



# Vocational training

**Vocational training  
of the handicapped**

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## Bulletin of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

# CEDEFOP

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European Centre for the  
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Tel: 88 10 61.

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## Editorial

Vocational training has become a subject of central concern in all discussions of a social and economic nature. The grave economic crisis which we are still experiencing has without doubt arrested the euphoric drive towards an Eldorado which the rapid economic growth of the 1960s led us to believe was within reach. The crisis has likewise forced us to call into question the traditionally-accepted distinction between man as a social being and man as an economic being and to endeavour to remould the dichotomy of the person who 'knows' and the person who 'does' into a humane synthesis. It has furthermore resulted in the call for vocational training to take on new and more important tasks. Here and there hasty attempts have in fact been made to place at the door of vocational training responsibility for solving pressing problems stemming from the economic crisis and the resultant reduced capacity of the labour market to absorb manpower.

This can in part explain why everywhere in Europe cultural and financial investments of considerable volume have recently been made in vocational training.

The central importance of the role of vocational training becomes even more apparent when an analysis is undertaken of the immediate impact which the economic crisis has had on specific marginal groups, namely, young people, women, migrant workers and handicapped persons.

Handicapped persons constitute that marginal group which is forced to wait for the longest time before entering/re-entering the working

world. It is therefore necessary to move the levers of vocational orientation, vocational training and employment for the handicapped and at the same time to provide firms with the assistance required to enable them to surmount resultant technical and social obstacles.

Vocational training is of particular importance to the handicapped in that it constitutes the only means by which they can return to active life and assume social responsibility, failing which they find it extremely difficult to affirm their own dignity as full-fledged citizens.

Vocational training is thus of importance to handicapped persons in that it prepares them for employment via rehabilitation and socialization. Training, rehabilitation and socialization are not, as Antonio Mazzi makes clearly evident in his Bulletin article, separate, chronologically successive processes but rather concurrent, complementary processes. Vocational training becomes itself part and parcel of rehabilitation.

Vocational training for the handicapped is thus to be understood not simply as an instrument serving to prepare handicapped persons for working life but far more as a means of restoring to them the lost feeling of political, social and economic identity.

The need was felt to emphasize in this editorial a number of specific aspects of vocational training for the handicapped. Experts may feel that this approach is somewhat naïve, but perhaps it will serve other readers as background reference for the articles presented in this Bulletin.

The European Centre has not included any project on the subject of the handicapped in its work programme. However, we decided to devote this issue of the Bulletin to this subject in order to stress the importance of the problem and to further familiarize readers with the action programme which the Commission of the European Community is now operating under the responsibility of Chief Adviser Dr Umberto Vidali.

This issue of the Bulletin is also intended as a modest contribution to information dissemination and as a homage to the work of many, work which is always difficult and frequently passes unnoticed.

# Vocational training of the handicapped

## Community action

Umberto Vidali<sup>1</sup>

In order to properly understand the situation at the junction point of the three coordinates: handicapped persons, vocational training and the European Community, it is advisable to proceed by way of a twofold approach, a review of recent Community activities and an analysis of the present situation. I shall attempt to pursue both approaches without raising any claim to completeness, and I trust that I shall succeed in providing readers with a sufficiently broad introduction to the articles and information that follow in this Bulletin.

### Recent Community activities

In 1974 the Council passed a Resolution establishing the guidelines for a Community action programme for the vocational rehabilitation of handicapped persons. Interest in the field of rehabilitation had already been expressed at policy level, and one might therefore question why the Community decided to give priority to vocational rehabilitation in 1974. There were two reasons. Firstly, the Community considered it important to achieve progress in training activities preparing the handicapped person for entry/re-entry to working life comparable with progress being made in the medical and therapeutical treatment of disablements. Secondly, the Community was in an excellent position to accelerate this progress since it had the means with which to intervene in labour market policy and its instruments and hence in vocational training. The institutions of the Community therefore moved on in 1974 from activity directed towards specific measures to steps aimed at estab-

lishing an action programme. The steps are as follows:

- *The field of intervention is delimited.* Vocational rehabilitation is defined as comprising vocational orientation, vocational training, and guidance during adaption to work. The programme is directed towards all handicapped persons regardless of the nature of their handicap. The objective is to render these persons capable of entering open employment on either an employed or self-employed basis.
- *The objectives to be proposed to the Community institutions and to other interested bodies in the Member States are defined.* For the target group in question it is necessary that they become able to enter open employment (on either a salaried or independent basis) under conditions and with remuneration comparable (to the degree possible) with that of their able-bodied fellow-workers. Seen from this perspective the specific purpose of the action programme is to provide more concrete opportunities for vocational rehabilitation.
- *Finally, the Community gives priority to measures which fall within this category and respond to these objectives, and makes funds available in order to encourage such efforts.*

Who implements this programme? The task of the Commission is that of general coordination and orientation. The main contribution is to be made by those bodies holding direct responsibility for the organization of such services as are essential to vocational rehabilitation. In other words, the role of the Commission is not to take action in the place of these bodies but rather to encourage and support their efforts. The programme is proposed therefore to them in the sense of an invitation rather than a directive. It is assumed that the desired improvement in rehabilitation should result in concrete initiatives of limited scope taken by relevant bodies and authorities with the

means at their disposal to meet the needs they have identified rather than in the simple implementation of models designed *a priori*.

The action programme will provide financial and methodological assistance to such initiatives, the only criterion governing provision being the required innovative and pilot character of these initiatives. The standards and the models will be elaborated *a posteriori* on the basis of experience gained. The action programme, which is aimed at making possible a normal employment relationship for a growing number of handicapped persons, establishes work priorities and introduces new criteria in connection with the use of Community resources but does not create standards.

We have spoken of financial and methodological assistance. *Financial aid* is provided by the European Social Fund (ESF). Ever since it has been in operation, ESF intervenes for the purpose of assisting handicapped persons. In 1974 ESF allocated special budgetary funds to support operations which are innovative and pilot-specific as called for in the action programme. This was the first time that the ESF undertook to function as an instrument of Community social policy (that is to say, intervention for actions launched in line with the objectives of the Community, which bring satisfactory results). In 1977, this operational capacity having been achieved, a general reorganization of ESF regulations was undertaken, within the framework of which financing for all measures relating to handicapped persons was established, coupled with the obligation that such measures must comply with guidelines which the Commission issues each year.

*Methodological assistance* is provided for a group of rehabilitation and training centres selected from all such centres operating within the Community (the

<sup>1</sup> Dr Umberto Vidali, Chief Adviser, Directorate-General V, Employment and Social Affairs; responsible for the Community action programme for the vocational rehabilitation of handicapped persons, in charge of coordinating Community work for the handicapped.

European network), the task of these centres being to develop and teach new methods. The centres are collaborating in this task under the direct responsibility of the Commission.

A critical review of the action programme was undertaken in 1978 and 1979, comprising the compilation and discussion of the results of the measures, their synthesis according to field of endeavour, and their presentation to the general public at information meetings which took place from 21 to 23 March 1979. The following conclusions were drawn:

- The invitation has found response in the form of numerous interesting, geographically well distributed projects. The funds provided by ESF have in each case been utilized to the full.
- The measures launched are characterized by a great diversity of social and economic situations existing in the Community (current situations at regional and interregional level).
- Some of the measures were restricted to a specific geographical area for the purpose of modifying a situation, of responding to a particular social need (for example, providing pretraining in the Paris region for migrant workers who have met with an accident and must therefore change over to another occupation; preparing mentally ill workers for social reintegration during their stay at a psychiatric hospital in an Italian province). Other measures flanked the conception, experimentation and implementation of a national policy (in Great Britain, for example, familiarizing physicians to a greater extent with rehabilitation).
- Vocational rehabilitation developed in the various Member States in accordance with diverse priorities but along comparable lines, with the Community action programme contributing to this development.

Some of the measures undertaken to modify a situation were launched in circumstances in which the social integration of handicapped persons was understood as a policy objective, a generally recognized social need, rather than just a simple technical procedure. All handicapped persons comprised the target group. In this context problems arose as regards the mentally retarded and the mentally ill, who, because they require special care, remain in the background by virtue of the difficulties involved. These problems were taken in hand via reforms of the social services and the health services in the direction of responding to the social need mentioned

above following a global analysis of needs (all needs) undertaken at local level. The problems were successfully solved.

As a consequence of these actions the relationship between rehabilitation and social integration has been subjected to a critical review. Certainly the ultimate goal of these actions on behalf of handicapped persons is their integration, that is to say, the re-establishment of normal relationships within their social environment. Certainly rehabilitation, the purpose of which is to create individual autonomy, to develop the capacity to establish fruitful interchange with others, must first be completed before integration is possible. Rehabilitation does not in itself suffice; if integration is sought after, it is also necessary to take into account the environment of acceptance. If the EC Commission is to have an impact on the rehabilitation structures and the environment of acceptance, it must pursue two distinct objectives, each of which calls for contributions and measures of a specific type. The framework of the Community action programme is thus considerably broadened.

Finally the pilot projects have on the one hand directed critical attention to rehabilitation itself, the traditional approach being to separate handicapped persons from able-bodied persons, to put them in closed surroundings and adopt for them special training methods and on the other hand stimulated research into ways of utilizing also for handicapped persons the training facilities intended for able-bodied persons, for all citizens. This approach is as a matter of fact the only one which justifies the hope of a solution acceptable to all mildly or moderately handicapped persons, with special measures being reserved for those suffering from severe disablements. This approach calls for certain adaptations with regard to teaching methods and classroom atmosphere, premises and auxiliary services. What are these adaptations? It would be helpful to have a theory about this. We are still studying relevant pilot projects, one of which will be discussed in detail in this Bulletin.

Another significant result of the desire to achieve integration, discussed above, was the organization of rehabilitation, vocational training and social assistance for important target groups, namely, all mentally retarded juveniles who had been placed in institutions and who it was felt should be returned to society, and all unemployed handicapped persons

of working age, this in spite of the lack of shortage of appropriate facilities. In this case the training of required personnel had to be undertaken within the context of the operations themselves and resulted in a considerable increase in the number of persons involved in pedagogic and social work on behalf of the handicapped. A particular liaison thus developed between the training of handicapped persons and the training of trainers: simultaneity of training and social transformation, the need to provide new methods and thus do creative work, and favourable conditions of intense social intercommunication leading to the realization on the part of both groups that the experience was that of full personal development rather than that of normal activity calling only for marginal effort:

- The trainers became intensely aware that they were the authors of their own training and likewise the authors of a new approach to pedagogic and social work.
- The handicapped persons came to realize that vocational training did not imply simply a series of utilitarian steps towards a specific learning goal but rather the reconquest of a lost and forgotten condition of social, economic and political awareness.

All this has been mentioned to make evident that the great diversity of situations, as discussed above, is of considerable importance. Although they were localized, some of these situations have had general impact. They have brought out into the open many problems of the handicapped which had been hidden in the background; they have removed these problems from the exclusive competence of specialists; they have enlarged and generalized responsibilities by appealing in the interest of social integration to all citizens and all bodies and authorities at local level.

The promotion of vocational rehabilitation at Community level could no longer remain the subject-matter of technical exchange. The simple transfer of experiences between Member States in which the sociopolitical dimension of the problems had exploded in the early 1970s and Member States in which the development of rehabilitation had proceeded along officially proposed lines became very difficult.

The Commission has therefore given priority to the dialogue and to the establishment of contacts, particularly within the framework of the European network of vocational rehabilitation centres and

vocational training centres. Efforts have been undertaken in two directions:

*establishment of relationships of cooperation among the staffs of the various centres;*

*establishment of a common approach as regards*

- certain problems of general interest such as inter-disciplinary cooperation and evaluation of the working capacity of handicapped persons undergoing rehabilitation;
- the tasks and duties of vocational teachers, orientation counsellors, directors of the centres and persons within the centres concerned with placement.

In this manner it is possible to achieve more effective and better organized collaboration involving the following objectives:

- evaluation of projects of a general nature, discussed above, which have also been funded by the Community and which, although they do not fall exclusively within the field of vocational training, do determine and have impact on this field. Such projects are concerned with vocational orientation and the organization of placement services as well as the provision of medico-social flanking measures in more difficult cases;
- provision of assistance in connection with development of rehabilitation in backward regions;
- improvement of employment opportunities during the current period of economic slack.

## **Analysis of the present situation**

This analysis must begin with the problem of unemployment. In reporting to the Council at the end of October 1979 on the implementation of the action programme, the Commission stressed the fact that following their rehabilitation handicapped persons had to wait

much longer than able-bodied persons for a job. If the wait is too long, these handicapped persons lose interest in work and are no longer motivated to achieve. In the face of this difficulty it is necessary to simultaneously promote both rehabilitation and employment without renouncing the objectives set at the beginning of the action programme. The promotion of employment for handicapped persons is a task of considerable magnitude. Advantaging the most seriously handicapped by means of special measures of vocational orientation, vocational training and placement does not alone suffice. Without abandoning these measures it is important to also help persons who have only a mild or moderate disablement in such manner that they can compete on the open employment market on the basis of equality of opportunity. The only way to achieve this is on the one hand to improve orientation and training facilities and placement services open to the entire working population and on the other hand to provide financial assistance to firms employing handicapped workers for the purpose of enabling these firms to more easily overcome resulting technical or social problems. Such a policy is feasible only if geared to objectives which are selected at local level and supported by the social partners and their organizations.

In the dialogue between the institutions of the Community and top-level representatives of the employers and the employees the search for new general guidelines for labour market policy plays a significant role and responds to concerns expressed in this article.

For the Commission the promotion of vocational rehabilitation implies above all the continuing implementation of the action programme in the spirit indicated, that of supporting all new initiatives and listening attentively to all needs. Within this framework vocational training is of central concern. It is of central concern for a very good reason, since the choice of and preparation for a new occupational activity in which normal work

tasks can be discharged in spite of a disablement is the only way open to handicapped persons of returning to working life and assuming social and family responsibilities in full dignity. It is furthermore of central concern by virtue of the considerations and thought processes which it evokes. In many cases vocational training systems, oriented as they are towards the provision of qualifications required by the labour market, seem to be very rigid when compared with the rapid changes occurring at workplaces as a result of technological innovations. Furthermore, training is frequently geared exclusively towards employment, whereas training should in fact be a period of personal growth. Its rhythm and duration should permit, particularly in the case of handicapped persons, an enrichment of personal motivations. These are criticisms; it is very difficult to propose criteria for vocational training.

That is all. My remarks may appear superficial to the reader, and indeed their only purpose is to provide background information serving to introduce the following articles of this Bulletin.

Two of these articles will describe efforts under way to improve vocational training, efforts inspired by the recognized need to gear training to the needs of handicapped persons and by the desire to establish fruitful contacts during training between the handicapped and the able-bodied trainees.

The other articles describe approaches taken respectively by a public authority, a private association working directly with firms dealing in each instance with the problems of entry/re-entry to working life and the vocational training of handicapped persons.

The information section of this Bulletin provides further clarification.

In this sense the readers must do their own work, and I sincerely hope that their efforts will be fruitful and rewarding.



**MSC –  
Manpower  
Services Commission**

Employment Service  
Division

The Pennine Centre  
20–22 Hawley Street  
Sheffield S1 3GA  
Tel. (07 42) 73 90 22

# Employment and training

## of disabled people in Great Britain in 1980

John Curtis<sup>1</sup>

I am delighted to have the opportunity of writing this article, firstly because I have recently become the United Kingdom member on the European Community Action Programme Working Party on Vocational Rehabilitation, and secondly, because in Great Britain we are right in the middle of some important and exciting developments which I should like to describe.

My article will be divided into two sections. In the first section, I will deal with our current large-scale public education campaign and review of our basic legislation on the employment of disabled people; in the second section I shall describe our operations and developments in the training of disabled people for new skills and in the provision of other facilities.

### 'Fit for work' – a campaign on new lines

The largest public relations exercise ever conducted on behalf of Britain's disabled workers was recently launched by the Manpower Services Commission (MSC).

With the aim of promoting wider understanding by management, trade unions, and employees of the abilities and potential of disabled workers and to create more and better employment opportunities for them, the MSC hired a British Rail Exhibition Train during September and October 1979 to carry the message that "Disabled workers are good workers" to 12 major cities. Subsequently we held some 300 local presentations in other areas to cover the whole country and have introduced a new annual awards scheme to give public recognition to firms and organizations that excel in carrying out the most constructive policies on employing disabled people.

The campaign was launched by the Secretary of State for Employment, Mr James Prior, on 17 September at Marylebone Station in the presence of top employers, trade unionists, political leaders, and representatives of voluntary organizations. It has the full backing of the Government, the National Advisory

Council on Employment of Disabled People, and both sides of industry.

### Positive policies

The 'Fit for work' campaign has its origin in an initiative of 1977, when a guide entitled 'Positive Policies' was sent to some 55 000 major employers. The guide set out six major guidelines which were regarded as constituting a constructive policy by firms. What sort of impact that and follow-up visits to firms by disablement resettlement officers made can perhaps partly be judged by the results of an in-depth survey of 78 firms carried out in 1978. The main findings were:

- *employers were sympathetic to disabled people but did not recognize that there was a problem concerning their employment;*
- *they had stereotyped ideas about what constituted disability and about the range of jobs disabled people could do, so they had limited understanding of the opportunities for employing disabled people;*
- *they were not well informed about those services which help them to employ disabled people.*

Clearly then the impact of the 1977 initiative was far from fully effective. On the other hand, placement and unemployment statistics since May 1977 are impressive. Disablement resettlement officers of the Manpower Services Commission placed 60 000 disabled

people in work in the year ending March 1979, compared with 54 000 and 49 000 respectively the two previous years. Moreover, the number of unemployed disabled people fell from 150 000 to 130 000 in the past ten years, though, as with the non-disabled, it has now started to rise again.

### Train exhibition and local presentations

We therefore saw the 1979/1980 campaign as building on the earlier one, retaining the six major guidelines, and giving practical examples of how they could be applied. The exhibition material in the train and similar exhibits at local presentations were dominated by success stories of individual disabled people, while a new booklet entitled *Disabled Workers are Good Workers – Help Them to Help You* replaced the earlier guide. This was sent just before the campaign to some 75 000 firms. Those same firms received warning of the forthcoming campaign through the issue in August of a newspaper about the campaign, aptly named *Platform*. A second issue of *Platform* was sent out just after the exhibition opened and a third was distributed in March 1980.

### Award scheme

The train exhibition and local presentation made a big initial impact but the

<sup>1</sup> John Curtis is Principal of Resettlement Services Development.

'Fit for work' award scheme aims to provide much needed long-term reinforcement. With the patronage of some 20 eminent employers and trade unionists, including Sir John Methven, Director General of the CBI, Len Murray, General Secretary of the TUC, and chairman of major companies like ICI and BP, the scheme is off to a promising start. Each year there will be about one hundred awards to firms in recognition of the efforts of all those involved, management and employees. The firms will receive a 'Fit for work' trophy, a plaque, and a citation. Through publicity for the scheme it is hoped to spread knowledge of good practices far and wide. Some 200 applications had been received by March 1980 for the first awards.

## Equal opportunities

The basic strategy of the campaign is firstly to change the attitudes of employers, employees, and trade unions and to urge them to look afresh at ways of providing equal opportunities for disabled people both in obtaining work and in career progression when in employment and secondly to emphasize that disabled workers can make a considerable contribution on their merits and that employing them is good business, and finally to make known that the Manpower Services Commission has information, advice, and special schemes to help.

## Quota review

It is particularly interesting that this campaign is being launched at a time when the MSC is reviewing the operation of the quota scheme, which has been the main plank in the country's policy on the employment of disabled people for 35 years. In May last year a discussion document on the scheme was issued which posed some major questions about the future style of legislation in this field and set out a number of possible options, including that of not having legislation at all and relying entirely on voluntary persuasion. The impact of the 'Fit for work' campaign may well influence decisions about the future of the scheme.

The quota scheme is being reviewed because it has encountered many difficulties, and for good reason. While originally this scheme was seen as a way to reduce prejudice and discrimination and to provide publicity, recent changes in the pattern of disability in industry and

in society generally and particularly in employment protection legislation and the declining trend in registration of disabled people have very significantly affected the validity of this approach. It is now known that there are actually more unregistered disabled people than registered unemployed and looking for work and that it is now impossible for all employers to satisfy their obligation to employ 3% registered disabled people. There are simply not enough jobs to go round.

