system governing financial participation of the State in the remuneration of trainees undergoing vocational training.

Under the previous regulations the amount of remuneration depended on the nature of the course undergone. Henceforth the financial participation of the State will take into account the status of the trainee concerned.

If the trainee has employee status, the State supports the firm in maintaining wage payments by assuming responsibility for wages falling due after the completion of the 160 or 500 hours of training for which the employer bears legal responsibility. If the trainee is a job-seeker, the State guarantees remuneration equal to 70% of his previous wage or, if he has never been employed, the minimum guaranteed wage. Finally, non-salaried workers receive an allowance calculated on the basis of the guaranteed minimum wage, provided that they have pursued an occupation for at least one year.

The final article of the new law concerns the right of workers to leave of absence for the purpose of serving on an examination board or on an administrative commission or an employer-trade union commission dealing with training and employment problems, provided that the commission concerned is entered in a national register. During such periods of absence wage payments are maintained either by the firm or by the State.

These provisions, in particular that providing for the transfer from the employer to the State of responsibility for the maintenance of wage payments to employees exercising their right to paid educational leave after expiry of the stipulated minimum legal period (160 or 500 hours), are intended to stimulate the activity provided for within the framework of the policy adopted in 1971.

Reactions on the part of the employers' organizations and the trade unions

Employers

Conseil national du patronat français — CNPF (National Council of French Employers)

"The merits of the legislation are twofold: Firstly, this law represents the first step in coordinating the right to educational leave for employees and the financial obligation incumbent on employers in that it explicitly stipulates the terms of the employers' obligation to bear the costs arising from educational leave, an aspect which had previously been neglected.

Secondly, the law simplifies the system governing State participation in the remuneration of trainees undergoing vocational training in so far as it now operates on the basis of one criterion only, namely, the status of the trainee within the employment hierarchy

The new system deserves criticism on two accounts:

- Firstly, it is incomplete. In effect the law fails to stipulate the conditions under which the State assumes responsibility for training fees, an item which should indeed be incumbent on it.
- Secondly, it shows the keenness of the State to assume the primary role hitherto played by the social partners in promoting exercise of the right to

educational leave. Henceforth the discretionary powers of the social partners are restricted to short-term training activities only (160 hours or fewer), while long-term training activities are now the exclusive domain of the State"

Trade unions

Confédération française démocratique du travail — CFDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labour)

"Although the new law does indeed include some significantly positive elements, there is a risk that its effect will be seriously foreshortened. The CFDT can perceive from its text no great possibilities — nor indeed the political will thereto — of genuine negotiation and control procedures in vocational training policy being established to replace the alleged practice of concertation and consultation. A number of difficulties remain which continue to hinder both individual and collective initiatives. Priority should have been given to unskilled workers and employees in small and medium firms; this is a step in the opposite direction"

Confédération générale des cadres — CGC (General Confederation of Salaried Staff)

"In practice it has become more difficult for salaried staff to take advantage of their right to educational leave, for two reasons:

- 1) In the light of the current legislation the only way of ensuring full financial support is to undertake courses organized by state-approved bodies such as the Association pour la formation professionnelle des adultes — AFPA (Association for Adult Vocational Training). However, these bodies offer very few training courses suitable for salaried staff.
- 2) The absence of salaried staff, especially in small and medium firms, makes for difficulties within the enterprise in so far as it is often impossible to provide substitutes for them.

In view of these facts it remains necessary to introduce modifications in both the types of course offered and in current practice as regards responsibility for the various costs incurred by training (accommodation, transport, fees, remuneration).

One positive aspect incorporated in the recent legislation deserves mention: regulation of the question of remuneration for employees serving in official training bodies. This is essential if employees are to participate in the organization of their training"

Confédération générale du travail — CGT (General Confederation of Labour)

"The CGT denounces the illusory and negative nature of the text revising the law of 16 July 1971. In effect the law does nothing more than slightly modify the restrictive provisions of the contractual agreement of 9 July 1976 to which the CGT and the CFDT refused to be signatories in view of its likelihood to preserve and even aggravate the difficulties encountered by workers in applying the terms of the inter-trade agreement of 9 July 1970 on vocational training"

CGT Force ouvrière — CGT FO (CGT Labour Force)

"The 1978 law is a positive step in so far as it is based on the only existing elements of an established right to educational leave, namely, the 1970 inter-trade agreement and, more especially, the supplementary agreement of 1976.

Its value lies in two important aspects:

- in the extension of the majority of the contractual provisions to include employees who had hitherto not been entitled to benefit therefrom;
- in the guarantee of increased state participation to cover the gaps left by the 1970 agreement, especially as regards maintaining wage payments for trainees"

Source: Inffo, Paris.