## A broader approach

But the 'Fit for work' campaign is concerned with more than just the number of disabled people recruited and employed. It attempts to create a whole new climate which reflects the main aim of the MSC policy in this field, that of the complete integration of disabled people into the workforce, a climate in which it is not the disability that is important but the ability, in which the disability is not a handicap, in which not just a job, any job, is sufficient but the right job, carrying appropriate induction and training and equal chances with colleagues for promotion and career development. It is a reminder that anyone of today's able-bodied can be tomorrow's disabled. It is then that those six positive guidelines can be very important. They are:

- *full and fair consideration of disabled people for all types of vacancies on merit;*
- *retention of newly disabled employees wherever possible, after rehabilitation or training;*
- *equal opportunities for training, career development, and promotion;*
- *modifications to equipment, the use of special employment aids, or job-restructuring where appropriate;*
- *adaptation of premises where necessary;*
- *close cooperation with the Disablement Resettlement Officer (DRO).*

## Learning new skills and other facilities training with the training services division

The Manpower Services Commission provides through its Training Services Division and Employment Service Division a comprehensive service to those interested in training opportunities and those seeking advice on careers and employment opportunities. The Training

Services Division relies heavily on the other divisions within the Commission, particularly the Disablement Resettlement Service through which recommendations for training for disabled people are initially made and which helps place disabled people in employment at the end of the course.

By far the majority of disabled people who enter training for jobs in the open employment market follow courses alongside able-bodied people under TSD's Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS). This provides free training with weekly tax-free allowances to men and women who need to develop their skills in order to improve their job prospects. Full-time courses are available at the MSC's own skillcentres, colleges of further education, private colleges, and employers' premises. There are over 500 TOPS courses which cover a wide diversity of subjects, including business administration, secretarial and commercial work, craft, and technical courses in engineering and construction, automotive skills, television, and electronics. In order to benefit a larger number of disabled people (over 4 000 in any one year) the Commission is able to relax the eligibility rules for TOPS training courses for this group.

Where a disabled person cannot take advantage of the mainstream training facilities under TOPS, MSC sponsors training at four residential training colleges for the disabled run by voluntary bodies. The courses available include training in secretarial and commercial skills, construction and engineering, gardening, and electronic wiring.

A further specialist scheme set up for the disabled is one under which training is carried out on the premises of individual employers. Training to semi-skilled or skilled levels can be arranged if the employer is prepared to offer at least six months' wage-earning employment after the course. The scheme is very flexible and allows a training programme to be devised that is tailored to the needs of the job and the capabilities of the individual trainee. Most employers who embark on this scheme do so because they recognize the value of employing people with the determination to help themselves. They find that they have acquired a worker who is skilled, productive, and loyal and that this has been done at very little cost to the company.

Training for a professional career is not in the hands of the Manpower Services Commission. A disabled person wishing

to follow a professional course, including a university degree, can usually obtain an educational grant. However the Commission has a fall-back provision for disabled people where such a grant is not available: the Professional Training Scheme. Financial assistance under this scheme is available for approved courses likely to lead to resettlement in work of a professional nature. Those accepted follow the normal methods of training for the profession concerned.

## **New developments in training**

Recent developments of new courses have taken into account the needs of the less able and the increasing opportunities in areas of high technology. One of the residential training colleges for disabled people has now set up two courses for people not able to cope with training to a highly skilled level, one in sewing machining and one in basic electronic wiring. Both courses provide related work experience. In the light of developments in higher technology new courses are being developed in the residential colleges, including up-to-date electronics and computer programming, the latter run in conjunction with ICL for more seriously disabled people who cannot take advantage of other TOPS provision.

As part of the European Community Action Programme for the vocational rehabilitation of the handicapped a course for instructors who train disabled people in skillcentres and residential training colleges has been set up on an experimental basis by the MSC. The course aims to provide information on disability and the services available, to provoke consideration of how skills training can be made to respond flexibly to the needs of handicapped persons, and to provide the opportunity for instructors to learn from each other's experience. After some development work the courses are proving successful, and from September 1980 it is planned to hold eight courses a year.

Aspects of this training provision are being reviewed as part of the MSC's ten-year programme for the development of employment opportunities for the handicapped, and current projects include an examination of the ease of access to training of certain groups, notably the mentally ill and the less able.

## **Other facilities**

The remaining paragraphs of my article will be devoted to a description of and comments on the facilities provided by our Employment Service Division. These do not provide new skills but are aimed at preparing disabled people for work and supporting them as necessary once they have started their jobs.

## **Employment rehabilitation centres**

These are special centres to help people back to work after illness or injury. Courses are carried out at 27 centres throughout the country and at a number of other establishments run by voluntary bodies such as The Spastics Society, acting as agents for the MSC. Courses, usually of six to eight weeks, are free, and allowances are paid. Each year some 13 000 people attend courses. The Commission is carrying out a review of its provision and an interim report is expected towards the end of 1981. Pending the outcome of the review, a number of interesting developments are proceeding.

To facilitate better contact with the medical profession, a direct doctor-to-doctor referral system is being introduced, allowing direct contact between outside medical bodies and centre medical officers to discuss the employment rehabilitation needs of their clients. The Employment Medical Advisory Service are also currently experimenting with a project to give greater responsibility to nurses employed within the centres, taking account of developments in the field of occupational health and the role of occupational health nurses in other employment situations.

Problems of the rehabilitation needs of disabled people of professional and executive levels are also receiving attention; an experimental course is presently being developed. We hope to utilize facilities and techniques developed for management training.

There is an increasing awareness, stimulated by initial reports from the Employment Rehabilitation Research Centre, of the complexity of the rehabilitation process and the multidisability nature of client problems. Involved is an amalgam of medical, psychological, and social problems occurring in varying

strength and importance from time to time and between client and client.

It is felt that we may have given insufficient attention to the psychosocial elements of disability in the past, and this has led to a review of the role of social workers in centres. A pilot experiment is shortly to commence to assess the effectiveness of greater professional input from Centre social workers.

Also from research there is a determination to make possible greater client participation in the planning and monitoring of courses and to develop ideas of partnership in our dealings with clients.

## **Special help for special needs**

The previous paragraphs on training and rehabilitation concern the vast majority of disabled clients, who in the main, after suitable courses, become employees of firms and soon become indistinguishable from other employees. But there are those, mainly the severely disabled, for whom this is often not possible. Therefore sheltered employment is provided for severely handicapped persons who are unlikely, because of the severity of their disability, to obtain and retain employment except under special sheltered conditions. Over 13 000 severely disabled people are currently employed in some 230 workshops and factories run by local authorities, voluntary organizations, and Remploy Limited, a company set up by the Government (Remploy employs over 8 000 in their 88 factories).

Employees in sheltered workshops and factories are engaged in a wide range of activities and are employed under contracts of service, being paid normal wages and paying income tax and national insurance contributions. They are expected to work a normal week, maintaining a reasonable level of output and producing articles or providing services of sufficient value to contribute substantially to the cost of the undertaking.

The Commission provides financial assistance to local authorities and voluntary bodies in the form of capital grants towards expenditure on buildings, plant, and machinery and grants to meet revenue losses in running the workshops. Remploy receives a subvention to cover operating losses and to provide for a capital expenditure programme of new buildings and equipment. A total expen-



diture on sheltered employment of UKL 37.6 million was provided for 1979.

We are encouraging the establishment of Sheltered Industrial Groups (SIGs); these are small groups of severely disabled people working under special supervision in normal industry and commerce within, for example, local authorities' parks and gardens departments. One of the major advantages of SIGs is that they can provide sheltered employment opportunities for severely disabled people in rural areas and also supplement conventional provision in other areas. Only modest progress has been made, however, with the promotion of SIGs. Perhaps the biggest hurdle has been finding suitable sponsoring organizations and employers to take responsibility for running them.

Sheltered employment is a facility from which many people derive great benefit and, of course, a living. But it is not suitable for all severely disabled people, and we give other help to those whose most suitable resettlement might be in open employment.

### **Job introduction scheme**

The job introduction scheme, introduced experimentally in July 1977, aims to increase employment opportunities for unemployed disabled people by offering grants of UKL 30 per week for a period of usually six weeks to employers who engage certain disabled people for a trial period of employment. The scheme

is used where the disabled person is *prima facie* suitable for a job but the employer has reasonable doubts about the person's ability. In exceptional cases the trial period can be extended for up to 13 weeks, if this is thought advantageous for the disabled person.

The scheme has proved a very valuable and selective resettlement aid to DROs in their efforts to persuade employers to give serious consideration to disabled applicants who otherwise they would have rejected and who would therefore have remained unemployed. Some 3 000 people have been helped so far.

A recent evaluation of the scheme has proved encouraging, too, showing that 75 % of those placed were still in employment one month after completion of the trial period and that 61 % were still in employment after six months.

### **SPECIAL AIDS TO EMPLOYMENT**

Special tools or modified equipment may be provided to certain disabled people free of charge on permanent loan under the Special Aids to Employment Scheme where they are necessary to employment and would not be required by an able-bodied person doing the same job.

In the last year 813 aids were loaned to disabled people, of which 621 were to blind and partially sighted people, chiefly in the form of brailled equipment. It is hoped to develop this scheme further to take advantage of the highly sophisticated aids becoming available. All aids, however, should relate to remunerative employment.

### **ADAPTATIONS TO PREMISES AND EQUIPMENT**

The Adaptations to Premises and Equipment Scheme, which came into operation in August 1977, provides for us to make grants of up to UKL 5 000 per adaptation to employers who make essential adaptations to their premises and/or equipment to enable them to engage or retain specific disabled employees. Each employer applying for a grant is expected to give an undertaking to keep the disabled employee concerned in the job for as long as he or she is capable of doing it satisfactorily.

Take up of the scheme has been much less than anticipated, and to date 134 adaptations have been authorized at a cost of UKL 106 275. However extra publicity is being given to the scheme.

### **ASSISTANCE WITH FARES TO WORK**

For people who cannot use public transport for all or part of their journey to and from work we can often provide financial help. This generally takes the form of the payment of 75 % of the cost of a taxi (less UKL 6 if the person gets a mobility allowance (UKL 12) from the Department of Health and Social Security).

### **ENVOI**

I hope this article has been of interest to readers in many countries. If any reader wishes to have further information about any of the items mentioned, either I or my colleagues will be pleased to help them.

## CENTRE DE RÉADAPTATION –

Rehabilitation Centre

57, rue Albert Camus  
F-68093 Mulhouse Cedex

Telephone: (89) 42 50 53

The Rehabilitation Centre of Mulhouse operates in three subject fields:

- functional rehabilitation;
- vocational orientation and rehabilitation;
- vocational training.

It is a private body which carries out an activity of public interest and therefore receives the benefits of public financing.

Every year there are 800 handicapped persons in the Centre, 400 of whom undergo vocational training.

The Centre is directed by Mrs Mutterer.

# The modular and individualized system of vocational training

(SMIF) – *Système modulaire et individualisé de formation professionnelle in the Rehabilitation Centre of Mulhouse*<sup>1</sup>

## The place of training in rehabilitation in France

In France the vocational training of handicapped adults is, *a priori*, in no way different from the vocational training of able-bodied adults except for the substantially longer duration of the training periods and the fact that this training is often undertaken in specialized institutions.

The first characteristic, the duration, is probably explained by the obvious fact that the gap between abilities and performance is much larger when a person is handicapped than when he is not.

The second, the segregation, is explained by the status of handicapped persons who enjoy the benefits of special legislation as compared with other adults covered by a vocational retraining project (e.g. unemployed persons or employed persons on educational leave).

This type of organization implies the need for reserves. Firstly, on the part of the handicapped. The longer a training course lasts, the more it postpones re-entry into working life of the person concerned, and this applies even more if the training is carried out in an establishment which is reserved for a special category of the population. Secondly, on the part of the organizations, which bear

the financial burden. Vocational rehabilitation seems to become more arduous in times of high unemployment, and there is a decline in the expected economic returns.

### IN THE REHABILITATION CENTRE OF MULHOUSE (RCM)

A closer look shows that things are not so simple. In the Rehabilitation Centre of Mulhouse (RCM), for instance, training is only one of the services offered to handicapped persons by the institution. The architectural and functional integration of measures which are implemented in the process of rehabilitation by medical doctors, kinesiologists, ergotherapists, social workers, trainers, psychologists, etc., ensures the timeliness, continuity, and cohesion of the measures for the handicapped person.

The period of stay in the Centre can be a long one, but the complementarity of the measures means a considerable saving in

time which a handicapped person would not obtain if he were obliged to rely on the fragmented services or institutions in which the rehabilitation of handicapped persons is a measure which is only secondary to their fundamental activity.

What should the design and direction of a training course which fits harmoniously into this process of social and vocational reintegration be? In more precise terms: under what conditions can vocational training contribute to the restructuring of the personality, because this is what is really at stake in the rehabilitation process?<sup>2</sup>

### REFLECTIONS OF THE TRAINERS

This was the question which the trainers and the other people participating in the work of the rehabilitation centres in north-east France set out to examine in the course of the pilot experiment on the

<sup>1</sup> This article has been prepared in collaboration with the teaching staff of the Centre.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Fizlewicz, *Le handicapé moteur*.

training of trainers for handicapped persons conducted by the RCM in 1975 and 1976 in collaboration with the Regional Pedagogical and Technical Centre of Metz<sup>1</sup> and with the support of the European Social Fund. The four following considerations emerged from their reflections:

- *Vocational training makes a pertinent contribution to the rehabilitation of handicapped persons*

It bases the autonomy of a person on the exercise of a remunerative occupation, thus making the handicapped person measure his capabilities by the standards of non-handicapped persons but at the same time equipping him with the means to exploit these capabilities. In comparison with other forms of rehabilitation, training has the advantage that it leads the handicapped person away from his protected environment, enables him to proceed beyond self-gratifying activities, and permits him to play a socially useful role.

- *Vocational training is not a panacea*

It is the handicapped person and his environment which condition rehabilitation measures and not vice-versa. Consequently, training is not a compulsory step required for re-entry into working life but one means of facilitating this re-entry which some handicapped persons have to undergo, either totally or partially. Ease of access, flexibility, possibility of interrupting or discontinuing a training course which no longer corresponds to the objectives or the resources of the person concerned, these are some of the characteristics which must be inherent in training, if it is to be well adapted to the needs of the handicapped persons.

- *Vocational training must be designed as a function of the expectations, needs, and aptitudes of the individual*

This is certainly desirable for everyone, but it is indispensable for a personality in the process of restructuring itself. A standardized training procedure which is geared to a poorly defined situation is doomed to failure in the long run. If, on the contrary, training is focused on a lasting integration, it must develop with the personality and adapt itself to the physi-

cal, psychic, and cultural aspects which influence training and are influenced by it.

- *Vocational training must equip the person concerned to have a direct effect on his environment*

Do measures which are confined to enabling a person to integrate himself into the firm or the town tackle the problem at the wrong end, is it not precisely the inadequacy of the environment which is at the origin of the handicap (accident, depression, etc.)? No one is better suited than the handicapped person himself to appreciate the nature of the risks involved and to contribute towards an improvement of the collective conditions of life. Thus if he is to act effectively, he must be informed and trained from this perspective.

We do not have the time or the means to evaluate how these reflections have enriched the practical work of the persons and the institutions which have participated in these measures since 1976. We will therefore confine ourselves to showing how the RCM has translated these ideas into reality in terms of organization and pedagogy by first conceiving and then testing, with the aid of AFPA, a Modular and Individualized Training System (SMIF).

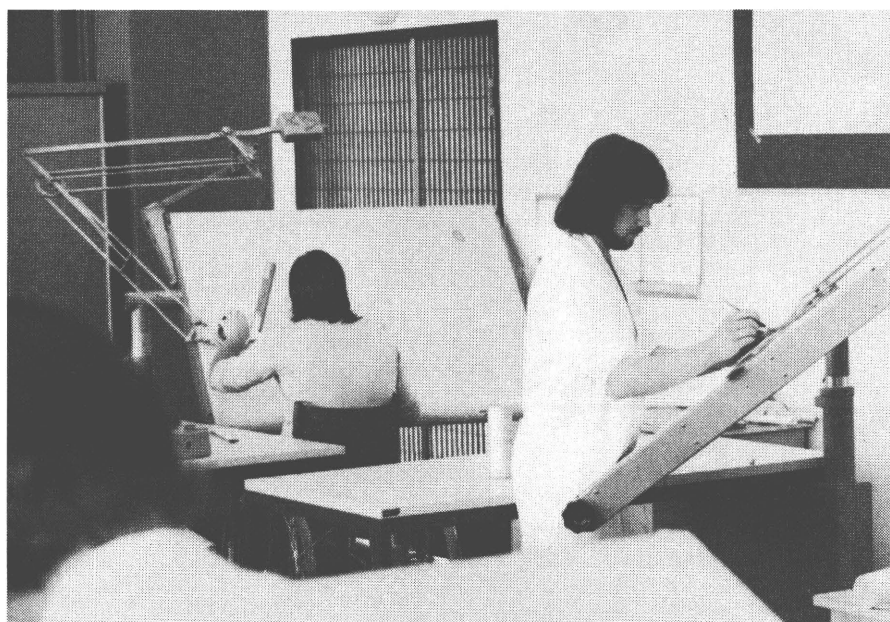
SMIF has the aim of

- redefining vocational capabilities to which handicapped persons have ac-

cess and which correspond to actual employment opportunities in a free economy. This entails a continuous updating of the programmes;

- individualizing the training programme of each person by proposing for common objectives means of achieving them which are as diversified as possible. This calls for an appropriate but varied spectrum of teaching instruments;
- making the training activity as flexible as possible, for instance not only suggesting different levels of final performance for a given technology but also phased entry and exit dates for training courses and variable periods for the duration of training;
- developing by means of vocational training the ability of the person to act upon his environment. This implies that summative evaluation is replaced by formative evaluation.

Rather than get intricately detailed description of a complex system, we will present it by giving the example of a specific training course, that of designer in electronics. This is an occupation which is suitable for handicapped persons, especially those with motor disabilities who are attracted to occupations in the electronics sector. The work can be done while seated and the place of work is easy to handle (a mechanical or electrical designing board) and generally to be found in a surrounding which is not highly pathogenious.



Mulhouse Centre: Vocational training course for electronics designers.

<sup>1</sup> An establishment of the National Association for Vocational Training of Adults (AFPA - Association Nationale pour la Formation Professionnelle des Adultes).

# The modular and individualized training system

## CREATION OF THE SYSTEM

### Definition of the objectives

In the course of the first six months of 1977 two trainers and a course assistant of the RCM, all three of them electronics men, contacted 23 firms all over the country which were working in the fields of electrical engineering and electronics.

They stayed for several days in 12 of these firms, where they had the opportunity of observing the technicians in the design section and interviewing the designers, the technical staff, and those responsible for personnel.

Subsequently, on the basis of the collected data, they described the products and the operations carried out by electronics designers. They found that operations could be classified into five main functions: drawing, preparation of technical files, construction of printed-circuit boards, study design, project design.

In view of the people who actually come to the RCM and without prejudice to later developments only the first four functions were retained. Each one of them was defined in terms of behaviour and then stated to be a *vocational objective* in the training project.

A *module* was constructed for each vocational objective. The module covers the total number of necessary and adequate training courses which will enable the trainee to comply with the pattern of behaviour described by the vocational objective.

What are the criteria for the organization of these courses?

### Organization of the content

There is extensive literature on this fundamental problem of pedagogy. We opted for a liberal adaptation of the approach known under the terms 'mathetics' and 'praxeonomy' as defined by Gilbert and Davies. Its empirical nature is suited to our situation; indeed, the experiment conducted by our trainers deserves preference to other more theoretical approaches.

Thus one proceeds through inverse programming. Taking the vocational objec-

tive as the starting-point, the repertoire of knowledge, know-how and proficiency which are considered to be indispensable for its performance is drawn up. Each elementary unit of this repertoire is expressed in operational terms (be capable of, etc.) and thus called a *capability*.