Luxembourg

Career guidance and preparatory training courses

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with its monolithic economic structure based on the iron and steel industry which employs one-quarter of the working population, the economic recession in general and the marked crisis in the iron and steel industry in particular have led, as indeed in other European countries as well, to an

increase in unemployment of which the principal victims are young people.

In accordance with the law enacted on 24 December 1977 which authorized the government to undertake measures designed to stimulate economic growth and maintain full employment, the Grand Ducal Regulation of 21 February 1978 established the guidelines for career guidance and preparatory training courses for young people who have completed compulsory schooling but do not yet fulfil the minimum age requirement entitling them to unemployment benefits.

The career guidance and preparatory training courses comprise two stages:

Information and orientation stage

Each young person attends a number of specially coordinated courses, each of ten days' duration, in a series of related workshops. Progress made during this time is observed by a pedagogic team comprising one industrial psychologist, one psychologist, one instructor, one teacher, and one educationalist, and recorded in a personal file. As soon as each trainee has completed a course in each of the various basic workshops (i.e. after a period of six weeks), the data recorded on the personal files are evaluated and the possibilities of undergoing preparatory training are discussed with the trainees and their parents. It is at this stage that the training which is polyvalent in nature and at the same time oriented towards the major occupational groups commences. Preparatory training may be undergone in one of the following occupational groups: hoteliery, horticulture, metalworking, woodworking, building, or painting.

Preparatory training stage

The purpose of this stage is twofold:

- to motivate the trainees to undergo more intensive vocational training,
- to serve as an intermediate step in the integration of young people into working life.

The first courses, which were held from February to June 1978 have revealed that of these young people:

- a high percentage encounter general or specific difficulties in finding an apprenticeship;
- many are marked as a result of failure at school and experience difficulty in making contact;

- many display a high degree of anxiety and insecurity;
- a high percentage experience a powerful and lengthy identity crisis in which a psychosomatic and psychosociological transition takes place;
- a large number come from disadvantaged sociocultural backgrounds;
- a high percentage are young migrants.

In the light of these facts, the pedagogic team endeavoured to:

- create an atmosphere free of the constraints and rigidity which are typical of traditional training systems,
- set a rate of progress compatible with the abilities and potential of the trainees and in this way launch a self-confidence-building process within them which would in turn stimulate their aspirations,
- promote active involvement by means of participation and cooperation,
- apply the credit system and commence training with self-evaluation (tests),
- employ a pedagogy aimed at providing personal guidance and lasting support structures.

The trainees were distributed as follows:

Distribution	Trainees	Classes
Hoteliery	30	2
Horticulture	6	1
Metalworking	48	4
Woodworking	12	1
Building	10	1
Painting	22	2
	128	11

The pedagogic team was made up as follows:

one director, one assistant director in charge of pedagogic follow-up, one industrial psychologist (half-day), one psychologist (half-day), five teachers (four part-time), twelve instructors (four part-time), and five educationalists (full-time).

At the end of the course on 30 June 1978, 121 trainees received a certificate of attendance and 67 trainees were awarded a certificate of proficiency, 20 with a pass, 28 with merit, and 19 with distinction.

It is now possible to draw the first conclusions. The major problem remains that of providing these young people with an apprenticeship which guarantees them long-term vocational training on a contractual basis. The first steps in this direction are the identification of those occupations in which apprenticeships are likely to be most numerous and, while respecting the right to freedom in the choice of occupation, the coordination of the preparatory training offered with these labour-market conditions. The advisory commission has proved to be of inestimable value in this connection, and the contacts made in the interest of placing these trainees in apprenticeships have proved most fruitful. Jobs have been found in the hotel branch for 27 trainees on the basis of an induction contract which is converted after three months into an apprenticeship contract. To date 78% of the remaining trainees have entered a craft apprenticeship.

The task now at hand is to maintain contact with the ex-trainees, their parents, and the various firms, with a view to averting any negative reactions which may stem from feelings of rejection or lack of self-confidence when entering working life. In order that contact can be effectively maintained on a permanent basis, the pedagogic team remains intact all the time, including school holiday periods.

The training experiment cannot justifiably be termed successful until a period of at least two years has passed, that is to say, until the final results can be accurately evaluated. The psychopedagogic counselling structure should remain accessible to all young persons who have completed the preparatory training course, providing them with educational advice, psychological guidance, and socio-educational support.

The present team is to be expanded to include in particular a greater number of psychologists and educationalists. However, care must be taken not to excessively compartmentalize the various roles, for the complementary and interdependent nature of the measures involved and the objectives pursued calls for constant, long-term interaction among all the individuals concerned.

The pedagogic team is to undertake internal evaluations of both a sectoral and global nature founded on the basis of information from feedback and follow-up measures to be conducted until 1980. The purpose of such evaluation is

to ensure that the young people now placed in an apprenticeship are not "forgotten" or in other words to create long-term support structures which will facilitate any adjustment which may become necessary.