These capabilities are heterogenous. Some are derived from one discipline (be capable of calculating), some from several disciplines (be capable of presenting things to scale — calculation, drawing). Some require knowledge (be capable of identifying the components — technological knowledge), others require the application of know-how (be capable of drawing according to set standards). Their frequency and their order of sequence are not subject to any other logic but that of the interest of the one for the execution of the following. Therefore, their progression is not or not necessarily from the simple to the complex; there are alternating degrees of difficulty.

### Individualization of training

Two measures have been taken to counteract the fragmentation and the utilitarian reduction of the training courses.

The first one is to regroup the capabilities in order to obtain syntheses which are either technological or methodological (or both together). For this purpose target-line objectives are set up whose evaluations, in the course of the module, make it possible to measure (and remedy) the level of integration and the capability of transpositions of each one of the trainees.

The second measure, and this is in response to the evaluations mentioned above, is to put at the disposal of each individual a set of resources geared to his personal situation. These may consist of additional teaching instruments or medical or psychological assistance, or the examination or testing of technical aids justified by the after-effects of his handicap, etc. We termed the totality of these polyvalent resources which are available to each person, irrespective of the specific training he is undergoing, the 'amoeba' in order to lighten the atmosphere of seriousness; it is 'gratuitous'.

We will now present the more detailed aspects of the rehabilitation which is to be promoted by this training system by showing what happens to the trainee.

## SUCCESSIVE STEPS OF THE TRAINING COURSE

Still with reference to the training of electronics designers we shall now give a description not of the training course which is currently being held but the one which will be held in future. The replacement of one system by another always implies all sorts of changes, particularly in mentality. Taken in isolation, all the elements of SMIF are already in place either totally or partially. But their interaction is still far from being coherent.

### Establishment of the individual steps of training

The trainee is received by a guidance team. In addition to the trainer responsible for the special field to which the trainee has been oriented from the start, it includes one or two of the following persons: those in charge of training (director, course assistant), medical practitioner, social worker, psychologist, administrative clerk, nurse, employment counsellor.

On the basis of discussions together with other trainees, face-to-face talks, tests, studies, and even visits to the firm the situation and the projects of the person concerned are established with his aid in order to set up an optimal course of training. This is put into question at the time of evaluation.

This phase has not yet been structured, and we are not sure that it should be.

### Achievement of the first vocational objective

#### *Prerequisite*

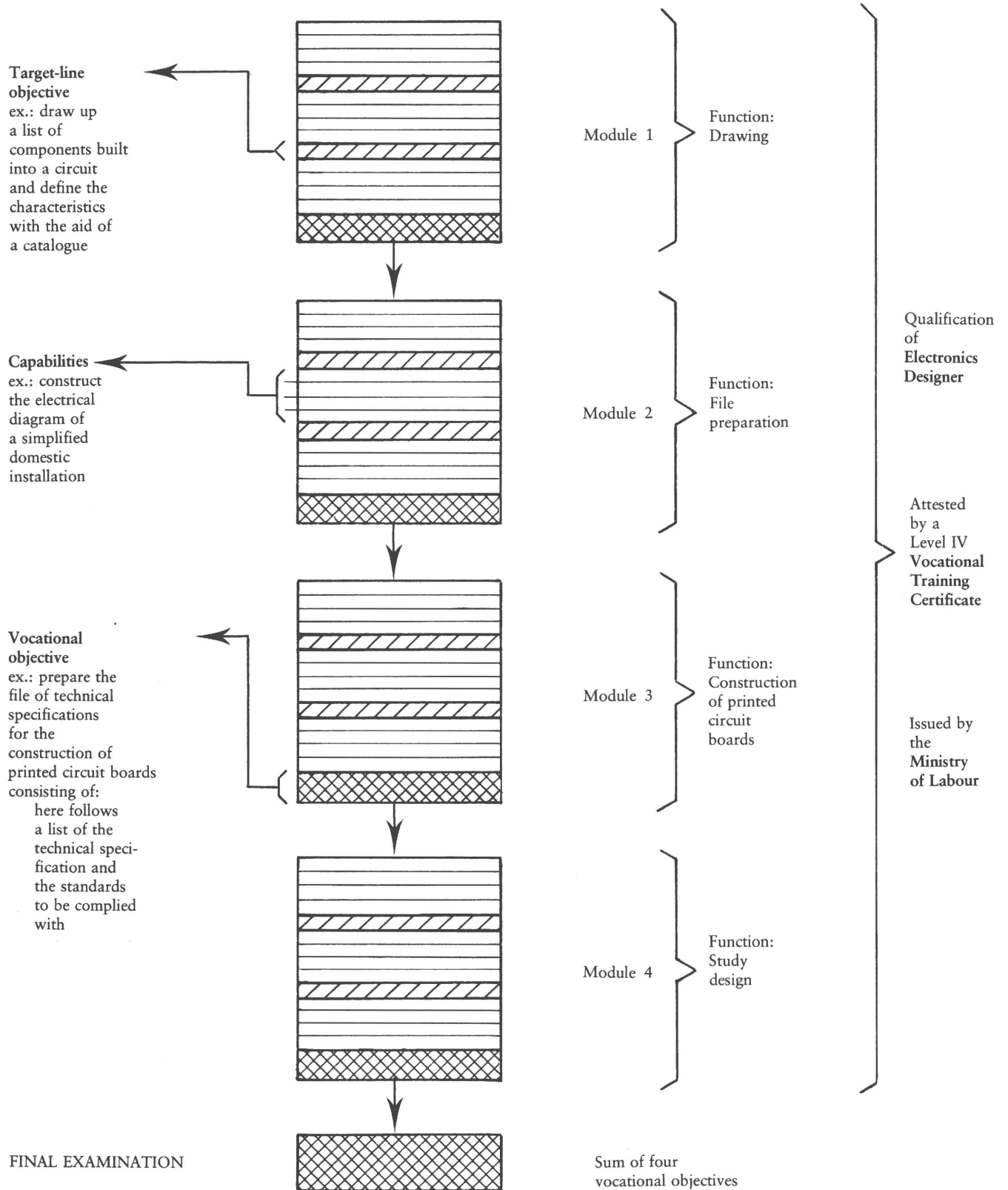
Once the training profile has been established, the distance which separates the person concerned from the threshold of access to the first module he has to traverse is measured. This may be the second or third module of a series if the experience and the abilities of the trainee permit him to skip over the first. The trainee is given the prerequisite training required for this module in the workshops of the amoeba so that any gaps in his knowledge may be filled.

#### *Module*

He then joins his colleagues in a module. All electronics designers are grouped in

FIGURE 1

Modular diagram of the training of electronics designers in the RCM





one or two rooms, depending on their number, and the groups they form each correspond to a module. The number of trainers who help them, correct them, encourage them, and help them to organize and administer the technical and teaching resources they need is equivalent to the ratio of one trainer for ten trainees.

As new entrants are regrouped, both for reasons of good management and in order to avoid the isolation of any one person, it is unlikely that a trainee is the sole person to enter a module. Also, one of the trainers selected, not for his aptitudes but according to his availability, gives the trainees the necessary means of achieving the first capability. Once these means are fully exploited (a deadline is fixed), the trainee himself tests his capability and appraises his performance in terms of the defined criteria. After his appraisal is confirmed by a trainer and turns out to be positive, he tackles the next capability; if it is not, he carries out additional exercises envisaged for this purpose or designed especially for him in order to overcome the deficiency.

Once a trainee feels he has achieved a target-line objective, a synthesis control authorizes the first in-depth evaluation of his progress.

Wherever necessary, the guidance team takes part in this evaluation. Its participation is compulsory if the subject under evaluation is a vocational objective (end of the module).

## Guidance

The guidance team sometimes takes part in the control procedure and always participates in the interview which completes it. In the course of this interview the trainee himself analyses his work and defines the level of performance he has attained on the basis of a standardized grid. The trainer also does the same. Together with the trainee the team analyses the difference between the two evaluations (this occurs in at least 50 % of the cases at the start of training and becomes increasingly rare and even exceptional at the end of the course). It tries to identify the causes of the deficiencies and the means of remedying them. It appoints the persons who are most capable of putting these remedies into practice and fixes the deadlines and the procedures required to measure their effectiveness. Together with the trainee it undertakes a *tour d'horizon* of his personal situation within the perspective of

his social and occupational reintegration and does this from the very outset of the training course. If necessary, it suggests a new vocational orientation.

At the end of this discussion the team alters or makes additions to the course followed by the trainee, mainly by helping him to choose from the range of complementary activities (the *amoeba*) those resources most suited to arouse or optimize his potentialities or to intensify or develop his project (study of a foreign language, a technical option broadening his field of specialization, etc.). It is then up to the trainee, with the aid of the person to whom he feels the most affinity, irrespective of whether this is a trainer or some other member of the staff, to carefully organize the use of his time, thus exercising his faculties of initiative, his sense of responsibility and his aptitude for mobility.

Thus the trainee becomes more and more autonomous in his training, alternating between training which is highly structured, compulsory and measured in terms of external criteria (the demands of vocational qualification) and training which is more flexible and evaluated in relation to his own needs and personal wishes.

From 1 January 1980 this model will apply with numerous variants to nine training courses (about 150 trainees). It will be generally applicable to all the 400 trainees undergoing training in the RCM by the end of 1980. What observations may be retained from the experiments under way?

## Perspectives opened through the experiment

### A PEDAGOGY OF RESPONSIBILITY

Most of the handicapped persons are at first bewildered by a pedagogy of responsibility which does not correspond to the conceptions they have formed of a training course. Then, very rapidly, most of them adopt the system and sometimes even develop an autonomy which at times has a disorganizing effect on the centre which has some trouble in responding to all requests. We are not in a proper position to speak for the trainees and will therefore restrict ourselves to our own observations.

At first something which will reassure those who find any type of innovation disquieting by definition. In a group of

18 trainees who experimented with a complete training cycle (electronic cables), the percentage of success in the examination and the net rate of job placement known at present are much higher than the average figures for the last five years, despite the adverse economic situation.

The trainers and other colleagues who participated in this experiment, including those who are participating in the training of electronics designers which has not been completed yet, all agree that:

- the quality of execution of the products made by the trainees is much better;
- as a rule the objectives are attained before the deadlines;
- the appraisal made by the trainees of their own results, their difficulties, and their future is generally reliable;
- the rates of absenteeism and dropout from the training course for reasons other than medical reasons are lower.

## THE ADEQUACY OF TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT

The work of reorganizing the subject matter taught in the courses which the trainers do with the aid of AFPA and, as far as possible, in collaboration with the firm makes it possible to have a diversification of accessible qualifications on the basis of a common technological base. At the same time the teaching content is updated in keeping with current technological evolution. We feel that the adequacy of training for employment is guaranteed better by the flexibility of the system to adjust to developments in the occupations than by adhering to an ambiguous polyvalence directed towards uncertain openings. Modular training lends itself to training activities whose duration and level can be varied due to the multitude of possible module combinations. At the same time this flexibility also affects entry. By eliminating fixed entry dates and hypothetical and discouraging periods for attaining the level, we hope we can make vocational training accessible to a part of the population which was kept at a distance because of its non-conformity with the established structure.

Finally, and this, in our eyes, is not the least merit of the exercise by associating people from different disciplines in the elaboration of the project and the evaluation of results, the circulation of people and information enriches the work of

each person and leads to a redistribution of roles.

#### A FORMATIVE APPROACH

The training system which will be in operation by the end of 1980 is the final result of the training of trainers for handicapped persons whose basic principles were laid down during the seminar organized in December 1973 in Mulhouse by the Directorate-General of Employment and Social Affairs of the Commission of the European Communities.

This direct descent is important because it justifies the difficult approach which we are applying for the implementation of our system; this approach itself is formative.

In other words, SMIF is not presented to the trainees or to the staff members as an object conceived by experts and ready for consumption. The same people who run the course in the traditional system are the ones who concurrently elaborate,

experiment, and evaluate the elements of the new system.

It suffices to say that the change taking place at present should not be viewed as the harmonious substitution, programmed and moduled, of one practice by another. On the contrary, it is the long, arduous, and contradictory implementation in common of a project which arouses reticence, criticism, and conflict. But as long as there is a solid and persevering core of volunteers authorized to bring about the change, who relate the contributions made by each person to the framework of common references (SMIF), even resistance to change becomes a dynamic element.

#### TOWARDS AN OPEN SYSTEM

The true project cannot be reduced to the elements which we have just described; modules, amoeba, guidance: all this just makes up the structure. The true project is the mutual adjustment of these elements and that of the persons and their

environment, in short, the fact that a system can develop by leaning on its constraints. This is exactly the path followed by the handicapped person in the course of restructuring. And this is exactly what the reintegration of handicapped persons demands of society. Through its training system the RCM intends to teach its trainees the technologies and the strategies which the firms, the administrations, and the towns use in their economy. But it also wishes to make the latter benefit from the experience, the capabilities, and the initiatives of handicapped persons. Many are the firms, the administrations, the associations, quite simply, many are the people who will have a great deal to gain, both at the level of human relations and at the level of working conditions, transport, and housing, from collaboration with handicapped persons for the achievement of their own objectives.

It is the role of the specialized institutions to make these relations possible. It is the aim of SMIF to make them effective.



## CENTRO DI FORMAZIONE PROFESSIONALE

### Opera Don Calabria

Vocational Training Centre Don Calabria,  
Via Roveggia 41,  
Verona (I), Italy

The Centre as presently structured was established in 1956 with the purpose in mind of providing vocational training for young people. It runs its own training services and can accommodate 350 pupils. As far back as 1967 it began to accept for training young persons who were either moderately or mildly handicapped (spastic paralysis, deafness, epilepsy, oligophrenia, etc.).

Ever since 1974-75 all regular training courses have been open to handicapped persons up to a total of one-third of each course's training places. Since its activities are in the public interest, the Centre is supported in part by public funds.

Don Antonio Mazzi is now serving as Director of the Centre.

# Vocational training

## in integrated training institutions

*Antonio Mazzi*

Even persons who paid little attention to the cultural revolution which marked the year 1968 have now realized that for the first time in history a radical change took place without evoking the need for a bloody strangulation of the revolutionary movement. Training institutions were one of the things which changed.

Many institutions existed for the purpose of being served rather than serving, and with this guiding logic they achieved only marginal impact. They continued to adhere to the illogical principle: 'Educate separately and separate by institutionalizing', which for centuries had dictated their training methods and training content.

At the Centre Don Calabria we decided to pursue the wiser course, in our opinion, of critical review and analysis. The result was that rather than undertaking to change everything in one fell swoop, we chose to move towards deinstitutionalization, in particular with regard to the mentally and physically handicapped.

### Our first step

We began our work with handicapped young persons in October of 1968, accepting 14 young persons considered to be moderately handicapped. The Centro Medico Psico-Pedagogico - CMPP (Medical and Psychopedagogical Centre) of the Province of Verona informed us that these juveniles had an intelligence quota (IQ) of from 50 to 70. Pupils who have an IQ of over 70 are automatically enrolled in our regular courses. At this time no other projects of this nature were ongoing in Italy.

### Why did we launch this project?

We did so

- firstly to respond to the urgent request of CMPP of the Province of Verona concerning the meeting of needs in this field in view of the great scarcity of appropriate training services, if one excludes the Istituto Ospedaliero e

Psichiatrico (Medical and Psychiatric Institute) as alternative;

- secondly because the cultural revolution of 1968, referred to above, made very evident the urgent need to open up training institutions;
- thirdly because, together with Hochmann, we inclined towards an approach to the problem of the handicapped which contradicted the customary approach. We feel that the pathology of the handicapped involves not only the disabled individual himself. On the contrary, we are convinced that we are confronted with a psychological-sociological infirmity having its roots in an interpersonal relationship that *inevitably* involves someone else as well (individual, group, community) and is pathological in nature. The task of rehabilitation is therefore not simply that of devoting attention to a single individual. This only leads to a personification of the problem, as testified to by the handicapped person.

The fundamental question which must be put by educators and specialists is: What

do we mean by a handicapped person?, given the fact that an individual assumed to be disabled is embedded in a network of interactions which cannot be isolated other than arbitrarily or artificially from one another.

Pathological is therefore, according to Hochmann, 'the totality of the structure and not the one or the other of its parts'. If we accept this definition, the entire edifice of rehabilitation is shaken at its very foundations both theoretically and from the viewpoint of actual practice.

*The community, understood in the broadest sense of the term as ranging from the microsociety of mother and child on to the family and again on to the institutions and living quarters, thus carries within itself the power to exert both a positive therapeutical influence and a negative influence.*

The prime task of educators and specialists should be to encourage within *the entire system* that dialogue which before could not take place, thus liberat-

ing the 'imprisoned word' which could not be uttered or which, if uttered, fell on deaf ears.

Hochmann is convinced that there must be constant interplay within the group if every sign of progress is to be turned into reality. The task of institutions of a new type will be to keep open and develop this interchange.

### In October of 1968 we were operating as follows:

- mixing together of the small group of disabled persons with the large group of normal persons in order to foster the socialization of the former;
- group activities (manual work, sports, schooling);
- daytime training (return to the family at night, use of public transport services, etc.);
- maximum use of the experimental approach.

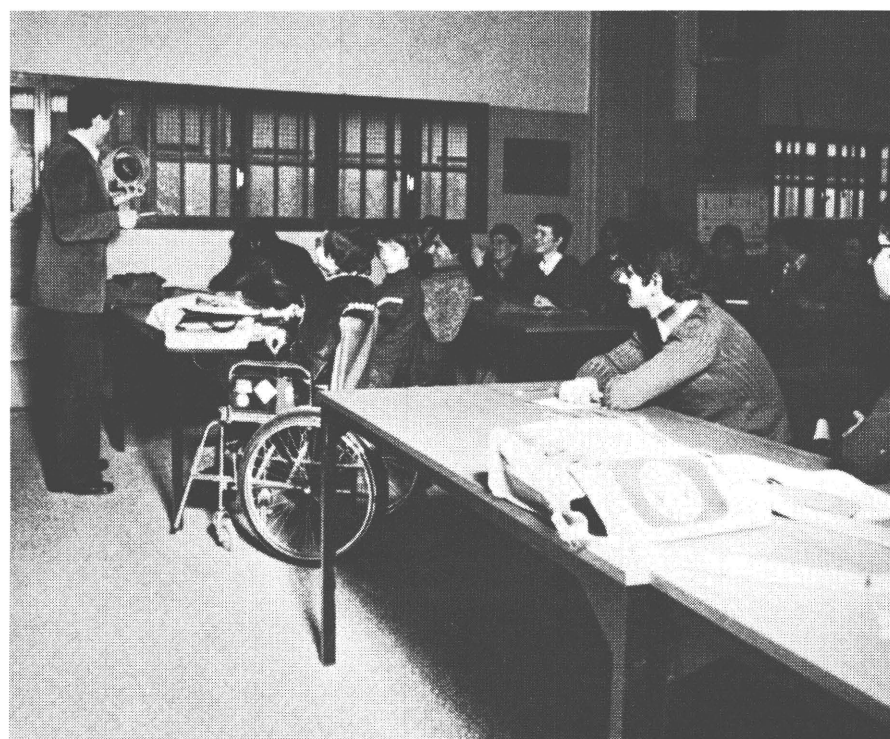
We established a special course in book-binding for handicapped young persons. However, the word 'special' proved to be nothing more than a label. In fact, the Ministry of Labour had set up a programme which was identical to that offered in regular courses.

Training as a bookbinder was selected because it served to stimulate an attitude of attention and sharpen the ability to

comprehend and furthermore involved gratifying experiences. But just as the Ministry of Labour erred, so did we. We tried to simply transpose the experience we had gained over the years in running regular courses to these new special courses: pleasant surroundings, practical instruction, a little theory, loosely scheduled programmes, and a lot of patience. What we failed to introduce were regular staff meetings designed to appraise ongoing and discuss newly proposed measures and procedures.

The young handicapped persons came to us with inadequate psychological-social profiles as provided by CMPP. True, these profiles served to categorize these juveniles as subnormal and were furthermore helpful to us for administrative purposes, but they merely touched on family and psychological aspects and did not contain any adequate medical history.

A CMPP team (a psychologist and a social worker) spent two hours a week at the Centre, sacrificing what little extra time they had. They assisted the teachers in charge of practical training, thus coming into contact with the pupils, met with the parents now and then, and checked with the Director of the Centre with regard to training progress. Contact with the families was a task falling exclusively to the social worker, whose sensitivity and ability to create an informal atmosphere enabled her to draw for the Centre great benefit from her visits.



Don Calabria Centre: Able-bodied and handicapped trainees together in a classroom.

In 1969-70 two further special courses were set up (20 pupils). Greater emphasis was placed on general instruction by adding more teachers and bringing vocational and cultural orientation more to the foreground. The need was recognized of moving towards polyvalence in order to avoid limiting qualification exclusively to the occupation of bookbinder; courses for joiners, tailors, and mechanics were therefore added.

In 1970-71 our experiment entered a crisis at all levels, the cause of which was twofold:

- *We had several very difficult cases sent to us from CMPP (no IQ to speak of).*
- *A dynamic process of maturation had set in which we had not foreseen.*

In spite of the fact that a CMPP team was spending more hours at the Centre than in previous years, that in most instances the handicapped juveniles had acquired more confidence in themselves, that socialization was proceeding slowly but surely, and that the trend was away from special courses and towards regular courses, the staff of the Centre felt that all these things were only 'pseudo solutions' of little general impact and somehow not even correct.

Much too much was being left undone:

- The teaching staff sensed that with regard to rehabilitation many aspects were being neglected.
- The possibility of aiming at partial rehabilitation (rehabilitation to a medium degree only) was not even taken into consideration.
- Interaction between the various groups at the Centre (staff running regular courses and staff running special courses; management and the services; pupils in special courses and pupils in regular courses) was lacking, there being nothing more than simple juxtaposition.
- Not even at hypothetical levels of activity had social forces (local bodies, living quarters, the working world) been drawn in.

The cooperation of specialists in the field of physical therapy, orthophoria, and general medicine (specialists for internal medicine, orthopaedists, neurologists) was therefore requested. Also considered necessary was the complete revision of training in order to eliminate the repetitiousness and automatism in which it was stagnating, together with the adoption of a nonauthoritarian attitude towards the group.

*In our opinion the solution to the problem was not to be found in the grafting on of technical alterations or in hypothetically conceived turnabouts but rather in the overcoming of sectorial and chronological thinking. In other words, since the young person undergoing training was constantly maturing, the various training measures should have been synthesized rather than proceeding sequentially one after the other.*

The carousel of persons rotating around the young handicapped resulted in their being unable to establish viable interpersonal contacts. On the contrary, any relationships which began to develop were nipped in the bud. Teachers in the regular courses (about 30 in number) were not properly sensitized to the problem in spite of the fact that the first phase of training for the handicapped automatically ended with entry to regular courses. Furthermore, the pupils in regular courses, rather than adopting a cautious attitude, should have been prepared to gladly accept and encourage these newcomers to their midst. Indeed, if they had experienced this situation as an expression of human response and a process of self-improvement they would have succeeded in refuting the concept of a world divided into castes. All of this could only have happened, however, in a synthetic manner.

In 1971–72 the Centre had 50 disabled juveniles in attendance (14 with serious mental disorders, 18 with moderate disorders, and 11 already enrolled in regular courses). In the years 1972 through 1975 an effort to synchronize and coordinate all the training measures was taken in hand. A permanent working group (autonomous, open, no member privileged over another) was set up. Its task is to identify in the pair 'teacher-pupil' the point of application of all the training measures. It is only this pair which can bring about the synthesis of the group and create fruitful interrelationships.

We are convinced that it is not training or treatment via medication but rather fruitful and abiding *interpersonal relationships* which constitute the nurturing ground of rehabilitation. It is the teacher-pupil pair which by means of direct testimony, by means of step-by-step example, by means of a whole series of activities (from play at work on to group discussion and various types of leisure time activity), and above all by means of constant availability one for the other succeeds in constructing/reconstructing the pupil's personality, with

both the teacher and the pupil taking upon themselves the inevitable and necessary obligation of identification and conflict.

In its deliberations the working group departs from the reality of the relationship handicapped juvenile-teacher-Centre-family-living quarters. Proposals brought forward by group members are carefully studied in order to eventually arrive at an effective training model based on this teacher-pupil relationship.

An analysis of the situation and a review of experience gained over these past years has led to the following conclusions:

- It is advisable to meet beforehand with the teachers who have previously had the disabled young persons in charge (overcoming dependence on the profiles).
- The intermediate objective is to enable the handicapped juveniles to form positive attitudes about themselves and mature into self-esteem through fruitful interaction with the teachers and the other pupils of the Centre, with the work they do at the Centre being understood as a process of identification, liberation, and creation. The final objective is *entry of the handicapped juveniles into the working world as socially autonomous individuals in possession of a vocational qualification.*
- Since the courses of the Ministry of Labour involve full-time attendance, the consequent organization of the Centre as a day school (8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m.) eliminates the need to function as a medical or paramedical institution.
- Handicapped persons enrolled at a training centre such as ours, where a good percentage of the pupils are not physically or mentally handicapped, can experience for the first time social and vocational integration.

## Training stages

Three training stages are envisaged (we have already operationalized a few measures):

*First year:* full polyvalence, a sort of pre-vocational preparation period in which work acquires the meaning of identification and liberation. In the morning: group work stressing personal expression (main interests taken as pivotal point); in the afternoon: individual therapy (if possible with linkage to work being done).

*Second year:* career selection. In the morning: group work aimed at fostering acculturation and socialization (frequent contacts with the outside environment); in the afternoon: occupation-specific vocational training.

*Third and fourth year:* attendance at regular courses (no special guidance is provided).

## Cooperation with the territory

Vocational training measures are not isolated from other promotional measures. It is not possible to separate the entry/re-entry of the handicapped person to the working world from his socialization, or in other words, from the need to modify marginalized structures and institutions. Neither can the one process precede the other. It is this action of social transformation initiated by the handicapped and supported by political and social forces which constitutes the very essence of rehabilitation. The Centre has now circumscribed within the territory the dimensions of its social obligation. By opening its training structures and coordinating its training measures with those of other institutions in the territory, it contributes to the provision of basic social and medical services available to every citizen, these services being prerequisite to all deliberations and efforts relating to the socialization of handicapped persons.

A territorial policy which is in line with the trend of development of the promotional system must necessarily take vocational training closely into account. Training courses for handicapped persons can fulfil a promotional function only if step by step territorial services open to all are concurrently transformed. It is thus possible on the one hand to avoid having to take the handicapped person out of his own social environment and on the other hand to achieve a closer link between training sectors and local production.

## From 1975 on

Since 1975 we have sought to perfect our selected method of approach, secure in the knowledge that our efforts have borne fruit (of the 25 handicapped juveniles completing training in 1975, for example, 20 found employment).

## Life led at the Centre by handicapped juveniles

Entering handicapped juveniles pursue the following schedule:

PHASE OF OBSERVATION (600 hours, CO (observation course))

Disorders which afflict handicapped persons give rise to two specific problems, namely, a distorted sense of time and space and insufficient control of body actions.

Taking these two problems as a starting point, we are now pursuing a strategy of general objectives by means of which the handicapped person should develop:

- the ability to properly comprehend time and space;
- the ability to concentrate, pay attention, and observe;
- a sense of responsibility;
- a critical attitude;
- the ability to overcome fatigue;
- the ability to concentrate;
- body control;
- self-esteem and self-confidence (personality development).

## PHASE OF INTEGRATION (1 800 hours)

The phase devoted to prevocational preparation (observation, orientation, gradual integration) is followed by a phase of vocational qualification, complete integration, and socialization.

Integration is considered to be an intermediate objective, just as is vocational qualification and employment.

*The final objective is individual and social autonomy, or, as the Anglo-Saxons say, social competence. We prefer to speak of autonomy because the term 'socialization' is now so overburdened with implications of all sorts that even experts with a lesser sense of responsibility are obliged to distance themselves from this term.*

The wild invasion of single disciplines into this field has watered down the term 'socialization', depriving it of all interdisciplinary content, which latter is essential if the pedagogic objective is to be achieved. We are all aware of the contradictory meanings given to socializa-

tion by sociologists, industrialists, the traditional type of teacher, the modern type of teacher, etc.

We must therefore define what we understand by the term 'individual and social autonomy'. Certainly we do not mean entrance to social reality on an equal footing and passive absorption by virtue of the disablement. Nor are we so naïve as to believe that the 'disabled' person who has been 'socialized' will tomorrow become hidden from view within broad masses or, worse still, become considered 'normal'.

We are perhaps justified in hoping that the handicapped person will learn how to develop all his aptitudes and talents, absorb guiding principles which will help him to play his own role in life, objectively filter for his own use the training content offered, strengthen his character by the exercise of duties and rights, and weave that net of genuine interpersonal relationships which will protect him from the humiliation of anonymity. In short, he will be enabled to plan his own life and bring it into execution within his social environment in accordance with

TABLE 1

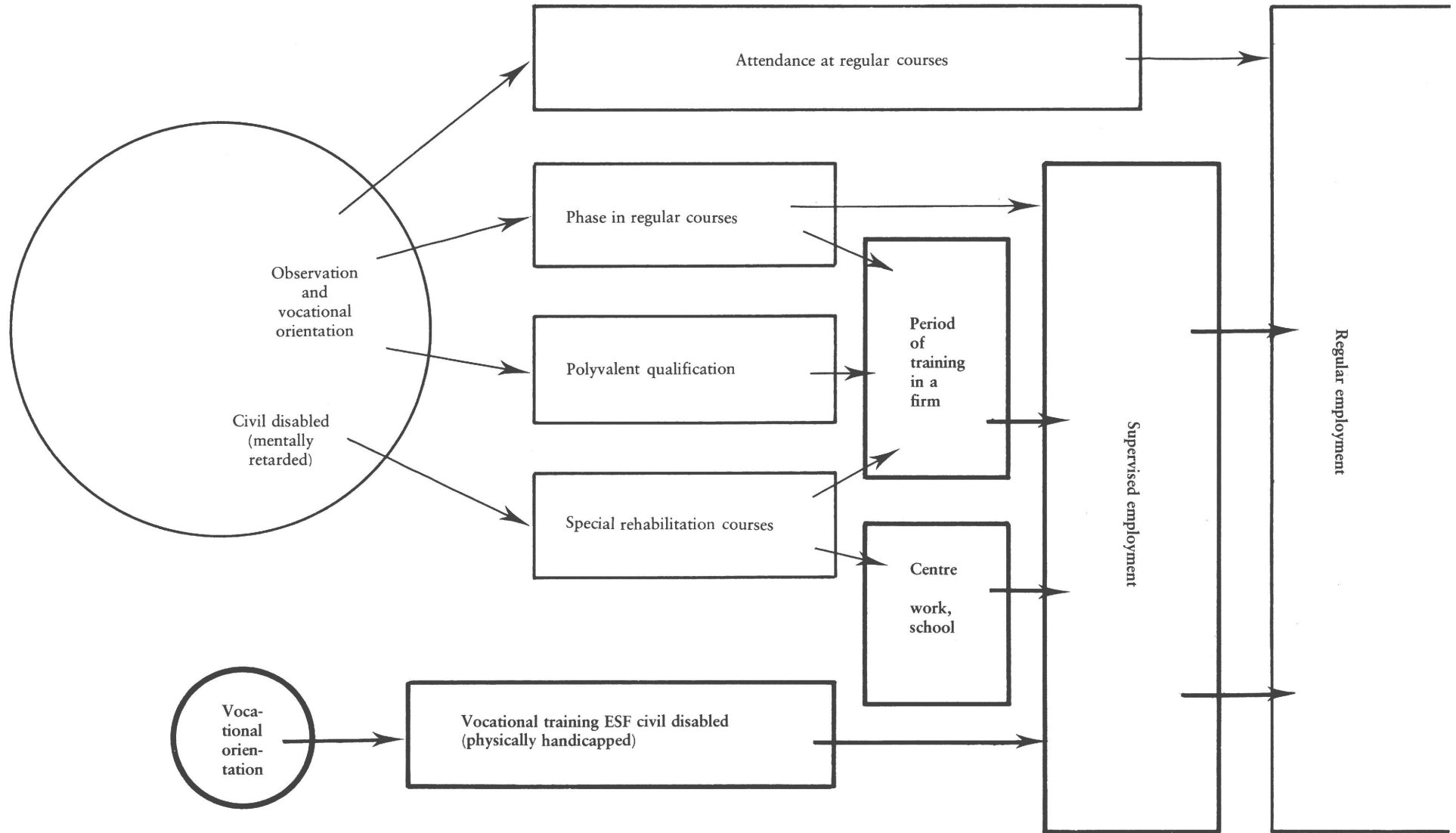
Observation course and vocational orientation

Activity		1st quarter	2nd quarter	3rd quarter	600 hours a year
Work	Group 1 Group 2 Group 3	Handicraft Expression Ceramics	Expression Ceramics Handicraft	Ceramics Handicraft Expression	10 hours a week
School	Divided into three groups: Three groups combined:	Reading and writing <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <span style="font-size: 2em;">{</span> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">           1 Cinematic forum a week            1 Assembly a week         </div> </div>			10 hours a week
Physical education	Divided into three groups: Individually:	Swimming, sport Psychotherapy			10 hours a week
Centre activities	Assembly (each quarter) Meals together, travel, recreation				

Duration: 600 hours.

Table 2

Vocational training for the civil disabled — CENTRE DON CALABRIA





the degree of maturity he has attained. In itself 'being together' means nothing. Only with regard to inanimate objects is insertion not a myth: one inserts a plug into a socket.

The observation phase is followed by a phase of vocational training, with the handicapped juveniles being trained within the framework of regular courses of the Centre (special courses are the exception). These juveniles pass through the three training sections of the Centre (technical drawing, mechanics, electricity). In each section they are supervised by the teachers of the section; only a few of them continue to receive therapy.

During this phase the vocational aspect takes precedence over the rehabilitation aspect, the threefold purpose being to convince these young people that they are able to stand on their own feet, to assure the parents that their children can get along without the help of specialists, and to inspire the teachers to take a new approach, to try something new.

One such new approach could be to take the handicapped person to various workplaces and let him try his hand at a skill. For example, he could be taught to hold an oxyacetylene welding torch which has a flame emission producing 3 000 caloric units.

These first and second phases are separated by a series of meetings and discussions (a) among specialists, teachers, and parents; (b) among CMPP, the Centre team, and the teachers; and (c) among the team, the teachers of the observation courses, and the teachers of regular courses. These meetings are devoted to specific subject-matter: examination of the personal record of each pupil in order to determine whether or not he has the motivation and capability required to pursue vocational training and if so, what risks he will be faced with, what limits his disablement sets, and what training programme would be most suitable. The great significance of these meetings is clearly apparent.

## EMPLOYMENT

Upon completion of vocational training two possibilities of employment open up: supervised employment; regular employment.

### Supervised employment

Groups of disabled juveniles are introduced to a working environment for

specific periods of time under the guidance of instructors. The firms providing this type of training are either handicraft firms or firms in the paper industry.

Juveniles who, in groups of five, have gone through such training have been able to gain a concrete idea of the working world. They have also acquired a greater sense of responsibility, upgraded their skills, learned to work throughout the day without becoming fatigued, and experienced the satisfaction of participating in actual production. Furthermore, they have made the other workers in the firms aware of a problem with which they had formerly not been confronted.

### Regular employment

Regular employment can be either voluntary or obligatory on the part of a firm. Mildly handicapped young persons seeking employment compete on a par with persons who are not disabled. For the other handicapped persons employment is regulated by Act 482 of 2 April 1968 (obligatory employment). Under Act 30 of March 1971 a young handicapped person wishing to avail himself of the benefits of Act 482 must first appear before a commission and be granted the status of civil disability. Last year 22

juveniles in the 16-24 age group (suffering from cerebral palsy, epilepsy, oligophrenia, or hemiplegia) found employment under obligatory employment legislation. We of course made every effort to ensure that these 22 handicapped juveniles found employment near their place of residence (we were successful only in 14 cases).

## To conclude this self-criticism

Our project is one which grows as time goes by. Having very few precedents to learn from, we must proceed so to speak by trial and error. The teaching staff have made a great effort to coordinate their work. However, it remains difficult to channel dynamic forces within and outside the Centre, authoritarian thinking continues to impede progress, we fear the consequences which will result from the changeover of the Centre to a Centro Aperto di Servizi (open centre of services), we have not involved the social partners on a continuous basis, we do not have sufficient patience to 'wait' and to 'hope', and finally we continue to shy away from the global dimension of the problem.



Don Calabria Centre: Able-bodied and handicapped trainees learning together how to operate a semi-automatic turner's lathe.

GIRPEH.

Groupements interprofessionnels régionaux pour la promotion de l'emploi des handicapés (Regional Interoccupational Groupings for the Promotion of Employment for the Handicapped)

27, rue de Général Foy,  
75008 Paris  
Tel. no: 5 22 25 12

Organized on a tripartite basis, GIRPEH addresses itself to all occupations in all sectors of economic activity.

It is financed by membership contributions, funds provided by international organizations, funds provided by the French Government and regional bodies, and payments out of the apprenticeship tax and the continuing training tax (1.1 %).

The Director General is M. Bernard Bachelot.

# Firms and the employment of handicapped persons –

## Encouraging a promotional policy

*Bernard Bachelot*

Work is one of the essential elements of social life. At economic level occupational activity constitutes, for most of us, the only source of income and hence the guarantee of financial independence and personal autonomy.

At psychological level work enables us to play a role in society by making our contribution to the common weal. Work is one of the ways in which we can find personal fulfilment. At sociological level the fact that we have a job is in itself an act of social recognition. To have a job implies doing work that is recognized, classified, and remunerated and that this remuneration is taken into account within our economic system in the calculation of the Gross National Product. A mother who is busy raising her family or an artist who, although talented, does not achieve success is not legally considered as being employed, this in spite of the importance of such activity. These persons are not considered to be an integral part of the working population and therefore feel that they are being disadvantaged.

These three reasons — economic, psychological, and social — explain why handicapped persons, more so than other persons, attach particular importance to the opportunity of finding a job which will enable them to live, to live with others, and to live like others.

This desire expressed by the majority of the handicapped (see Information:

France in this Bulletin) was taken into consideration in legislation enacted in France in 1975. In this Act the employment of handicapped persons is designated as being a 'national obligation'. The Act calls upon 'the families, the State, the local bodies, the public establishments, the social security authorities, and the associations as well as groupings, bodies, and enterprises in both the public and the private sector to coordinate their efforts in the interest of meeting this obligation in order to assure handicapped persons autonomy to the fullest extent to which they are capable'.

Important actions have been launched and numerous regulations have been enacted. Among the problems which handicapped persons must face, the problem of their employment is, however, still waiting solution not only in France but in many developing countries as well. One of the main reasons for this stalemate is the fact that the working world has never been called upon to take action with regard to this problem of entry/re-entry to employment of handicapped persons, nor has it concerned itself with this problem in any way. Active participation of the working world is

nevertheless necessary, if we are to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

In awareness of this situation a number of firms in France undertook to coordinate their efforts to promote employment for handicapped persons. In 1977 they founded GIRPEH as a non-profit association.

The activities of GIRPEH flank those of special bodies. The unique aspect of its work is that it concerns itself with the problems which the entry/re-entry to open employment of handicapped persons poses for the firms. It is by:

- (1) identifying and analysing concrete problems with which firms must contend and unjustified negative reactions on their part;
- (2) coming to know and comprehend the reality of these problems as they affect the firms, the handicapped persons, the training centres, and the authorities; and
- (3) helping the firms to find solutions — taking into account all social, economic, and technical aspects involved — that GIRPEH participates in the promotion of employment for the handicapped.



As a *platform of encounter* between two worlds which are unaware of each other, GIRPEH acts as *interface* between the working world on the one hand and the world of handicapped persons, together with all those preparing them for work or looking for employment for them, on the other.