The internal evaluation drawn up by the team will be supplemented by an external evaluation elaborated under the supervision of the EC and with the assistance of the psychopedagogical service of the Institute of Pedagogy. The fact that the training experiment conducted at the Walferdange Centre for unemployed young people between 15 and 16 years of age is being supported by various competent EC services shows that interest in the project prevails both within and outside the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Career guidance and preparatory training courses recommenced on 13 November 1978 in the first training centre located on the outskirts of the city of Luxembourg. A second training centre located at Esch-sur-Alzette, a coalmining area, will be opened in January 1979.

Source: Ministry of Education, Luxembourg.

The current situation and trends in training

Vocational training

The government has paid particular attention to the improvement of vocational training as such. Apart from the reform of the schooling regulations for pupils finding difficulty in obtaining the Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle — CAP (vocational training certificate), the most important measures have been the extension of full-time training in the crafts sector, special classes and training courses for the less sought-after occupations, and the extension of pre-apprenticeship training in the 9th grade to include courses for intending jewellers, watch and clockmakers, dental technicians, office machine technicians, and opticians. However, the most important innovation is the introduction of regulations governing a further occupation, that of iron and steel metallurgist, and of regulations governing apprenticeship in industry.

As regards measures affecting the two grades constituting the observation and orientation cycle (7th and 8th grades) a

considerable improvement has been manifest in the application of an efficient information and guidance policy, particularly in the 8th grade. The measures taken focus on the curriculum, which now provides for one lesson per week of special instruction to serve as an introduction to working life (a field formerly covered within the framework of practical guidance work), as well as on teaching materials which have been diversified with greater emphasis being given to information material and audio-visual equipment. The envisaged *rapprochement* between the 8th grade in polyvalent training and the 4th grade in lower secondary education had not taken place to the extent anticipated by the beginning of the 1978 school year, owing to a number of differences in the respective curricula. Renewed endeavours to restructure and coordinate the curricula should be brought to a successful conclusion by 1979.

The reform of training for the crafts sector focuses primarily on three aspects:

- a prolongation of training at school which will make itself felt both in an increase in the total duration of apprenticeship (under investigation in the case of radio and television electricians) and in a modification in the ratio between the duration of school education and that of in-firm training to the benefit of the former. This increase is being effected by replacing the present system of alternating training by a system of training in block sessions (i.e. consecutive periods of instruction). The block training system was introduced in the 1978/79 school year for intending caterers, chefs, waiters, central heating fitters, and sanitary equipment fitters, and proposals to extend it for a trial period to include intending locksmiths in their final year of training are being investigated;
- a restructuring of the training system to take into account contemporary requirements on the labour market;
- the creation of new training tracks: proposals to include vocational training for intending swimming pool attendants and beauticians within the framework of vocational training for the crafts sector.

The most important field of reform is undoubtedly apprenticeship in industry, which comprises all the technical occupations for which the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Labour are competent. In addition to extending the duration of theoretical training

(prolongation of compulsory schooling), the new regulation establishes the instrumentality for concerted action of schools and workshops, ensures parity in the rates of advancement in theoretical and practical training, and creates a new institution, that of the apprenticeship counsellor.

Meanwhile, proposals to reform apprenticeships in commerce are at present being deliberated by an *ad hoc* committee composed of representatives of the Ministry of Education, the Apprenticeship Examination Board, the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Private Employees, and the vocational schools. The project under discussion would introduce in the commercial sector an instrumentality analogous to that recently established for industrial apprenticeships, including the establishment of a national commission for apprenticeship in commerce, the introduction of an apprentice's report book, the possibility of extending the duration of an apprenticeship contract, and progress tests within the firm, and the identification of the educational fields to be dealt with during the course of training.

Commercial apprenticeships cover two occupational groups:

- office clerks and bookkeepers;
- sales personnel, storemen, and display dressers.

Government policy is very much in favour of persuading young people who have completed commercial courses at vocational schools not to be satisfied with this only partial qualification (i.e. with only the theoretical part, the vocational training certificate (CAP) awarded upon successful completion of a training course within the framework of full-time schooling), but instead to conclude a regular apprenticeship contract and sit the practical part of the examination upon completion of the period of apprenticeship. Proposals have been made for the creation of the institution of counsellor for commercial apprenticeships. In its communication on the 1979 draft budget, the Chamber of Private Employees, while expressing its approval of the creation of the institution of counsellor for industrial apprenticeships, pointed out that it considered the institution of such a counsellor to be far more urgent in the commercial sector. Although the government has in principle approved this proposition, it nevertheless contends that it would be advantageous if the institution were not to come into being before 1980, since by that time the

reform of commercial apprenticeship will be complete and consolidated in legislation. The agreement to be concluded among the various chambers competent for the institution of a counsellor for industrial apprenticeships could then be reviewed and, if necessary, modified in the light of the experience gained in the meantime.