Before proceeding to describe what GIRPEH is and what it does, it is important to explain why this association came into being in the first place. We shall deal successively with the following subject matter:

*general remarks concerning the concept of a disablement and the definition of a handicapped worker;*

*the employment situation of handicapped persons in France:*

- the situation of handicapped persons in search of employment,
- the situation of employed handicapped workers in the course of working life;

*analysis of the reactions of the firms, undertaking to*

- explain subjective and objective causes of the reactions and
- propose ways of rendering them more positive.

We will then turn to the objectives, the organization, the main principles, and the four fields of activity of GIRPEH.

## The concept of a handicap

### THE STEREOTYPED CONCEPT

The first images which come to mind when one speaks of 'the handicapped person' are those of a blind person and an invalid confined to a wheel chair (the blind and the lame of the fable). Persons afflicted with a sensorial handicap (blindness, partial sight, total or near total deafness) constitute about 4 % of the total number of handicapped persons of working age, and invalids confined to a wheel chair constitute less than 2 % of this total.

If we accept this stereotyped concept, we must exclude:

- all other physically handicapped persons, who constitute 15 % of the total number of handicapped persons of working age;
- all mentally retarded persons, who constitute 15 % of this total;

- all persons who have a disablement, often not apparent, resulting from a disease (cancer, heart trouble, diabetes, tuberculosis, haemophilia, allergy, etc.), who constitute 45 % of this total;
- all mentally ill persons, who constitute more than 20 % of this total.

In these percentages account has not been taken of the mildly handicapped, who, according to a study published by the Ministry of Education, 'are indistinguishable from other adults of the working population'. Nor has account been taken of the socially maladjusted, although they are very numerous.

The solutions found and the means adopted to achieve entry/re-entry to employment of handicapped persons vary considerably according to the type of handicap involved. They will obviously differ according to whether, for example, a blind person, a mentally retarded person, a person with heart trouble, or a mentally ill person is involved. It is therefore indispensable in actual practice to become liberated from preconceived ideas and stereotype concepts, if problems relating to the employment of handicapped persons are to be effectively dealt with.

### RELATIVE NATURE OF A HANDICAP

An individual can be handicapped with regard to specific activities or a number of activities but never with regard to all activities. On the other hand no person can do everything. A handicap has a relative connotation. It is evolutionary within the function of time, it is variable within the function of situations. One calls any person handicapped who has a handicap of whatever nature. When we say 'the handicapped' we turn the adjective into a noun, lumping all types of disablement together. An enterprise recently refused to employ a handicapped person because 'its premises were not easily accessible'. The handicapped person in question had, however, not specified the nature of his handicap. He was deaf and dumb.

By not taking into consideration the relative nature of a handicap, we end up by confusing 'handicap' with 'inaptitude'. Every individual, whether handicapped or not, has a specific profile of aptitudes and skills. There is no clear line of distinction between persons considered to be 'handicapped' and persons considered to be able-bodied. 'The handicapped', in the absolute sense of the term, do not exist.

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CAUSE AND THE EFFECT OF A HANDICAP

Physical or mental disability can result in a person being handicapped as regards a certain activity. The English language distinguishes between cause: disablement, and effect: handicap. The French language has only one term, unfortunately.

When employment is being sought for a handicapped person, it is important to know what consequences the handicap will have at the workplace. However, there is no such thing as a functional classification of handicapped persons; what we have is classification according to the medical cause of the disablement. This type of classification is not in line with the needs of the working world and furthermore tends to emphasize negative aspects rather than positive ones such as functional capabilities and personal motivations.

### DEFINITION OF A 'HANDICAPPED WORKER'; PROBLEMS INVOLVED

The relative character of handicaps as well as their variedness makes it very difficult to define the term 'handicapped person'. However, in order to introduce legislation on behalf of handicapped persons legislators must first define this term. In France a handicapped worker is so defined under the law: 'Handicapped workers are all persons for whom the possibility of obtaining and retaining open employment is considerably reduced by virtue of their inadequate or restricted physical or mental capability'.

The status as handicapped worker is established by a 'Commission Technique d'Orientation et de Reclassement Professionnel - COTOREP (technical commission on vocational orientation and rehabilitation).

Decisions are based on a very broad definition of the nature and degree of disablement. The method of identifying the capability of a handicapped worker is, on the other hand, very restrictive. Power to register a person as handicapped rests exclusively with a COTOREP, which has no means of taking into account the relative nature of the disablement *vis-à-vis* workplace tasks involved and the many situations met up with during the course of working life.

Since a COTOREP has no knowledge of the jobs envisaged and the requirements

involved, it generally judges the capability of handicapped persons on the basis of their shortcomings. This in turn again underlines the negative aspect of disablement and thus narrows down the field of employment opportunities for handicapped persons.

*All legislation which is aimed at protecting a minority group must first define the group. In so doing, it automatically assigns the group a status which entails the danger of segregating it even further and closing all doors to subsequent normalcy.*

## **The employment situation in France as regards handicapped persons**

In order to properly analyse the positions of the authorities and the reactions of the firms faced with the problem of the employment of handicapped persons, it is first necessary to review the employment situation.

We distinguish between the situation of handicapped persons looking for a job and that of employed handicapped workers.

### **THE SITUATION OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS LOOKING FOR A JOB**

Very numerous are those handicapped persons (nearly 300 000) who could or should be able to hold down a job but who, not having found employment, are resigned to living on social welfare.

Each year in France only one-third of the 40 000 handicapped persons capable of working and in search of employment actually find a job whereas 90 % of the 2 500 000 normal persons looking for a job find one quite in spite of the unsatisfactory economic situation.

In terms of statistics the ratio between the number of job-seekers and those placed indicates the average time required to locate a job. For normal persons the average time ranges from two months in periods of full employment to seven months at present. For handicapped persons, on the other hand, the average time is always a number of years, at present nine! This figure relates exclusively to handicapped persons who are able and willing to work, thus demonstrating that the selection of job applicants is not based exclusively on aptitude and motivation but takes largely

into account the status as a handicapped person. In other words, registration as a handicapped person is a reason for rejection.

As regards the national problem of employment, it can be assumed that within the category of structural unemployment, unemployed handicapped persons most probably account for a large majority. Since the State could not remain indifferent to this situation, it enacted legislation obligating the firms to take into their employ handicapped workers, including disabled war veterans and persons disabled as the result of industrial accidents, up to a total of at least 10 % of their payroll. Faced with a worsening situation, the State has now reinforced legislation. However, the introduction of further obligations has inevitably led the firms to stiffen their attitude and tend more strongly towards the rejection of handicapped workers. Since the obligatory percentage is too high (10 % even though unemployed handicapped workers constitute only 2 % of all unemployed workers) and the regulations are much too complex, it is practically impossible to enforce this legislation. Evasion is made easy, and it is therefore tempting for the firms to observe the letter of the law rather than its spirit.

### **EMPLOYED HANDICAPPED WORKERS**

Although many disabled persons are now employed, the problems posed by their entry to open employment are far from being solved. To these handicapped workers who have been registered by the commissions we must add all firm employees who in the course of working life become, for various reasons (illness, accidents, old age), less productive so that it is impossible to retain them on their jobs unless some adaption can be made.

The problem of re-entry to open employment of handicapped workers in the course of their career is common to all firms, but it is more pronounced in specific economic sectors (automobile industry, transport industry, iron and steel industry, public works, etc.):

- where work, usually done on a team work basis, is difficult, industrial accidents are more frequent, and increasing age is disadvantageous;
- where automation results in there being fewer easier jobs suitable to rehabilitation;

- where varying levels of training and qualification and varying educational backgrounds render all reconversion difficult.

The graveness of the problem is accentuated by high seniority in the firms and by the fact that in certain types of jobs absolute integrity is for reasons of security essential.

This problem is latent in all firms. It is frequently more evident in periods of economic crisis or firm-specific economic difficulties and results in the dropping of workers from the payroll, transfers, and modifications in the workplaces. It is not by chance that in France it was the iron and steel industry which first addressed itself to this problem in the late sixties.

The situation of handicapped workers in open employment is little known; above all the public authorities most closely involved with job demand are unfamiliar with it to a large extent. This also explains in large measure the hesitation of firms to employ handicapped persons; in fact they are frequently unable even to rehabilitate those of their own workers who have become less productive as the result of an acquired handicap.

## **Analysis of negative reactions on the part of firms**

The situation which we have described is serious. It has not only grave human consequences but also economic implications.

The social protection of unemployed handicapped workers places a heavy burden on the State, and the re-employment by a firm of workers who have become disabled in the course of work results in the firm becoming less productive. We thus have a conflict between human interests and economic interests. We will later on present proposals elaborated by GIRPEH concerning ways of alleviating this conflict.

We distinguish four types of reasons which dictate negative reactions on the part of firms: sociological reasons, technical reasons, legal reasons, and economic reasons.

### **SOCIOLOGICAL REASONS**

The management, be it of a firm or an institution, is susceptible to the general trend of excluding persons from its

payroll who are considered to be not like others ('abnormal') and of referring them to special institutions, where they become categorized as being inapt. The firm thus reflects our society, which is becoming more and more standardized, more and more segregative. The rejection of an applicant is sometimes justified by the existence of just a simple 'difference'. The handicap, particularly if it is apparent and even more so if it is confirmed by registration, is frequently reason enough for an application not even being taken into consideration.

*In order to break out of this process of segregation, GIRPEH proposes two types of action:*

- effort to familiarize the firms with the problem complex involved in employing handicapped persons and help them to comprehend the nature of a handicap and its relative character: overcoming apprehension by knowledge;
- development of in-firm stages for handicapped persons: stages of vocational orientation and reorientation, stages of training, and above all pre-employment stages of the type being run in France under the National Youth Employment Act. Such stages facilitate understanding between the handicapped person and the firm. They serve to reassure both the employer and the handicapped person that the latter is capable of holding down the job in question, they make possible a smoother transition to working life, and they enable the firm to recruit on the basis of positive criteria rather than to eliminate on the basis of assumed functional inaptitudes.

The establishment and development of stages of this type is, so to speak, a preamble to the right of handicapped persons to equality of opportunity. However, many obstacles still hinder handicapped persons from benefiting from such in-firm stages. Development of these stages therefore implies the need to take supportive steps to ensure complete legal and financial coverage.

#### TECHNICAL REASONS

The system of vocational orientation and vocational training for handicapped persons is poorly adapted to the needs and requirements of the firms.

*Vocational orientation* is undertaken without consulting the handicapped persons concerned. It is based primarily on medical criteria. Whereas COTOREP

takes into account functional aptitudes in this age of rapid technological progress, a firm no longer recruits a worker for a specific workplace but rather for a career in the firm, taking into account the motivations of the applicant and his general aptitude, above all his adaptability.

The decision taken by COTOREP is based on the existing system of vocational training rather than the actual situation on the labour market. It is therefore urgent that preorientation centres as envisaged under legislation be established. Also urgent is the need to set up orientation/reorientation courses in order to help handicapped persons to discover their own capabilities and understand their own motivations. The career decision which they will then make must take into account job requirements.

*Vocational training* for handicapped persons is provided in France mainly by special centres, of which there are far too few. Their standard is generally quite high. The training could, however, be criticized as failing to be in line with vocational reality. It is not sufficiently aligned to the needs of the firm and is not regularly updated for the purpose of keeping in all cases abreast with technical progress. It is important that handicapped persons be enabled to follow the main streams of vocational training whenever possible. GIRPEH therefore recommends three types of action:

- sensitize and inform vocational teachers;
- provide technical and financial aid to those training centres and firms which do agree to accept handicapped persons in their courses so that the teaching can be adapted when necessary;
- modify the system of financing special centres, at present based on the principle of 'charge per day'. Such a system does not encourage the centres to prepare their pupils for transfer to regular vocational training streams; on the contrary, it encourages overfilling.

It is also helpful to encourage contacts between the special training centres and the firms. A firm is encouraged by coordinating bodies such as GIRPEH to provide the special centres with services such as instruction given by employees of the firm, training of trainers in skills required in the firm, provision of tools and equipment, financial assistance, regular dissemination of information on technological advance and job requirements, etc.

#### LEGAL REASONS

The firms feel that by employing handicapped persons they run the risk of having to take into account additional industrial accidents and industrial diseases. They fear moral, legal, and financial consequences. It can very well be that some handicapped persons faced with the inevitable consequences of unemployment will prefer to work in spite of the increased risks which may possibly result because of their handicap. If so, they should be allowed to do so. Whether or not an additional risk exists, however, the concern of the firms is nevertheless real. In order to relieve them of this concern, we propose two types of action:

- *adopt a new definition of responsibilities;*
- *develop a new method of calculating the costs resulting from industrial accidents or industrial diseases which takes into account the state of health of the worker at the time of employment.*

#### ECONOMIC REASONS

At national macroeconomic level it is not difficult to show that social protection for unemployed handicapped persons is more expensive than the additional effort required to ensure their vocational training and subsequent employment. At microeconomic level, on the other hand, the competitiveness of a firm can be hampered by supplementary costs resulting from the employment or reemployment of a handicapped worker or by a drop in productivity due to the employment of a handicapped person whose output is less than that of an able-bodied worker. Financial aid is available to firms who employ handicapped persons (aid to help cover the costs of adapting workplaces and to supplement the reduced wages of handicapped workers whose working capacity is considerably diminished), but such aid is difficult to obtain and in general does not suffice to cover the supplementary costs actually carried by the firm. Indeed, any firm which undertakes to employ handicapped persons is actually being economically penalized.

We feel that the proper solution would be for the State to transfer to the firms the advantages which derive at macroeconomic level from the employment of handicapped persons. One way of doing this would be to partially exempt the firms from social contributions. The lat-

ter are paid by the firms in order that the nation as a whole can help those who have no income from work and are without funds. It seems completely justifiable to help the firms remain competitive by exempting them from social contributions to the extent correspondent to the actual effort they themselves are making. This would be greatly to the advantage of the State, since the volume of aid provided to unemployed handicapped persons is considerably higher than the total volume of social contributions paid by the firms for their employees.

## GIRPEH

This analysis of the reactions, unfortunately all too often negative in character, of firms faced with the problem of employment for handicapped persons enables us to better understand the role of activation and coordination played by GIRPEH. We have already explained why this association came into being and stressed the originality of its approach. We shall now discuss its objectives, its organization, its main principles, and its fields of activity.

### THE OBJECTIVES OF GIRPEH

GIRPEH's field of engagement lies outside of that of job placement or job retention. Its essential aim is to enable handicapped persons to gain entry/re-entry to open employment to the extent possible. In order to achieve this aim, GIRPEH has assigned itself three operational objectives, namely, to:

- assist the firms in connection with the reemployment and management of their handicapped workers;
- foster the entry to employment of handicapped jobseekers;
- develop contacts between the firms and the sheltered employment sector.

### ORGANIZATION

**Tripartite grouping:** The national bodies and the regional groups of GIRPEH are constituted in three groups, each having the same number of votes:

- group of employers, consisting of firms and professional associations;

- group of employees, consisting of employees' organizations functioning at national level (as juristic persons);
- group of persons qualified in matters relating to handicapped persons, consisting of handicapped persons and persons engaged in an important task on behalf of the handicapped.

**Interprofessional groupings:** These comprise all occupations in all sectors of economic activity (industry, banks and insurance, services, commerce, agriculture, arts and crafts, freelance professions).

**Regional groupings:** The regional delegations function as close to home territory as possible, working directly with handicapped persons and persons working with them, industrial establishments, firms, and local bodies and institutions.

### FINANCING

GIRPEH is financed out of:

- *membership fees paid by the firms*, who also have the possibility of seconding one of their employees to GIRPEH;
- *subsidies* provided by the State and by regional, departmental, and local authorities;
- *payments of the exempted firms* out of the apprenticeship tax, obligatory contribution towards the financing of continuing vocational training.

### MAIN PRINCIPLES

After two years of operation, GIRPEH has now defined those main principles which should underlie all action on behalf of handicapped persons. These principles are as follows:

- *endeavouring to ensure equal employment opportunities for handicapped persons* by improving their vocational orientation, better aligning their vocational training, recruiting them for a job exclusively on the basis of aptitudes and motivations, adapting their workplace and their working environment to the extent necessary, and making certain that they enter open employment whenever possible;
- *treating each case individually from all aspects:* human, social, medical, occupational, ergonomic, and economic;
- *permitting handicapped persons to take on responsibilities*, helping them to help themselves;

- *involving the firms actively in the task of integrating handicapped persons into working life.* All hierarchical and functional levels of the firm (personnel management, industrial medicine, social aspects, etc.) must be activated. There is a need to sensitize, inform and train employers as well as employees;
- *working to prevent industrial accidents:* improving personnel management and working conditions in the firm, developing the 'ergonomy of conception'.

### FIELDS OF ACTIVITY

#### Information

One of the main tasks of GIRPEH is to:

*provide information*

- on problems which confront firms in connection with the entry/re-entry of handicapped persons to open employment, and
- facilities available for the vocational orientation, vocational training, and placement of handicapped persons;

*encourage the exchange of information*

- within the working world and
- between the firms on the one hand and the authorities, handicapped persons and persons working with them, vocational orientation centres, vocational rehabilitation centres, vocational training centres, associations, physicians, etc., on the other.

#### Assistance to firms

Assistance is provided in connection with the task of:

- processing individual cases of entry/re-entry to working life;
- analysing the situation of employed handicapped workers in a specific firm and identifying solutions;
- locating subcontractors or service firms for the sheltered employment sector (sheltered workshops, special centres).

#### Assistance to handicapped jobseekers

Individual assistance rendered to handicapped jobseekers consists mainly in:

- providing them with relevant official information;
- helping them to set up their career plan;



- advising them on how to go about looking for a job;
- helping them to contact the authorities and the firms.

#### Assistance to the sheltered employment sector

This assistance consists of:

- facilitating contact between the sheltered workshop/special centres and the firms;
- informing the firms on the services

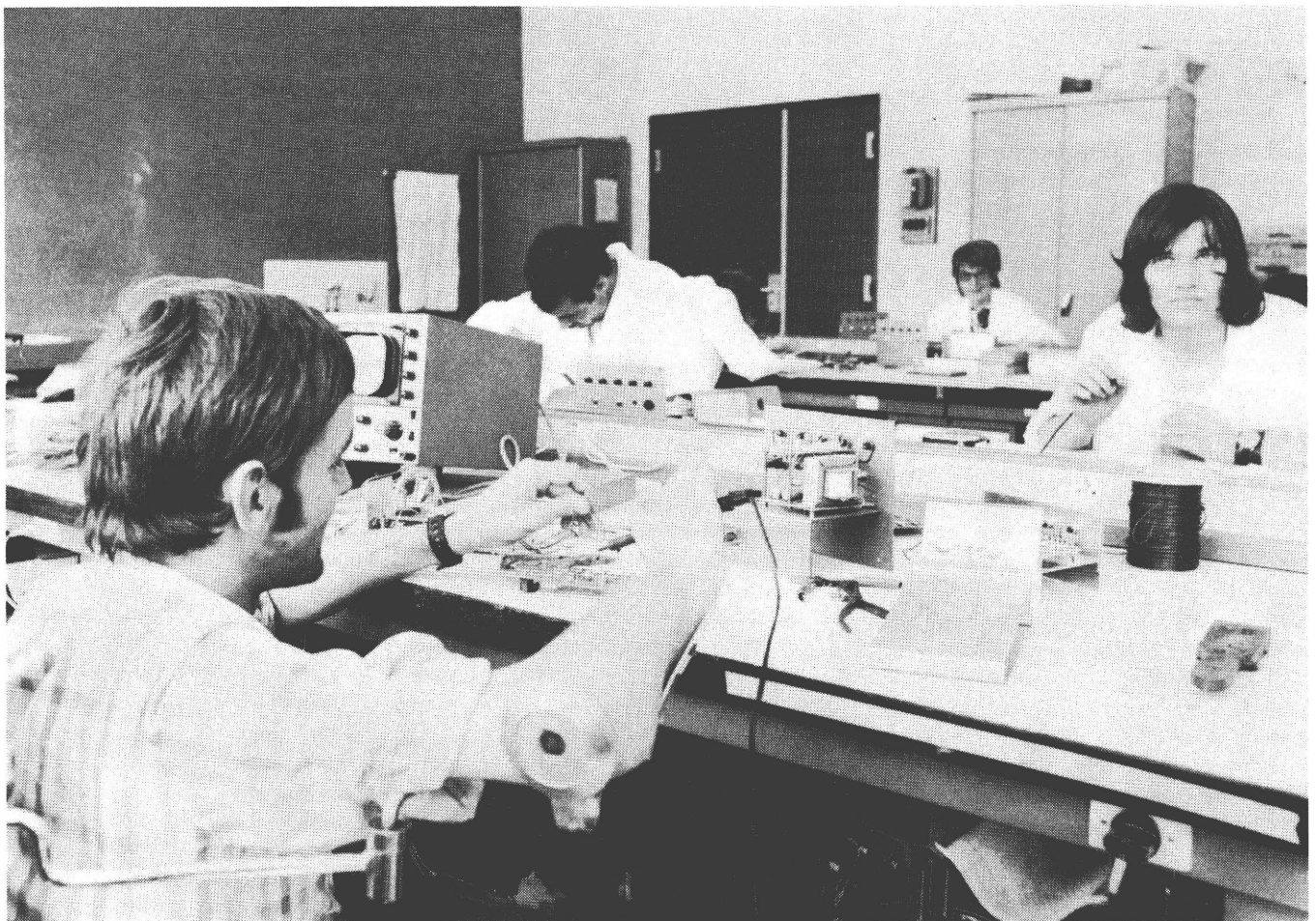
and products offered by the sheltered workshops and the special centres.

Under legislation on vocational orientation handicapped persons are ensured *the right of autonomy through employment*. If this right is to become a reality, it is necessary that this national aim be supported by promotional actions such as sensitization programmes, development of innovative measures and aid measures on behalf of the firms, and above all taking handicapped persons into consideration in connection with employment priorities, particularly in the

wake of national employment programmes.

Since they are directed at and involve the firms, these promotional actions should considerably increase the chances of handicapped persons of succeeding in entering/re-entering working life.

A promotional policy of this nature could draw considerable support in France from an institution such as GIRPEH, itself an emanation of the firms themselves.



# VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

## Federal Republic of Germany

Work and the pursuit of an occupation play a very central role in the life of every person. For the handicapped person these activities are of even greater significance, since they imply the possibility of earning one's own livelihood and this in turn helps to better overcome the disadvantages of being disabled. Entry/re-entry into working life as an essential prerequisite of social integration also acquires special significance. The employment of handicapped persons also has economic implications. The *leitmotiv* of rehabilitation legislation in the Federal Republic of Germany, namely, that rehabilitation takes precedence over a retirement pension, is dictated by the realization that the number of persons depending on social security or public funds for their livelihood must be kept as small as possible.

The coupling of individual rights with overriding social, economic, and labour market policy objectives against the background of traditional, historically determined structures has led to the present practice of vocational rehabilitation.

In order to better understand the vocational training of handicapped persons it is first necessary to deal with certain factors such as statistical data, changing implication of the term 'handicapped', rights of the handicapped, and new training institutions and facilities, all of which serve to clarify actual practice in the field of vocational rehabilitation. Discussion of the employment situation of handicapped persons must be restricted for lack of space.

### Statistical data

In the Federal Republic of Germany the group of handicapped persons can be delimited to a certain extent only. The

reason for this situation is the great variety of definitions of the term 'handicapped' contained in social legislation and in a growing number of groups of persons classified under this term. Furthermore, there is no obligation to register. Such obligation would of course permit the identification of handicapped persons according to objective criteria but would at the same time entail the danger of intruding into personal rights. Adoption of the obligation to register is therefore still contested. The three questionnaires supplementing the microcensus of 1966, 1974, and 1976 are therefore not based on objective criteria but rather on subjective judgement on the part of the respondents, and the following figures are therefore approximate only.

On the basis of projections undertaken in 1976 there are roughly 3.4 million handicapped persons in the Federal Republic of Germany. These 3.4 million handicapped persons constitute about 7 % of the resident population. In other words, every fourteenth citizen is handicapped.

There is an estimated annual increase of roughly 45 000 children born with a defect. Approximately 200 000 adults leave the working world every year because of illness, reduced working capacity, or an industrial accident.

### Vocational rehabilitation; changing implication of the term 'handicapped'

In the Federal Republic of Germany the vocational training of handicapped persons, which is comparable with the vocational training of able-bodied persons, is also called vocational rehabilitation.

The term rehabilitation, meaning in its original sense the re-establishment of a reputation or of previous rights, implies an extensive process aimed at the entry/re-entry of disabled persons into working life. Rehabilitation provides 'the assistance and help which is required in order to eliminate or prevent the further

deterioration of a disablement and mitigate its consequences' (Article 10, Social Code). In this sense, rehabilitation not only involves the concept of social integration of handicapped persons but also serves to prevent their expulsion from working life. Also implied is the need to enable handicapped persons to participate in social life by helping them to overcome to the extent possible disadvantages deriving from their disablement. This approach to the problem of handicapped persons corresponds with the dynamic interpretation of the term 'handicapped' which is steadily gaining ground, according to which the determinant factors must be derived from the consequences which a disablement has in the various spheres and phases of life. Examples of such factors are upbringing, education, occupation, family, leisure time, and society as a whole.

Rehabilitation in this newer sense also implies that it is no longer primarily the disablement but rather the possibilities remaining open to the handicapped person which are determinant for the launching of rehabilitation measures.

### Bodies responsible for rehabilitation measures

The system of social security in the Federal Republic of Germany has, in the course of time, as in most other neighbouring European States, become a conglomerate of varying, in part uncoordinated, coexistent laws based on a number of principles (social insurance principles, social welfare principles, social assistance principles).

Rehabilitation is rooted in this system in which, by virtue of its diverse origins and objectives, varying services are rendered and diverse bodies assume responsibility for the financing and implementation of these services.

The following bodies are responsible for rehabilitation measures for the handicapped:

- retirement pension authorities;
- accident insurance authorities;

- veterans' insurance and welfare authorities;
- health insurance authorities;
- Federal Labour Office;
- supralocal social assistance authorities.

## Development of the rehabilitation system

Considerations were first directed towards the gradual elimination of system-specific disparities such as

- the causality principle as dominated by the rendering of services;
- the existence of diverse legislation;
- the various types of responsible bodies and training institutions.

The first comprehensive presentation of these considerations is contained in the 'Aktionsprogramm der Bundesregierung zur Förderung der Rehabilitation der Behinderten' (Action Programme of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Promotion of the Rehabilitation of Handicapped Persons) of 1970, which is still ongoing.

Most of the objectives of this Action Programme have now been achieved. Particularly in the field of legislation progress has been made in recent years. With the passage of legislation on rehabilitation and that on social security for the handicapped it was possible for the first time to proceed in accordance with a much more broadly-conceived concept of the handicapped, one which is no longer based exclusively on the cause of the disablement, congenital or acquired, covers all handicapped and ill persons (official status), directs attention to preventive measures, and integrates the problem of the handicapped into the concepts and objectives of labour market policy.

Essential to the rehabilitation of handicapped persons are a number of objectives contained in the rehabilitation legislation. The following are of cardinal importance:

- finalization of services;
- prevention;
- standardization of concepts and services;
- legal confirmation of the principle of rehabilitation rather than pensioning;
- increased efforts in the course of the rehabilitation process to achieve coordination.

Of particular importance are the general agreements to be reached within the framework of this legislation. Of special interest is the general agreement of 1 April 1977 on the participation of the Federal Labour Office in vocational rehabilitation. Under this agreement the competent labour office is to be drawn in during the initial consultations with handicapped persons. In this manner the special role of the Federal Labour Office in the field of vocational integration is emphasized.

## Establishment of rehabilitation institutions

Efforts to establish special rehabilitation institutions began back in the 1960's. The concept of the vocational rehabilitation of adults has since then been considerably influenced by the organizational structure of the *vocational promotion centres*. The purpose of these institutions is to provide training measures for handicapped persons which properly reflect labour market needs and expected labour market developments. A network of 21 centres with a total of 12 000 training places was set up and completed in recent years. The costs for training measures totalling 21 000 a year are carried by the four largest bodies responsible for vocational rehabilitation, with three-quarters of the funds being provided by the retirement pension authorities.

A similar trend is to be noticed in connection with the establishment and expansion of *vocational training centres*. In these vocational training centres vocational training takes the form of combined theoretical and practical instruction, in contrast to the traditional dual system of in-firm training plus theoretical instruction at school. These vocational training centres undertake to train handicapped juveniles in accordance with the Vocational Training Act. The training measures are flanked by assistance from physicians, psychologists, special teachers, and other specialists. A final certificate is awarded. Twenty-four vocational training centres with a total of 7 000 training places are now in operation, and in the coming years another 12 centres equipped with 3 000 training places are to be established.

These vocational training centres are run by various bodies. They are financed by the Federal Labour Office which, as a general rule, is the sole supplier of funds

for the vocational training of handicapped juveniles.

A third type of institution aiming at the integration of handicapped persons into working life are the *sheltered workshops*. These workshops provide those handicapped persons with a workplace who cannot or can no longer hold down an open job.

Although an integrated approach to vocational training and occupational activity for this target group is being striven after as well, it cannot be denied that the separation of these handicapped persons in workshops dominates at present. For example, handicapped persons working in these workshops have no access to the labour market; they are not insured against unemployment and under labour law they are recognized as workers only under certain conditions. These workshops are financed out of funds of the Federal Labour Office and the social assistance authorities. There are at present more than 350 workshops with a total of 35 000 workplaces in operation, and a further 25 000 workplaces are to be provided.

## Vocational training of handicapped juveniles

The principle of the Vocational Training Act which states that young persons under 18 years of age are not to be trained for occupations which are not officially recognized and for which the vocational training regulations need not be observed applies basically to handicapped young people as well. The implication is that also handicapped juveniles are to be given the opportunity to gain access to an officially recognized occupation by way of appropriate preparation for career selection, timely occupational orientation, training programmes in the school and at the firm which take fully into account the disablement problem, and guidance and assistance from qualified vocational teachers. In order to achieve this objective, the Federal Labour Office undertakes, for example, to implement, in accordance with the Employment Promotion Act, a number of vocational orientation measures. Also in the schools measures of this type are carried out within the framework of basic vocational training year curricula, workshop instruction, etc. Of importance in this connection is careers information, which falls under the competence of the Federal Labour Office.



For those physically and mentally handicapped juveniles whose disablement is of such a severe nature that they are not capable of undergoing training in an officially recognized occupation the competent authorities, as a rule the chambers, are empowered under the Vocational Training Act to issue special training regulations valid for their specific area of competence. In order to standardize such training regulations, which at present still vary considerably from chamber to chamber, and also in connection with the procedure involved in establishing the degree of severeness of a disablement, the Committee on Matters Relating to the Handicapped of the Federal Institute for Vocational Training submitted a number of recommendations which were adopted by the Institute in 1978.

In undertaking to assess the effectiveness of vocational training measures for handicapped young persons it is important to bear in mind the following problem areas. The possibility of establishing special training regulations can, among other things have the effect, from the educational policy point of view certainly not desirable, that new types of vocational training certificates become valid, which in turn, if this vocational training stream were to be expanded to any extent, would drastically limit the opportunity open to handicapped juveniles of obtaining a regular vocational training certificate of one type or another. This danger is all the greater when the supply of training places is restricted by virtue of an economic recession, at which time even young people without any disablement at all have difficulty in finding a training place. The fact that to date no regulations exist concerning special pedagogical and psychological qualifications to be met by training personnel working with handicapped juveniles constitutes a further problem, even though a few relevant research studies and pilot projects financed by the German Federal Government are in progress.

## **The continuing training and retraining of handicapped adults**

Under the Employment Promotion Act continuing training is understood as a process whereby the competitiveness of the handicapped person on the labour market is retained and improved by virtue of vocational training measures

which serve to improve knowledge and skills already obtained.

In the vocational rehabilitation of handicapped adults continuing training measures have until now played only a minor role (only 2 % of all vocational rehabilitation measures for handicapped adults), although according to estimates it is assumed that approximately 30 % of all handicapped adults undergoing vocational rehabilitation can be further trained in their previous occupation. The reason for this is that, similar to the continuing training of able-bodied workers, two objectives still remain determinant, namely, continuing training for the purpose of job induction or skill preparation for a specific workplace and continuing training for the purpose of advancement within the firm.

Precisely in the field of the vocational rehabilitation of handicapped persons, rehabilitation which has the purpose of further developing existing skills in a direction of increased specialization is frequently much more logical than rehabilitation aiming at the acquisition of completely new knowledge and skills leading to the award of a recognized training certificate.

The term retraining implies the acquisition of a completely new qualification similar to the training of a young person in a recognized occupation.

Conditions playing a role in the vocational training system for handicapped adults, for example a broad spectrum of responsibility, greater freedom from regulations, curricula geared more towards general education (adults have already had considerable training and job experience) have fostered the establishment of non-firm training facilities, in particular the occupational promotion centres. In these centres most of the vocational rehabilitation measures for handicapped adults take the form of training and retraining.

The firms themselves also carry out a considerable number of retraining measures. However, most of these measures run for less than 18 months whereas the occupational promotion centres conduct retraining courses which last longer than 18 months.

## **Employment of handicapped persons**

According to the microcensus of 1976 only 28 % of all handicapped persons of

working age are employed (the comparative figure for able-bodied workers is 61.3 %). The situation of handicapped persons with regard to work and career in the Federal Republic of Germany can be roughly compared with that in Great Britain and the United States. Among the characteristics are the following:

- with increasing age more and more workers become handicapped;
- the number of handicapped persons who can no longer work increases as the gravity of the disablement increases. This applies in particular to handicapped women;
- the consequences of a disablement result in general in greater difficulties in adaptation and worsening work conditions such as, for example, a job which is not in line with training, a drop in social status, transfer to a lesser occupation, etc.

Access to the labour market is particularly difficult for that group of handicapped persons whose working capacity has been recognized as being reduced by 50 % in spite of the fact that it is precisely this group which under legislation for the protection of severely disabled persons can take advantage of special assistance offered. Reduction of working capacity is generally understood to imply deviation from the level of working capacity typical for a specific age group; however, only an approximation of percentage is possible.

Persons whose working capacity is reduced by 50 % or more are classified as severely handicapped. Similarly classified are persons with at least a 30 % reduction of working capacity who cannot otherwise be integrated into the working world.

Under legislation for the protection of severely handicapped persons all public and private employers whose firms have at least 16 workplaces are required to employ severely handicapped persons. At least 6 % of their workplaces must be made available to such persons. Otherwise they must pay DM 100 a month in compensation. At present only 2 % of such workplaces are filled. Among special rights enjoyed by handicapped persons are an extended period of notice and the obligation of the firm to assign an employee to represent the interests of its severely handicapped employees.

The principle that rehabilitation must take precedence over a retirement pension is based on the assumption that upon the completion of rehabilitation the acquired skills can lead to employment.

If the economic situation is poor, rehabilitation can of course remain ineffective, the reason being that handicapped persons must compete on the labour market with able-bodied workers and thus have much less chance of finding a job.

Source: Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung – BIBB. (Tibor Adler), West Berlin.

## France

It has been estimated that there are more than a million handicapped people between the ages of 16 and 60 in France. This constitutes 4.5 % of the total working population.

In order that these handicapped people can be integrated into social and working life and live as independent individuals more or less on a par with other adults, they must be enabled to undergo vocational training and subsequently enter employment.

The public authorities have therefore established special institutions providing for the vocational orientation, vocational training, and entry/re-entry to working life of handicapped persons.

An Act on behalf of handicapped persons adopted on 30 June 1975 lays down that 'the detection and prevention of a disablement and also the care, education, vocational orientation, vocational training, and employment of physically and mentally handicapped juveniles and adults as well as a guaranteed minimum income and full access to sport and leisure-time activities constitute a national obligation'.

The Act further stipulates that 'the action undertaken shall ensure access of juvenile and adult handicapped persons, to the extent that their aptitude and family environment permit, to institutions open to all citizens and lead to their integration into open employment and social life'.

In accordance with this objective the provisions and directives of the Act of 1975 cover all stages of the process of professional integration: vocational orientation, vocational training, employment.

The Mission pour l'insertion professionnelle des travailleurs handicapés (Com-

mission on the Vocational Integration of Handicapped Workers), constituted in 1977 by the Ministry of Labour, carries responsibility for the implementation and supervision of all measures.

### Vocational orientation

The first step in vocational orientation is to determine the aptitude of the handicapped person for employment. As is disablement itself, so is aptitude a relative concept which can undergo change in the course of time.

Under the Act of 30 June 1975 Commissions techniques d'orientation et de reclassement professionnels – COTOREP (technical commissions on vocational orientation and rehabilitation), one in each *Département* (administrative district, 99 in all), undertake to evaluate the handicapped person's disablement. They examine each case history individually and may then, if indicated, officially register the person as a handicapped worker. Such status assures the worker of employment priority and financial assistance from the State. To the extent possible these commissions undertake to find a training place or a job for registered handicapped workers.

Commission membership consists of government officers, specialists (physicians, psychologists, trainers, placement officers) and representatives of associations of handicapped workers, employers' organizations, and employees' organizations.

The decision taken by a COTOREP is of decisive importance. It is alone registration as a handicapped worker which permits access to training places and jobs reserved for the handicapped and ensures an income.

In discharging their task the COTOREPs encounter a number of difficulties, including the excessive number of case histories which have to be processed and regularly re-examined, the shortage of training places, poor training place adaptation, and shortage of jobs in the respective *Département*.

Efforts are now under way to establish pre-orientation centres providing retraining and 'stages de découverte' (identification of skill aptitude) in a firm prior to the submission of case histories to a COTOREP. The first of these preorientation centres is now operating. It is very important that their number be increased

rapidly in order that waiting time until employment can be reduced.

### Vocational training

Qualified vocational training which compensates for a disablement greatly increases the chances of a handicapped person to find employment and become fully integrated into working life. Such training should therefore be provided not only before but also during employment in order to ensure that the handicapped worker will have the same chance of advancement as is guaranteed to able-bodied workers under the Continuing Vocational Training Act of 16 July 1971.

In accordance with the spirit of the Act on behalf of handicapped persons of 30 June 1975 the vocational training of handicapped persons is to take place to the extent possible in vocational training mainstreams:

- courses of initial vocational training, training via school and university education, and apprenticeship. Apprenticeship regulations have been modified in order to facilitate the entry to apprenticeship of handicapped juveniles: extension of the age limit to 23 years, prolongation of the duration of apprenticeship to three years; there remains the problem of safety measures and flanking medical measures;
- employment-training contracts, periods of practical training in the firm, and courses preparing for entry to working life;
- attendance during working life at public vocational training institutions (AFPA (National Association for Adult Vocational Training), schools, universities) and private centres (run by professional groups, firms, authorities, associations, etc.).

Handicapped persons who are unable to take advantage of the above training streams may attend *special institutions*:

- Handicapped juveniles may undergo general education and vocational training in special courses set up within the general school system, or in special institutions.
- Handicapped adults who desire to obtain an initial vocational qualification or who are no longer able to pursue their former occupation may undergo training at a vocational rehabilitation centre. Such training, which lasts from one to two years, ends with the award of an official cer-

tificate, either the CFPA (adult vocational training certificate) or the CAP (certificate of vocational aptitude). Most frequently chosen are occupations in the electrical industry, occupations in the field of industrial design, and commercial occupations (office work).

Training can also be undergone *in a firm* on the basis of a contractual agreement (rehabilitation contract). Under such contract the employer agrees to take charge of the handicapped worker from the beginning of his training throughout a period lasting at least twice as long as the training period and in any case longer than one year. For his part, the handicapped worker agrees to remain with the employer for the same period and to accept a wage which the employer has reduced in order to take into account the costs of the worker's training.

Whatever their type, the training offers are far too few in number. Estimates show that only half of the requests for training can be satisfied.

The institutions being operated under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health provide at present a total of 100 000 places open to juveniles up to the age of 16, occasionally up to the age of 20.