It is evident that decision on the institution of apprenticeship counsellor is less the result of an identification of priorities than of objectivity.

Finally, the measures initiated in recent years are being continued as before:

- special classes for apprentices in less sought-after occupations (e.g. glazier, insulator, silk-screen printer);
- special classes for non-German-speaking pupils;
- extension of the concept of alternating training in workshop and school to include the crafts sector.

Technical and vocational education

The reforms introduced in vocational education are incorporated in two pieces of legislation, one governing the organization of vocational training, the creation of a technical secondary education system, and the organization of continuing education; and one governing the establishment of a higher institute of technology.

The proposed texts of these pieces of legislation were submitted for comment to the various educational establishments, chambers, and teacher associations concerned. The Ministry of Education redrafted the texts after due consideration of the observations made and then submitted the modified texts to the legislative branch. Apart from undergoing a few minor modifications, the texts were accorded wide approval.

By supplementing the legislation on vocational training and technical secondary education with regulations on continuing education, the Ministry of Education is simultaneously pursuing two objectives, namely, the creation of a cohesive system of continuing education and the establishment of a solid legal base for training courses.

In its communication on the 1979 draft budget the Chamber of Labour stated in this connection:

"If any further proof is still required, the present crisis has come at an appropriate time to illustrate the compelling necessity

for paying increased attention to continuing education. Whereas in Luxembourg this has to date remained in an embryonic state, present almost by coincidence, other countries already dispose of the entire instrumentality necessary for training and retraining their labour force (functional infrastructure, personnel, training programmes, research structures, incentive schemes, etc.). Although it is true that Luxembourg has not experienced the endemic unemployment found in a number of its neighbouring countries, economic statistics have manifested a constant change over recent years which has brought us to a situation in which trained ability and occupational mobility are more basic than ever to the pursuit of prosperity or, more precisely, the survival of the economy."

The Chamber of Commerce has also spoken out in favour of the institutionalization of accelerated continuing education and of training courses and seminars organized in the implementation of such a policy.

Source: Ministry of Education, Luxembourg.

Italy

Analysis of the new vocational training law

The situation

On 9 November 1978 the Italian Chamber of Deputies approved the draft of the new outline vocational training law. In this law it is laid down that in Italy competence in training matters falls to the regions whereas competence in establishing general principles falls to the State. It is in fact this law which establishes such principles.

In accordance with the Italian Constitution this law will not come into force until it has been approved by the upper house of parliament, namely, the Senate of the Republic.

Distortions in the Italian vocational training system

The Italian vocational training system, the management of which was placed in the hands of the regions on 15 January 1972 (DPR 10), is plagued by serious distortions which the new vocational

training law seeks to correct by means of innovations. These distortions consist in:

- the existence of training systems which differ from region to region not only with regard to content but also frequently with regard to training objectives. There is furthermore no clear distribution of spheres of competence between the regions and the State (Minister of Labour) as regards tasks of programme design and occupational guidance;
- the absence of general criteria which encourage in the individual regions the financing of training institutions operating in the private sector, the result being that the work of these institutions is not properly geared to the needs of the labour market;
- the absence of a standard scale of remuneration for the teaching staff, the result being extreme variation in salaries from training institution to training institution and from region to region;
- the tendency to give preference to basic vocational training of long duration (two to three years) for boys, the result being that in many cases vocational training has become a parallel type of schooling competing with general schooling provided by the State;
- a poor linkage between school and work characterized by the absence of a well-functioning circuit leading from school to occupational guidance to vocational training and on to placement and work;
- the lack of involvement of the firms in the training system as reflected in their failure to participate in financing the system, in problems involved in implementing alternate periods of schooling and in-firm training, in the shortage of data provided by the central data offices on employment opportunities, and the gradual worsening of apprentice training, which has in fact become an instrument of underpayment with only sporadic training content;
- the difficulty (primarily bureaucratic in nature but frequently also resulting from insufficient organizational and programming capacity of obtaining access to the European Social Fund).

It is clear that all these distortions and difficulties:

- are on the one hand accompanied by a great variety of proposals, imaginative experimentation, and methodological innovations, by reason of which it would be unfair to

automatically condemn the existing system;

- are on the other hand the direct result of the difficult socio-economic situation in which Italy finds itself, one which cannot be corrected simply by legislative measures.

It is therefore instructive to analyse point for point what the law envisages by way of corrective innovation.