Out of a total of 200 000 apprentices, only 300 are handicapped persons. The situation in the field of vocational training for adults is even less satisfactory. In 1975 only 4 000 of the 9 000 handicapped adults who had undergone vocational orientation could be trained for the purpose of preparing them for re-entry to working life.

At geographical level in 1975 the discrepancies were even more pronounced. Of the 99 *Départements* 57 had no facilities for providing training for handicapped adults (*source*: Economic and Social Council, 2 May 1979).

## Entry/re-entry to working life

Upon completion of their vocational training, or, more precisely, directly following registration by a COTOREP, the handicapped persons seek employment. According to their degree of disablement they look for a job in either the open employment or the sheltered employment market.

Search for an *open job* can be undertaken with the assistance of the placement officers of the National Employment Agency. In certain cities registered handicapped workers may use the services of a special team composed of representatives of the public authorities, the medical profession, the working world, and the associations of handicapped persons. These teams see to it that the handicapped worker obtains open employment. Unfortunately, there are far too few of these teams.

All firms who have more than ten employees must reserve 10 % of their workplaces for war victims and/or handicapped workers. This priority must be observed. However, firms may be exempted from this obligation by either re-employing their own workers who have become handicapped by virtue of an industrial accident or an industrial disease or contracting to serve as supplier, subcontractor, or supplier of services to sheltered employment establishments.

A number of firms and professional organizations have joined together in the Groupements interprofessionnels régionaux pour la promotion de l'emploi des handicapés – GIRPEH (Regional Interoccupational Grouping for the Promotion of Employment for the Handicapped) for the purpose of providing information and consultancy to firms which for the most part tend to distance themselves from the problem of handicapped workers, preferring to pay a fine rather than make the necessary effort of adaptation.

*Sheltered employment* is provided for handicapped persons who are not capable of entering open employment. Whenever possible, however, every effort is made to prepare them for entry/re-entry to open employment.

Sheltered employment facilities take two forms:

- *sheltered workshops and centres for the distribution of piecework to be done at home* function as firms operating on the competitive market. They may be either public institutions operated by local authorities or private institutions operated by firms or associations for handicapped persons. They place the handicapped persons under employ and pay them a wage in accordance with their output and their qualifications. The State guarantees these workers a minimum income equal to 90 % of the official minimum wage, or about FF 2 000 a month;

- *centres d'aide par le travail* – CAT (work provision centres). These centres accept severely handicapped persons who are unable to work in either a firm or a sheltered workshop. They run activities of a vocational and educational nature and provide medico-social care in a pleasant environment. They are under the supervision of the Ministry of Health, which provides them with subsidies. They are generally managed by associations for handicapped persons. The handicapped workers are paid a wage. The State guarantees a minimum income equal to 70 % of the minimum wage, namely, approximately FF 750.

Sheltered employment, even though recognized as being an effective way of assuring the most severely handicapped an occupational activity and a wage and possibly subsequent open employment, is greatly hindered by a shortage of training places. There are at present 300 places in the sheltered workshops and 32 000 places in the work provision centres. The sheltered workshops lack the financial means to invest in materials and research new markets. The work provision centres, which are concerned with education, social and medical care, and adaptation to work rather than with profitability, also encounter financial difficulties.

## Conclusion

In spite of the fact that unemployment is now high, a situation which renders even more difficult the integration of handicapped persons into working life, there has been increased awareness in recent years on the part of the authorities and the firms with regard to the problems of handicapped persons. Two trends seem to confirm that fears and negative attitudes are being overcome. The first is the increased preference being given to integration over segregation, the second is the increasing degree of contact among handicapped persons, rehabilitation centres, and firms. Unfortunately, measures undertaken on behalf of handicapped workers, although well in accord with principles defined under relevant legislation, have not yet succeeded in overcoming two main difficulties, namely,

- the danger of labelling a handicapped worker as such, which, although it is helpful to the handicapped adult, does result in his becoming isolated from the rest of society and thus hindered

- from experiencing occupational and social integration;
- the lack of sufficient funds to provide for the vocational orientation and training of handicapped persons and the sensitization of the general public to the problem of handicapped persons.

*Source:* Centre pour le développement de l'information sur la formation permanente – INFFO. (Dominique Vignaud), Paris.

## Italy

### Training activities on behalf of handicapped persons

With regard to the problem of handicapped persons a number of effective measures are now ongoing in Italy, the purpose of which is to achieve the full integration of handicapped persons into the social structure.

Initially training activities were undertaken, for the most part in a more or less isolated manner, by special autonomous institutions. This type of training activity was burdened by specific problems firstly from the point of view of the social environment, in which social reality was deaf to the needs of the handicapped and the families themselves did not show interest, and secondly from the point of view of the training environment, in which the handicapped persons undergoing training were in no way prepared for integration into the social environment upon completion of training.

In awareness of the need to move beyond this inadequate institutional solution, first steps were taken to initiate the integration at training level of physically or mentally disabled and physically and mentally normal persons.

Scholastic integration began in the early seventies. With the establishment of the regions and the enactment of decrees by the regional school authorities on the basis of delegated competency the integration of handicapped persons into the regular schools (and consequently the obsolescence of special, separate training institutions) became a subject of central importance in considerations of political and educational import in the realization that such integration was prerequisite to the socialization of handicapped persons.

On the basis of resolutions and conclusions put forward by a special ministerial committee, the Ministry of Education issued a number of guidelines for the integration of the physically and mentally disabled into the general school system. These guidelines were contained in Circular 227 of 8 August 1975 and Circular 228 of 29 September 1976. Finally, under Act 517 of 8 April 1976, specific measures aimed at scholastic integration were spelled out.

The vocational training system has the task of linking compulsory schooling with the working world. The subject of vocational training for the handicapped is covered in Act 845 of December 1978 in the section relating to vocational training. Article 3 states that the regions have legislative power to launch vocational orientation and training measures aimed at providing psychopedagogic, technical, and medical assistance on behalf of pupils afflicted with behavioural disturbances or with physical or mental disorders, whereby use is to be made of appropriate training structures functioning at regional level. Article 4 of Act 845 empowers the regions to enact legislation aimed at regulating the vocational qualification of disabled persons and to take steps to guarantee the rights of these persons to vocational training. Finally, Article 8 of Act 845 states that the regions shall provide initial training opportunities for physically handicapped persons who because of their disabilities cannot attend regular courses.

Vocational training for the handicapped as provided by the regions is available to handicapped persons who are over 14 years of age or have completed compulsory schooling. Training takes place:

- in regular courses, whereby the respective labour offices at regional level decide what percentage of the training places in the vocational training centres is to be reserved for the handicapped;
- in special courses set up for handicapped persons who are unable to attend the regular courses or who require special pretraining care and assistance;
- in medical or social centres where complete rehabilitation is aimed at; and
- in periods of in-firm training provided by firms for the purpose of enabling disabled persons to experience working life at first hand.

In general terms the threefold principle that the vocational qualification of handicapped persons via processes of instruction and training must be acquired at

regular training institutions which are open to all, that identical teaching methods must be applied, and that appropriate integrative measures must be launched where necessary is thus observed.

In the regular courses at the vocational training centres, in fact, provision is made for a period of preliminary instruction which is polyvalent in nature, thus enabling the instructor and the disabled person to determine the latter's preferences and capabilities. Training is then planned in accordance, taking into account thereby occupational possibilities open at local and regional level.

In order to properly monitor the progress of handicapped pupils there must be regular contact between the successive trainers (for example, a pupil's former teacher at school may already have helped to guide his/her interests in a particular direction) and between the trainers and the firms coming into question as employer (the firm management must make certain that handicapped workers are assigned workplaces which are properly aligned with their productive capacity).

### Protective legislation on behalf of handicapped persons

In Italy provisions on behalf of persons afflicted with physical disabilities are regulated under appropriate legislation enacted in 1971. Covered by this law are persons afflicted by either congenital or acquired physical disorders which have reduced their working capacity by not more than one-third and persons under 18 years of age who have constant difficulty in discharging age-specific tasks and functions as is expected of persons of their age. Entry to employment is regulated by another law passed on 2 April 1968, in accordance with which public authorities and private firms are obligated to employ physically handicapped persons up to a specified percentage of their respective total manpower. On 21 July 1979 the Ministry of Labour, in response to a query from the Inspectorate of Labour, Milan, commented on a number of aspects of the laws mentioned above, namely, aspects relating to restrictions as regards entry to employment of physically handicapped persons. According to this document of the Ministry of Labour 'physically handicapped persons must not necessarily be employed' by public authorities and private firms.



Alone obligatory is the employment of persons afflicted with minor physical disorders which do not reduce their working capacity by more than one-third. In other words, the document draws consequences from implications of the law of 1968, which makes mandatory only the employment of those physically handicapped persons whose physical disability is not such as to endanger the health or safety of their fellow workers or jeopardize the safety of the installations. However, in drawing attention to this inherent defect in the law the document has given rise to criticism and concern on the part of the regions, the trade unions, the employers, and the Ministry of Health, all of whom have reacted by maintaining that it renders purposeless the obligation to reserve workplaces for the physically handicapped and furthermore vitiates basic therapeutic criteria which call precisely for the entry of disabled persons to the labour market in order to foster their medical and social rehabilitation.

Shortly afterwards the document was corrected by means of a Circular containing important innovations. Issued by the Ministry of Labour in November of 1979, the Circular deals with the entry to employment of persons afflicted with mental disorders. It states that in expectation of a broader reform of provisions in force regulating the entry to employment of handicapped persons, the Ministry has drawn up an amendment to draft legislation now before Parliament. This amendment, which calls for the launching of a pilot job entry project, would constitute a first legislative mechanism, also experimental in character, in support of administrative action to be undertaken to ensure entry to employment of persons afflicted with minor mental disorders. In awareness, in other words, of the high social value of the rehabilitation work being undertaken by the regions, the regional authorities offering vocational training courses for the mentally handicapped are to supply the regional labour offices with a list of those pupils who have successfully attended a course of training and acquired adequate mastery of basic skills, specifying for each pupil the sectors in which employment would be most suitable and attesting to the fact that the nature and degree of disability is not such as to endanger the safety of fellow workers or jeopardize the safety of installations. Employers offering employment will contact those whom they wish to employ.

This pilot project will have considerable impact, since it will not only serve as a

basis for final legislation in this field but will also make possible a count taking of the mentally handicapped thus identified by the regional authorities (at present neither the number of persons afflicted nor the percentage in terms of degree of gravity of affliction is known) as well as the identification of persons in this target group who find employment. Furthermore, information will be provided on the modalities of entry to employment of these jobholders and on additional skills they acquire on the job.

Source: Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori - ISFOL (Daniela Pescarollo), Rome.

## Belgium

### An integration policy on behalf of handicapped persons

All provisions of the Act of 28 April 1958, subsequently replaced by the Act of 16 April 1963, which relate to the social rehabilitation of handicapped persons are aimed at the establishment of an integration policy for this target group.

This legislation provided for the creation of the Fonds national de reclassement social des handicapés (National Fund for the Social Rehabilitation of the Handicapped), the task of which is to encourage and support all measures aimed at enabling handicapped persons to become fully integrated into social and working life.

The National Fund programme involves two areas of endeavour:

*at individual level*, that of preparing, for every handicapped person who requests it, an individualized rehabilitation programme (medical care, vocational orientation, vocational training, employment), supervising rehabilitation progress, and meeting arising expenses not covered by social security or other funding. Also required in connection with the rehabilitation of handicapped persons are psychological, material, technical, and financial assistance which in turn imply meeting additional personnel demand;

*at collective level*, that of establishing the objectives of the Fund's policy, setting up standards, and monitoring the harmo-

nious development of institutions in charge of implementing this policy, namely:

- rehabilitation centres (medical or functional rehabilitation),
- specialized vocational orientation centres,
- vocational training centres,
- sheltered workshops.

Since the purpose of rehabilitation is to improve employment opportunities for handicapped persons, assistance provided under this legislation is available only to those handicapped persons who are not drawing a retirement pension.

All handicapped persons are protected until the age of retirement whose capacity is reduced by at least 30 % in the case of a physical disablement and by at least 20 % in the case of a mental disablement and who are nevertheless able to enter either open or sheltered employment.

In addition to the measures of the National Fund described above, a number of other measures are launched at its initiative and with its collaboration which have the purpose of ensuring handicapped persons equal opportunities of employment. They relate to various activities of social life such as information, communication, accessibility to buildings and means of transport, housing, and costs of change of residence.

It is important to stress that under the Belgian rehabilitation programme every recipient of assistance is integrated to the greatest extent possible into training structures catering for able-bodied persons. Another characteristic of this programme is that the National Fund directs its attention to measures aimed at ensuring equality of employment opportunity, leaving to public authorities and private initiative to the extent possible responsibility for activities undertaken on behalf of handicapped persons.

### Vocational training of handicapped persons

#### ORGANIZATION OF TRAINING

As stated above, the individualized rehabilitation programme established for each handicapped person benefiting from rehabilitation legislation envisages the following phases of a process which is individualized and regularly adapted to the aim of integration:



- medical or functional rehabilitation;
- vocational orientation;
- schooling, vocational training, or re-training;
- entry/re-entry to employment;
- social assistance, involving primarily grants for the purpose of purchasing technical devices serving to correct a disablement or alleviate its effects.

This process, designed firstly for a period of two years, can then be continued, modified, or supplemented.

The individualized programme is based on a medical and social case-history which takes the form of a rehabilitation prognosis involving an evaluation of the working capacity of the handicapped person in question and all personal criteria (motivation, previous schooling and training, occupational preferences, social and family situation, age, sex), bearing in mind the objective set.

In the absence of data required to evaluate working capacity and establish the programme accordingly, the National Fund is authorized to consult medical specialists, vocational counsellors, and placement officers of the National Employment Office.

#### PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

To the degree possible vocational rehabilitation facilities provided for able-bodied persons are made available to handicapped persons to the extent that their disablement permits.

The legislation of 16 April 1963 provides for the vocational training and the vocational rehabilitation of handicapped persons as follows:

#### Schooling

By means of adaptation measures many handicapped persons are enabled to pursue their training in regular educational institutions. The National Fund for the Social rehabilitation of Handicapped Persons supports this effort by providing funds for the purchase of special teaching materials and also covers change-of-residence costs incurred. In a certain number of cases it is necessary to provide for special instruction.

Assistance provided by the Fund generally takes the form of coverage of change-of-residence costs incurred.

#### Vocational training

In the field of vocational training in the narrow sense of the term a certain number of handicapped persons can qualify for either an apprenticeship in a craft, commercial or industrial firm or a rapid vocational training course run by the National Employment Office. Most of the handicapped persons, however, must undergo adapted vocational training.

Three types of vocational training are available:

- A special apprenticeship indenture can be concluded with a handicraft firm, a commercial firm, or an industrial firm. Such a contract has the advantage of ensuring qualified vocational training and not too infrequently subsequent employment at the same workplace. Special apprenticeship training has proved to be most successful for a variety of reasons:

- the handicapped person can usually find an apprenticeship with a firm located fairly close to his place of residence, thus avoiding the need to move and look for new lodgings;
- the handicapped person has a much greater chance of afterwards finding a job in which he can do well;
- the training can be an *à la carte* one which adequately takes into account the capabilities of the handicapped apprentice and the rate of progress made;
- such training qualifies the handicapped apprentice for a real rather than a hypothetical job, one in which the dynamic management of the training firm and technological development have already played a role;
- in the companionship of his employer and his fellow-workers the handicapped apprentice experiences a real working atmosphere;
- upon completion of apprenticeship, the handicapped worker is very frequently retained by his training firm under a regular employment contract.
- A training contract can be concluded with a rehabilitation centre. These centres, totalling ten at the present time, are approved and subsidized by the National Fund.
- Vocational training may be undergone within the general school system.

Handicapped persons undergoing vocational training receive allowances/wage subsidies which serve to guarantee them a minimum income from the age of

18 on. In addition to providing these allowances and subsidies, the National Fund covers the costs of training, change of residence, and accommodation during training, provides funds for the purchase of special teaching materials, and pays the social security contributions of the employer in the case of contractual agreements (apprenticeships, training firms, vocational rehabilitation centres).

#### Financing

Legal provisions relating to rehabilitation have been introduced in Belgium in about 20 different pieces of legislation. The most important provisions relate to health insurance (illness and invalidity), unemployment, industrial diseases, industrial accidents, and traffic accidents.

Costs incurred by vocational rehabilitation are covered by the bodies involved under these provisions. In the event that all or part of the costs are not covered (particularly when the handicapped person is not covered by social security) the National Fund steps in. It also helps to finance handicap-specific training methods called for under the rehabilitation legislation.

The National Fund meets these financial obligations out of its own budget, the receipts of which stem from:

- a supplement to accident insurance premiums paid by the employers;
- a supplement to premiums paid by motor vehicle drivers;
- civil responsibility in the case of organizations which are not required to carry motor vehicle insurance;
- a supplement to fire insurance premiums;
- a State subsidy.

The National Fund covers all operating costs of the approved vocational training institutions and funds up to 60 % of their fixed and movable assets, including equipment.

During training handicapped trainees receive allowances equivalent to allowances granted unemployed able-bodied workers undergoing retraining, reimbursement of costs incurred through change of residence, under certain circumstances reimbursement of living costs during training. They receive a tide-over allowance at the end of training. If they are being trained under contract (vocational training, vocational rehabilitation, or special apprenticeship) they are covered during training by social insurance.

## Supervision

The National Fund for the Social Rehabilitation of the Handicapped monitors the rehabilitation progress of all handicapped persons benefiting from rehabilitation legislation, evaluates the results of their training, and sees to it that they are then registered as jobseekers at the National Employment Office. It grants employers who take on handicapped workers a number of financial benefits, described below.

The contract of special apprenticeship is approved by and concluded under the auspices of the National Fund. The indenture is signed by the handicapped person or his legal representative and the employer.

## Training of trainers

The regulation of 7 February 1964, supplemented by the regulation of 24 September 1965, which sets the terms of approval of vocational training centres catering for handicapped persons, stipulates the qualifications required of trainers at vocational training centres or vocational rehabilitation centres:

- advanced technical teacher diploma plus five years of teaching experience;
- technical teacher diploma plus ten years of teaching experience.

The teacher training regulations established in collaboration with the Teacher Training Centre of the National Employment Office serve to adapt subject content and teaching methods of the teaching staffs at vocational training centres to the specific needs of handicapped persons as determined by the director of the respective centre.

## Employment of handicapped persons

The principle of the obligatory employment of handicapped persons as established by the Act of 16 April 1963 is applicable to:

- firms in the private sector, particularly in the fields of industry, commerce, and agriculture;
- public authorities as well as organizations operating in the public interest;
- firms in the craft industry;
- the freelance professions;
- sheltered workshops.

However, it has not yet been possible to effectively implement this legislation,

firstly because of the unsatisfactory economic situation and secondly because of psychological problems resulting for the employers, the able-bodied employees, and the handicapped persons themselves from this legislation.

A number of incentives serving to encourage the employment of handicapped persons are of interest:

- Within the framework of economic development legislation the State provides financial assistance to firms desiring to expand, coupling this assistance, however, with the obligation that the firms include a certain number of handicapped workers on their new payroll.
- Under Collective Bargaining Agreement No 26 concluded on 15 October 1975 with the National Labour Council the employer is authorized to pay a handicapped worker a wage commensurate with the latter's output. The difference between this reduced wage and the regular wage is covered by either the National Labour Office or the National Fund for the Social Rehabilitation of the Handicapped.
- Financial assistance is provided to help cover wage costs and social security contributions for handicapped workers who are either newly employed or employed at another workplace within the firm. This assistance takes the form of a one-time payment to compensate the employer for loss in earnings during the period of the handicapped worker's training.
- Costs of adapting the workplace to the needs of the handicapped worker are covered in full by the National Fund.
- The National Fund undertakes to cover those costs of work clothing and equipment which are not covered by the firm itself.
- The Fund covers additional costs which arise in connection with travel of the handicapped person to his place of work.

It is possible on the basis of the results of the handicapped person's individualized rehabilitation programme and personal aspects involved such as his family situation, his social environment, and his choice of occupation to determine what kind of job he can most adequately fill.