Innovations introduced under the new law

- (a) Better coordination has been established among the regions (Comitato Nazionale della Formazione Professionale (National Vocational Training Committee), composed of representatives of the government and the social partners), and the general competences of the Minister of Labour (promotion of access to ESF, research and experimentation particularly via ISFOL, and definition of qualification levels) have been more clearly defined.
- (b) Uniform procedures of financing private training institutions (agreements) have been established and general principles have been defined (linkage with analyses of qualified manpower demand on the labour market).
- (c) A uniform scale of reference (man/hour remuneration) has been established for the teaching staff.
- (d) Regulations governing course organization and course attendance have been introduced (breakdown of courses into cycles of not more than 600 hours, impossibility of attending more than four cycles without having had job experience in between) in order to discourage parallel competition with the schools and to integrate vocational training into the continuing education structure.
- (e) Except for proclaiming relevant principles little has been done to ensure a stable link between training and placement and to reform apprentice training. Placement and apprenticeship remain anomalous functions of the interface between the competences of the State and those of the regions. Thus for the most part the problem of occupational guidance remains unsolved.
- (f) A relationship between the training system and the firms has been set up, with the firms being requested to

contribute — percentage-wise only symbolically, to be sure — to the costs of the system in return for enabling them to receive certain benefits in connection with the in-firm training offered.

- (g) Machinery has been set up (a rotation fund at national level) which, although not free of imperfections, should enable a much greater number of Italian applicants, both public and private, to benefit from ESF grants.

Conclusion

In summarizing, it can be said that with the new vocational training law everything possible has been done to correct the most glaring distortions in the sector by rationalizing via internal adjustment and drawing a clear line of demarcation between the state schools and the vocational training centres.

The law has been less effective where the challenge is to throw a bridge to working life and to create an image of vocational training as an effective instrument of an active labour policy.

In this connection it should be mentioned that there will be ample opportunity to eliminate these weaknesses (and for this reason it is improbable that the law will be approved by the Senate) when the Government submits its draft law on *servi-nazionale dell'impiego* (national employment services) to parliament in the near future. In this legislation the continuity between training and employment, supported by precise operational instruments which will concretize this continuity, is expected to be called for in precise terms.

Source: G. Medusa, Rome.

Belgium

Vocational training in the secondary sector

In 1978 the National Employment Office (ONEM) initiated a new project to train job-seekers whose previous training had proved to be inadequate. The project is intended to benefit unemployed persons for whom the placement services have difficulty in finding a regular job despite the fact that the training which they have undergone should, in principle, correspond to labour market requirements.

Having been identified according to these criteria, the job-seekers are accepted at the training centres and classified into groups according to occupation. Their abilities are assessed on the basis of an interview, a written test, and, where appropriate, a practical test. Performance in these tests has confirmed that the candidates' abilities are for the main part inadequate and sometimes virtually non-existent. It has also become evident that job-seekers are ill aware of the vocational training opportunities open to them, and many do not grasp the importance and value of such training until they visit the ONEM training centre and have occasion to see in concrete terms exactly what training consists of.

If the tests show that the job-seeker is properly qualified, he/she is referred to the placement service, which, now being able to proceed from much more reliable and accurate information, finds its task considerably simplified.

The remaining candidates, who constitute by far the majority, are given a clear and precise indication of their shortcomings and are provided with advice on supplementary training courses which are specially adapted to their requirements. Although the candidates are under no obligation to undergo any kind of training, many in fact choose to do so, readily recognizing their inadequacies and displaying an interest in a training course which will prove to be of real value.

Although the project takes into consideration the entire secondary sector, particular attention is being paid to those occupations for which the demand on the labour market is particularly strong. The results obtained to date have been more than encouraging.

Meanwhile, ONEM has also been consolidating its cooperation with the various professional associations in order to better follow developments on the labour market and thus be in a position to constantly update its existing training programmes to meet changing requirements and to conceptualize new training courses.

This policy of cooperation has been pursued with particular success in the building sector. In close cooperation with the Fonds de formation professionnelle de la construction — FFC (Building Training Fund), ONEM has begun a comprehensive revision of its training courses to render them more polyvalent and to update the teaching meth-

odologies employed, with special attention being paid thereby to the now generalized use of prefabricated components in construction.

A survey conducted by FFC throughout Belgium has revealed a considerable demand for skilled labour in road construction and maintenance (polyvalent road work), an occupation for which no training was formerly available. ONEM has now established three training centres to meet this demand, and further centres will be established, should the need arise.

As regards the metalworking occupations, a decision was taken to refer the most successful trainee welders from ONEM training centres to the Centre de perfectionnement des soudeurs — CPS (Advanced Training Centre for Welding Technology), a centre established on the initiative of FABRIMETAL. After successful completion of a two-week training course at CPS the trainees are awarded an official certificate which greatly enhances their possibilities of finding employment as skilled welders in industry.

Finally, the concept of establishing training centres for numerical-control machine tool technology, a project which had been studied in cooperation with FABRIMETAL and held in abeyance for a while owing to misgivings arising from the economic situation, has just moved one step nearer to becoming reality with the decision taken this year to establish two pilot centres in 1979.

Source: ONEM, Brussels.

Observation and guidance centres promoting female employment

A limited number of specific measures having already been undertaken to train women for so-called male occupations (for example, machine tool operator, welder), it was decided at the end of 1977 that the observation and guidance centres should conduct an extensive and intensive sensitization and motivation campaign among women to promote female employment in the secondary sector.

Despite the high degree of interest displayed by the women in the project, it was found that only a minimal

percentage of the applicants were in fact suited to receive vocational training for an occupation traditionally regarded as a male occupation.

The reasons were twofold:

- Motivation for vocational training was often found to be weak because the applicant was not convinced of being able to find employment after completion of training and was furthermore restrained by factors of a personal nature (care of children, attitude of husband, etc.). Socio-cultural factors were also often found to play an important role;
- In the majority of cases the applicants were found to have a level of ability insufficient to enable them to benefit properly from a vocational training course. It was also found that the women were considerably disadvantaged as regards educational background and type of work previously performed.

Despite the modestness of the results obtained, ONEM is continuing to promote these measures for the following reasons:

- This is one way of recouping a considerable number of women who would otherwise not have had an opportunity to undergo vocational training.
- This is one way of demonstrating that there are women who are just as capable as men of learning a so-called male occupation such as welding, carpentry, painting, paperhanging, etc. It is thus one way of promoting the struggle against existing social prejudices.
- The excess of female labour already evident in the tertiary sector, in particular of low-ranking clerical staff, constitutes a problem which will become increasingly pressing in the near future, the only solution to which will reside in the placement of women in jobs in the secondary sector.

Source: ONEM, Brussels.

Netherlands

Promotion of vocational training

On 11 July 1978 the State Secretary for Education and Science and the Minister for Social Affairs presented to parliament a memorandum entitled 'Pilot projects in new educational facilities for young

people 16 to 18 years of age'. This memorandum, the outcome of the government statement of January 1978, describes the plan to implement from 1 August 1979 a number of pilot projects in the education of young people from 16 to 18 years of age, the second phase of secondary education. The aim is specifically to assess the value of new two-year vocational training courses on an experimental basis. It is estimated that a maximum of 4 800 young people will initially be involved in the experiment.

In an explanatory statement on these plans, the abovementioned members of the government state that participation in full-time education until an ever-increasing age is causing problems in various places. For example, the transition from lower vocational training to the various forms of intermediate vocational training is not always possible for all school leavers, even those with certificates, and the intention is to stimulate the development of training facilities for this specific group. The new courses may also play an important role in efforts to combat youth unemployment. In addition, they may satisfy the demand for short vocation-oriented training courses following lower vocational training or intermediate general secondary education.

Programmes

The plan is based on two kinds of programme, two-year vocational training courses on the one hand and orientation and other programmes on the other. The new two-year vocational training courses are in principle open to young people who have completed a lower vocational training course or their intermediate general secondary education, whether or not they have obtained a certificate, and those who have dropped out of higher general secondary education or intermediate vocational training courses. As a general rule, those without a certificate must have had ten years of education. The level is therefore at least the same as that of comparable "primary" apprentice training schemes. The government members consider it reasonable to assume that this level will meet a constant demand for labour in the industrial and building trades, in commerce, and in the welfare sector.

The intention is that the new full-time training courses should exist as an equivalent alternative to the present apprenticeship scheme. In the new

courses equal importance is to be attached to the eventual occupation and to general education. For this reason, each course primarily comprises a genuine vocational training component consisting of practical subjects, theoretical subjects, and possibly on-the-job training. The second component consists of the development of individual and social personality, general guidance, creative work, physical training, etc. The third component is left to the discretion of the authorities (the school's board of governors).

The orientation programme is designed for apprentices who have not yet chosen a course or do not fulfil the requirements for admission to the new vocational training scheme. These apprentices are given the opportunity of taking part in a programme which provides vocational guidance and so helps them to choose a course. It is also possible to select a programme to make good shortcomings in previous training. Furthermore, general guidance programmes can be taken. Finally, combinations of the programmes outlined above are possible. The maximum duration of the orientation programmes is one year.

Pilot projects

The memorandum was drawn up with the aim of putting the pilot projects into operation as quickly as possible. The funds available for this purpose—HFL 9.5 million—are described as limited but sufficient to implement a number of projects. A decision on the general introduction of the new form of training cannot be taken for some time, according to the State-Secretary responsible. In any case account will have to be taken of the educational results achieved with the projects and of the financial possibilities.

If on completion of the projects (1981) a decision is in fact taken to introduce the scheme generally—parliament has urged this—the Order in Council under which the experiment will be conducted will have to be replaced, according to the State-Secretary, by an amendment to the Secondary Education Act. The plan to extend the one day of compulsory education to 17-year-olds will not now be implemented.

Screening

A distribution and screening committee, on which representatives of the educational organizations will be joined

by regional policy and labour market experts, will evaluate the applications for participation in the experiment. One of the criteria will be regional labour market requirements.

Comments

In their comments on the planned new form of training, educational and employees' organizations both emphasize the implications of the projects for the relationship between education and the labour market. This relationship should not at any cost be regarded as the overriding criterion in formulating educational objectives or deciding the scope and curriculum of the new facilities.

The Netherlands Trade Union Federation (FNV) remarks in its comments that the proposals are not argued from a clear, educationally well-founded, longer-term view of education for the age group involved in the second phase of secondary education. FNV maintains there is nothing to show that the proposals are directed at both the labour market and education: the plan is characterized by a definite bias. In its opinion the labour market, in particular the regional labour market, is also quite wrongly regarded as the determining factor in deciding the form that education should take and where which programmes should be implemented. FNV wonders what guarantee there is that after their training apprentices will find a job. The regions in which supply far outstrips demand are a cause of considerable concern. Can training schemes be introduced in such regions? And how can young people obtain qualifications in an occupation for which there is no demand in the region where they live? In conclusion, FNV feels that the situation from which the need for potential craftsmen should emerge in the longer term does not in fact exist.

The National Christian Trade Union Federation (CNV) takes the view that the emphasis placed on labour market considerations will make the new facilities sensitive to economic trends. This, according to CNV, represents an irresponsible restriction of the freedom of educational and vocational choice. The fact is also pointed out that it is very difficult to express labour market requirements in valid forecasts. This is perhaps the reason why the plan gives no indication at all of the crafts that will be involved in the pilot projects. CNV concludes that the regional labour

market situation must be rejected as a criterion. Both national and regional labour market information can be offered to apprentices only as a guide.

In November 1978 the Association of Netherlands Enterprises (VNO) and the Netherlands Christian Employers' Association (NCW)—both employers' organizations—published a brochure entitled 'Vocational training for all', containing reactions to the proposals for new facilities for young people of 16 to 18. The need for these new facilities is underlined, not only because they will provide training courses for those who will become skilled workers in later life but also because priority should be given to efforts to combat youth unemployment within the existing financial limits.

The employers' approval of the plan does not, however, mean that 'primary' training of apprentices has no further role to play for this age group. There will continue to be a need for part-time training, VNO and NCW say, as an equivalent alternative to the new facilities. In this context it is pointed out that there will always be a group of young people who rather than staying at school want to stand on their own feet from an early age and obtain qualifications while working. In addition, the retention of a part-time alternative can counteract the tendency for young people to stay at school until an increasingly later age and so delay their entry into working life. Finally, the employers' organizations contend that much of the practical teaching that is important for vocational training cannot be given in school.

Research

The Kohnstamm Institute of the University of Amsterdam has included in its research programme for 1979 and subsequent years certain aspects of the problems connected with the new educational facilities to be developed for young people 16 to 18 years of age. This new research programme is based on current and/or already completed investigations into combined on-the-job and off-the-job training schemes.

Thus in the first half of 1979 the Institute will contribute to an investigation into the effects of training of an innovative nature aimed at improving the position of women and girls on the labour market. The request for this investigation was made by CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training). It

will concentrate on an analysis of the background, objectives, content and organization, participants and effects in a small number of cases.

Source: Social and Economic Committee, The Hague:

- Report of proceedings 15098
- Comments on 15098 by FNV, CNV and COLO (Central Association of National Training Boards) (Doc. page 88, October 1978)
- Vocational training for all, brochure published by VNO/NCW (November 1978)
- Kohnstamm Institute: Investigation into the multiannual plan 1979-83 (annexes).

United Kingdom

New financial measures

Provisional expenditure by the Manpower Services Commission in 1977/78 is set out in the MSC Annual Report for 1977/78. Some UKL 291.9 million was allocated to the Training Services Division (TSD). This covered costs of meeting training needs of industry which includes UKL 90 million on the operating costs of industrial training boards, grants for training schemes, and administration, UKL 184.7 million on the Training Opportunities Scheme,

and UKL 7.7 million on other programmes. Special programmes cost the MSC UKL 14.7 million, but this comparatively small figure will be greatly increased next year when the costs of the recently introduced Youth Opportunities Scheme and the Special Temporary Employment Programme become visible in the balance sheet. A total of UKL 432.5 million was spent by the MSC during the year plus another UKL 11 million spent by the Commission on behalf of the Department of Employment.

Research expenditure was less than UKL 1 million and was spread over manpower intelligence and planning, the socially disadvantaged, meeting the training needs of industry, improving training effectiveness and efficiency, training research, and the employment service. The budget for research was deployed in ways relating to the main programme developments taking place during that period.

Industrial Training Boards

The TSD's financial contribution towards the work of the ITBs was about UKL 84 million in 1977/78, split between the boards as follows:

ITB operations 1977/78

Board	Employees in scope (1 000)	Total MSC contribution (UKL 1 000)
Air Transport and Travel	113	1 692
Carpet	40	165
Ceramics, Glass and Mineral Products	304	1 649
Chemical and Allied Products	436	2 905
Clothing and Allied Products	266	1 105
Construction	959	14 137
Cotton and Allied Textiles	162	1 078
Distributive	2 250	5 838
Engineering — Main	2 891	21 893
MEECI	(35)	970
Food, Drink, and Tobacco	1 200	2 650
Footwear, Leather, and Fur Skin	114	845
Foundry Industry Training Committee	130	1 453
Furniture and Timber	206	1 835
Hotel and Catering	1 108	2 702
Iron and Steel	269	1 285
Knitting, Lace, and Net	140	619
Man-made Fibres	40	168
Paper and Paper Products	192	1 029
Petroleum	92	818
Printing and Publishing	482	2 022
Road Transport	847	11 670
Rubber and Plastics	262	1 392
Shipbuilding	110	3 293
Wool, Jute, and Flax	104	520
Total	12 718	83 733

Special measures

This year sees the last of the special measures which were introduced in July 1975 as a programme aimed to safeguard future needs for skilled manpower. The initial allocation of Exchequer funds was mainly directed to supporting off-the-job apprentice training. Such was the demand and such was the effect of the downturn in employment that another programme had to be devised. Skills shortages in the British, and indeed other countries', labour markets had made the issue complex. After some consultation, the Manpower Services Commission launched its programme for action. Consultation continues and some submissions for action have been received by MSC from the ITBs and other national training bodies. By the autumn of 1979 the new programme should be in operation as a comprehensive measure in balancing

skills requirements and available manpower.

Review of craft apprenticeship

In 1978 the Engineering Industry Training Board published its review of craft apprenticeship in the Board's Information Paper 49. Its proposals are radical in that the attainment of craft status should depend on achievement of serving a fixed period of time and that both the starting age and the total length of apprenticeship should be reduced. Agreement on implementing this revolutionary proposal would alter the pattern of apprenticeship as it has been known in Britain for the last four hundred years. Its other proposals demand an improved relationship between schools and industry, with developments in the school curriculum to allow for a technical option for those pupils who choose it. Here the debate has been furious, questioning the entire purpose of education. The craft training

system should be so revised that the basics of two modules of training are carried out off-the-job in training centres. Finally, the EITB Joint Consultation with representative bodies of employers and trade unions should establish a desirable annual intake of apprentices. A financial mechanism should be provided to ensure that the desirable level of apprentices entering the industry is achieved.

If these proposals are accepted after all due consultation has been made, they should go some way to improve the quantitative and qualitative problem in getting the right number of suitably qualified craftsmen. The proposals are not without criticism and have met with strong disapproval from the teaching unions, although most parties concerned seem to be in agreement with the basic principles.

Source: Manpower Services Commission, Selkirk House, 166 High Holborn, London WC1.

Source: Engineering Industry Training Board, 54 Clarendon Road, Watford, Herts. WD1 1LB.

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- ☐ Youth unemployment and Vocational Training
— A conference report — 1977, 305 pp.
Available in: English, French, German.
- ☐ Equal Opportunities and Vocational Training
— Seminar report — 1977, 23 pp.
Available in: Danish, English, French, German, Italian, Dutch.
- ☐ Information and Documentation as a task and a need of the Centre
— Proceedings of the seminar — 1977, 175 pp.
Available in: German, English, French.
- ☐ Emergency measures for the Employment and Training of young people in the European Community
1978, 138 pp.
Available in: French (English, German, Italian to follow).
- ☐ Occupational choice and motivation of young people — Their Vocational Training and Employment
Prospects — Member States Report — 1978, 132 pp.
Available in: English, French, German.
- ☐ Brochure on CEDEFOP, 1979, 6 pp.
Available in: Dutch, English (Danish, French, German, Italian to follow).

Periodical

- ☐ **Vocational training**, Bulletin published four times a year in Danish, German, English, French, Italian and Dutch.

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- No 1: Seminar on youth unemployment and vocational training
- No 2: The development of British training legislation
- No 3-4: Equality of opportunity and vocational training for women

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