The question is frequently raised as to whether sheltered workshops facilitate subsequent entry to open employment or on the contrary block off handicapped persons from the labour market. In certain instances the gravity of a disablement is such that the disabled person is not even able to temporarily hold down

an open job. For this reason Belgium pursues a sheltered employment policy aimed at establishing special workshops in which each workplace is specifically tailored to the capabilities of the handicapped worker involved. Some of the handicapped workers do acquire sufficient skill to transfer to open employment.

## Recent developments in the field of rehabilitation

### WIDER CAREER SELECTION FOR HANDICAPPED PERSONS

A pilot project implemented by IBM in collaboration with other large firms likewise aware of the problems involved in the integration/reintegration of handicapped workers into working life received financial assistance from the European Social Fund. This project involved the training of the blind and the lame in the field of information science. The project, which terminated at the end of 1978, gave impetus under the auspices of IBM to the establishment of the Association for Integration in Data Processing by some forty private and public institutions in 1975.

The task of this association (AIDP) will be to interest persons of this target group in the occupation of computer programmer, counsel them individually, and enroll them at a school or university located in the vicinity of their place of residence which is suited to their learning capacity and their aspirations. The course of study may run for two, four, or five years.

This new line of effort is justified by the rapid development of the occupation of computer programmer and hence the need for a higher level of qualification obtained in the course of more intense study.

AIDP carries responsibility for selecting the applicants, sponsoring and assisting the students, providing technical counseling for the students and the teaching staff, and locating jobs for the graduates. AIDP continues to maintain contact with the National Fund with the intent in mind of benefiting from the financial and material advantages which the Fund links to training. It is perhaps of interest to note that the National Fund provides the special technical equipment needed by a handicapped student (videoscope, etc.) for study purposes and also equips the workplace where the student will be employed with special tools and/or modified equipment as required.

## WAGE ADJUSTMENT DURING THE PERIOD OF ADAPTATION TO WORK

Under collective bargaining agreements a handicapped worker is entitled to the same wage as that earned by an able-bodied worker. This in turn obligates either the National Fund or the National Employment Office, as the case may be, to cover the difference between a wage paid to a handicapped worker during the period of adaptation to the workplace and a wage paid to an able-bodied person. Such financial assistance is limited to 50 % and runs for a period of 12 months. An extension of this time period is possible.

A pilot project on behalf of handicapped jobseekers who are mentally retarded to a mild degree is now ongoing in a region of Belgium (Tournaisis) characterized by youth unemployment. Using an adapted method of theoretical instruction and practical training in occupations of the building industry (construction and finishing), this project undertakes to prepare handicapped trainees for open employment by stressing the training-employment relationship and maintaining contact with trainees following placement.

A working group composed of directors of vocational training centres catering for the handicapped and senior officers of the National Fund has launched new initiatives aimed at promoting the vocational training of handicapped persons in Belgium. Envisaged is the distribution of information to handicapped persons, employers, and all organizations concerned with this problem. Use will be made of posters, brochures, and folders bearing the United Nations seal and carrying the motto: 'Handicapés, cultivez votre avenir – Assurez votre formation professionnelle' (appeal to handicapped persons to ensure their future by taking advantage of vocational training opportunities).

Source: Office National de l'Emploi-ONEM (Pol Debatty), Brussels.

## Denmark

Reforms of the Danish social security system over the last decade have been based on the fundamental concept of

decentralization, normalization, and integration.

This also obtains for the last phase of administrative reforms in this field which was completed on 1 January 1980. This phase involves a transfer of responsibility for the care of handicapped persons from the state to municipalities and local authorities.

This decentralization covers instruction, practical training, and employment as well as care of and social assistance for handicapped persons with all types of disablement. This phase also involves a transfer of responsibility for all types of special instruction and training from the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Ministry of Education.

Efforts to normalize conditions for the handicapped and integrate them into a normal training and working environment coincide with the general development in Western Europe during the past decade and are also in accordance with the Resolution of the Council of Europe of 1973.

This kind of administrative reform accelerates integration efforts, which in turn can lead to certain difficulties, as will become evident in this article.

### Primary and lower secondary school and the handicapped

At primary and lower secondary school level integration has already proceeded so far that about 40 % of the pupils who in 1972 would have received instruction in special classes are now integrated into normal classes. However, when integration 'to the greatest possible extent' is to be the aim, it must be pointed out that although nobody seems to be against integration as such, there is great disagreement as to the limit to integration of the handicapped at primary and lower secondary school level.

About 800 000 pupils attend primary and lower secondary school in Denmark, approximately 100 000 of whom receive special instruction of one kind or another:

- 75 000 handicapped pupils are taught in normal classes, with special aids and special supplementary instruction being provided. The teachers may obtain advice from school psychologists;

- 15 000 handicapped pupils received instruction in special classes offered in normal schools;
- 10 000 disabled handicapped pupils are admitted to special schools, about 2 000 attending national boarding schools or national care-providing institutions.

The structure of special instruction for handicapped pupils is undergoing a change within the framework of transfer of responsibility for the care of the handicapped. Moreover, this structural change has been delayed for one and a half years *vis-à-vis* the reform and therefore only the general objectives can be dealt with here on the basis of information provided by the Ministry of Education to local authorities (circular letter of 29 August 1979).

The envisaged local authority structure of this special instruction will take a tripartite form and include possibility of transfer:

- special schools administrated by the municipalities;
- special schools administrated by the municipalities in cooperation with the local authorities;
- integrated school classes and individual handicapped pupils receiving special instruction within the framework of primary and lower secondary school on the basis of an agreement between a local authority and a municipality.

In general the placing of handicapped pupils within this system depends on their degree of mental capacity; there are a number of possibilities, depending on their social adaptability, their reaction to their environment, etc.

The scope of development of this system will be determined by available resources in terms of buildings and finance as well as teacher qualifications.

The pending transfer of special instruction for handicapped persons to the Ministry of Education was one of the reasons for launching an investigation into the need for special teacher-training, completed in 1978 with Report No 850. This report deals with the need for special pedagogical qualifications by teachers not only in primary and lower secondary schools but also in the field of vocational training, supplementary instruction, and adult education.

The report recommends a general system of special teacher-training for the various

groups of teachers. This system is based on basic teacher-training and involves three stages:

- Stage I: introduction to the instruction of handicapped persons (*circa* 150 hours);
- Stage II: special teacher-training equivalent to one and a half years of full-time study;
- Stage III: special graduate teacher-training lasting four semesters.

It is estimated in the report that in the light of the progressing integration of handicapped persons all teachers should undergo training in special teaching methods equivalent to that provided in Stage I. This applies to teachers of all categories, namely, teachers in primary and lower secondary school as well as teachers in the fields of vocational training, supplementary instruction, and adult education.

## Basic vocational training

Legislation on basic vocational training which was introduced on a trial basis in 1972 and finally enacted in 1977 ensures all handicapped persons improved vocational training opportunities.

In the traditional vocational training system in Denmark apprenticeship with a master or a contract of apprenticeship with an employer is required before training can be started. This requirement can be difficult for handicapped persons to fulfil.

With the Basic Vocational Training Act serving as a starting-point, it was specified in 1978 that all young people who have completed compulsory schooling, no matter in what way and whatever the results, have a right to basic vocational training. Thus there is no longer any requirement that an apprenticeship must be concluded before training can start. This development is in accordance with the overall objectives of integration and normalization.

The special teaching provisions within vocational training establish the principles of 'consideration' and 'compensation' instruction.

In the 'consideration' instruction model the handicapped persons attend a regular class, instruction being differentiated to take into consideration their mental capacity. The primary aim is to enable

handicapped persons to attain a normal education level and to acquire vocational competence. Special supplementary subjects may be offered in the place of elective subjects. The legislation also covers the possibility of departing, if necessary, from the given learning goals in favour of training which leads to limited qualifications.

In certain cases it is possible to provide 'compensation' instruction, namely, special instruction for handicapped persons. For example, special instruction is provided in Danish and mathematics.

However, the main emphasis in basic vocational training is placed on the 'consideration' instruction model, which aims at teaching a handicapped person to think and act in the presence of able-bodied persons in accordance with his own capabilities.

The varying instruction necessary in a class which includes pupils with differing disabilities places particular demands on the teacher. The present introductory period is particularly difficult because of a lack of experience in the vocational school instruction of handicapped persons. The reason for this is that the problems are in many ways different from those faced in primary and lower secondary school and the experience gained cannot therefore be automatically transferred. There is thus an urgent need for action as regards both the development of special teaching methods and the training of teachers.

## Development of special teaching methods

The development of special teaching methods for handicapped persons is still in the introductory stage.

The largest group of handicapped persons undergoing basic vocational training consists of those who have difficulty in reading and writing. It is estimated that from 8 to 10 % of all first-year pupils should receive special instruction because of difficulties in reading and writing. In a number of schools (14 technical schools and 13 commercial schools) supplementary instruction is provided in Danish and mathematics on the basis of special teaching materials designed for primary and lower secondary school pupils and for adults. There is a great need to develop teaching materials intended specifically for handicapped persons undergoing basic vocational training. Normal teaching material frequently

includes technical literature which is so designed that pupils who have problems with reading and writing find it extremely difficult to master the contents.

It is not only in the field of teaching materials that efforts are necessary. Light should be thrown on the entire situation of the handicapped within basic vocational training, including social, emotional, and motivational factors, as was done some time ago for the handicapped in primary and lower secondary school.

However, the reorganization of basic vocational training in order to take the handicapped into consideration does not eliminate the need to provide other possibilities of transition from school to work for young handicapped persons who are not capable of starting a training as broad as basic vocational training.

## Other vocational training schemes

In various economic branches short introductory vocational courses have now been organized throughout Denmark via cooperation among primary and lower secondary schools and schools for semi-skilled workers.

These courses are intended primarily for handicapped pupils from remedial classes but pupils are also accepted from primary and lower secondary school who have 'particular difficulties', usually behavioural problems.

For example, in the municipality of North Slesvig introductory courses have been conducted by the adult education school ever since 1972. These courses consist of two stages: an introductory course lasting two weeks and a specialized course in an occupation, chosen by the pupil upon completion of the first course, which lasts six weeks. In the first six months of 1979 courses were held in 26 different occupations. Pupils are recommended to these courses by youth employment officers, special advisers who provide special pedagogical advice in primary and lower secondary schools and adult education schools.

Similar courses have been organized in the Copenhagen area. These courses generally take place in schools for semi-skilled workers in order to familiarize the pupils with these schools, which many of them will attend later on. The courses, organized by the Copenhagen Adult Education School, are free, since the local authorities pay all tuition fees.



Practitioners from various economic branches serve as teachers, and instruction, which is mainly practical, takes place in groups of from six to eight participants. During the last school year 43 different courses were held, some of which were divided into a beginner course and an advanced course. The length of a course varies according to the occupation involved but is normally between two and five weeks.

A general problem in this type of course is the shortage of courses which are attractive to girls. This is due to the fact that the courses concentrate on occupations for adult semi-skilled workers and these are traditionally male-dominated occupations. On the other hand, handicapped girls rarely have the strength necessary to break down traditional sex-role patterns, as they have enough other problems to deal with.

Finally, transition from school to work can take the form of 'on-the-job training'. On-the-job training for pupils in the 15-16-year age group runs parallel to school attendance, and school teachers and youth employment officers thus have an opportunity to give counsel and advice. Work is organized in various ways: school attendance in the morning and training at the workplace in the afternoon, two to three days of school attendance a week with the remaining days being used for training, or full-time training over a fairly long period followed by return to school.

Because of wide-spread unemployment, however, it has become difficult to find training places for pupils in the Copenhagen area whereas problems of this kind are of less significance in other parts of the country.

## Teacher-training

Obligatory pedagogical training of vocational teachers has to date consisted only of orientation in special teaching methods, and this does not suffice to meet requirements which will become necessary in the future. This is why a change of rules is being undertaken so as to make obligatory the study of special teaching methods (150 class hours).

At the same time further training will constitute a problem for vocational teachers who have already completed pedagogical training. Plans to organize this type of further training in the form of study-groups are now under way.

The National Institute for Teacher-training in Vocational Pedagogy (SEL) carries responsibility for the pedagogical training of all the teachers in Denmark. For many years now SEL has been conducting a further training course in special 'consideration' instruction. This course is equivalent in content to the general part of Stage II in the future teacher-training structure.

Due to the lack of resources efforts will for some years to come be directed towards training a fairly large number of teachers at Stage II in order to make certain as quickly as possible that each vocational school has at its disposal two to three teachers so trained who can serve as advisers in the field of special instruction.

The course organized by SEL in special 'consideration' instruction has up to now run for 60 days, with certain periods of self-instruction being included. Restructuring into a system of alternating training lasting one year is now in the planning stage. Only at a later stage will training which the teacher receives be extended to correspond with full special teacher-training equivalent to Stage II. Stage III of teacher-training in special teaching methods is not yet operative, since applicants will be those vocational school teachers who have completed Stage II.

## The employment situation for the handicapped

The social partners, the Federation of Danish Employers and the Danish Confederation of Trade Unions, are in principle very much in favour of the widest possible integration of handicapped persons into working life.

These apex organizations cannot, however, force their members to provide the handicapped with more and better employment opportunities. The present economic crisis has hit handicapped persons harder than other marginal groups, among other reasons because many smaller firms with a traditionally more open attitude towards the handicapped have had to close down.

Although the work situation of handicapped persons in Denmark is rather gloomy today, there are some initiatives worth mentioning. Two attempts to create job opportunities for the handicapped are of particular interest. One aims at establishing sheltered workshops

within large private firms while the other aims at providing individual sheltered employment at the workplace.

A sheltered workshop was established at the Grundfos Pump Factory in Bjerringro in Jutland in 1967 with the help of the Welfare Service Centre in Viborg. Today 36 disabled persons are working in the workshop. They come from centres for the mentally handicapped, rehabilitation centres, welfare homes, and remedial schools. The workshop produces components for other sections of the factory and is self-supporting. The firm requires of sheltered workshop job applicants that they have sufficient ability to work and to function effectively in a working environment and that some public assistance is guaranteed. This financial assistance may consist of either a disablement allowance or aid in accordance with the so-called '40—60 system' in Danish social security legislation whereby local authorities/municipalities pay 40 % and the private employer pays 60 % of the wages (Act No 333, 1974).

It should be pointed out that this arrangement is based on acceptance by the trade unions of the fact that these handicapped persons do not fall under general wage agreements.

In the early years some of the handicapped persons could be transferred after a while from the sheltered workshop to a regular workplace, but in the last few years this has rarely occurred, the reason being not that handicapped persons are less capable but rather that greater demands are now being placed on manpower than was the case prior to the economic crisis.

The sheltered workshop at Grundfos has served as a model for the establishment in the municipality of Ringkøbing in western Jutland of nine similar workshops in various branches of craft and industry.

The sheltered workshops already constitute a step towards a normal life for the handicapped. However, in the municipality of Viborg efforts towards integration have progressed even further and led to the establishment of sheltered workplaces in firms. This has also been achieved with the support of the 40—60 system. Both physically and mentally handicapped as well as socially disadvantaged persons are involved. Sheltered workplaces have been set up primarily in smaller firms and up to now there has been no problem in finding firms which are interested in cooperating. Firms with



between five and 20 employees appear to be best suited, and industrial production with some craft character seems to be the most suitable type of work.

As mentioned before, the social partners are in support of this experimental form of employment, and with the aid of various supportive measures it has been possible to overcome to a large extent the problem of social integration which confronts a handicapped person at a regular workplace.

The results obtained so far seem to indicate that a combination of these two systems, the sheltered workshop and the individual sheltered workplace, could perhaps solve many problems which exist in connection with the employment of handicapped persons in the private sector of the economy.

In accordance with the same guidelines social security legislation also opens up possibilities for employment of the handicapped in public and concessionary enterprises, an approach which will be used increasingly in the future.

Job opportunities for severely handicapped persons are provided by the public welfare institutions.

## Prospects

The present situation in the field of vocational training for handicapped persons in Denmark is characterized in temporary difficulties in a number of areas.

Today handicapped persons who went through school before integration and therefore lived in a protected environment start basic vocational training in regular classes. Handicapped persons thus experience a process of adaptation made even more difficult by the fact that their fellow trainees are not accustomed to being together with handicapped persons.

With regard to vocational school teachers, an acceleration of teacher-training is to set in in the autumn of 1980. However, negotiations between the vocational training authorities at national level and the trade unions concerning the working conditions of these special teachers have not yet been concluded.

In the long run the most pressing problem as regards both training and employment for the handicapped is the great lack of social responsibility *vis-à-vis* this group. General acceptance of the handicapped as a part of daily life is not

arrived at through administrative reforms alone, and it is probably naïve to believe that the handicapped will not always be confronted with difficulties.

The situation of handicapped persons has not yet attracted the attention of the mass media. This is one of the areas in which considerable effort will have to be made in order to bring about that radical change in attitude which is prerequisite to the further integration and normalization of the handicapped. This campaign must be waged at public opinion level as well as at employer and trade union level.

Source: Statens Erhvervspædagogiske Lærer Uddannelse — SEL  
(Else Kofoed), Copenhagen.

# Luxembourg

Under the Constitution of Luxembourg every citizen has a right to employment. Handicapped persons are protected by legislation which not only guarantees them the right to employment but also declares their schooling, their vocational training, and their access to employment to be a national obligation.

Under legislation of 28 April 1959 the Office de Placement et de Rééducation Professionnelle des Travailleurs Handicapés — OTH (Placement and Vocational Rehabilitation Office for Handicapped Workers) has been established. All persons are considered to be handicapped who suffer from a physical, psychological, or mental disablement which reduces their working capacity by at least 30 %, the disablement being either congenital (birth defect) or acquired (illness, industrial accident, traffic accident, etc.). Registration as a handicapped worker is undertaken by a commission of three members, two of whom are physicians. Ever since its establishment OTH has been in charge of all measures undertaken by public authorities on behalf of handicapped persons, in particular vocational orientation, vocational rehabilitation, and entry/re-entry to open employment.

OTH collaborates closely with

- all rehabilitation centres operating in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg;
- all relevant organizations and associations such as polyclinics, medico-so-

cial centres, social welfare homes, homes for the blind, etc.;

- special centres in France, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Belgium, the reason being that Luxembourg does not have sufficient training facilities catering for handicapped persons in all the required economic sectors.

Public authorities and firms employing more than 50 workers are obligated by law to employ handicapped workers up to at least a 2 % level. Firms or authorities employing at least 25 and not more than 50 workers must give priority to a handicapped whenever a job is to be filled which can be handled just as well by a handicapped person as by an able-bodied person. As a matter of fact, the large firms exceed this 2 % level by re-employing those of their workers who have met with an industrial accident. Small firms tend to disregard this legal obligation. For its part the National Solidarity Fund grants severely handicapped persons who are unable to work an allowance which ensures them a minimum income.

Of all handicapped workers whose case-histories were processed by OTH in 1978, 30 % were disabled by lameness, 20 % by mental disorders, 7 % by mental depression, and 8 % by back trouble. 57 % of the persons whose case-histories were processed were placed in jobs in various economic branches of the private sector.

Of the handicapped workers whose case-histories were first prepared in 1978, 15 % were requesting training leave in order to undergo vocational rehabilitation and 85 % were without a job. Of this latter group 27 % were disabled by lameness, 13 % by mental disorders, 11 % by mental depression, and 9 % by back trouble.

## Vocational rehabilitation

### GENERAL SCHOOLING

To the degree to which they are capable, handicapped juveniles (15 to 22 years of age) attend full-time secondary school (lower secondary school, technical secondary school, domestic science secondary school).

### PREVOCATIONAL TRAINING

The other handicapped juveniles attend special centres which provide prevo-

cational training geared in each case to the level of capability. Most of these juveniles are afflicted with mental disorders, deafness, blindness, or anarthria.

## VOCATIONAL TRAINING

### Vocational training, public sector

Some handicapped juveniles attending technical secondary school also follow public vocational training courses in order to obtain the Certificat d'aptitude technique et professionnel — CATP (vocational and technical training certificate) or the Certificat de capacité manuelle — (certificate in manual skills).

### Vocational training, private sector

The employer trains the job applicant in the respective occupation, with OTH frequently paying the employer a wage subsidy in exchange.

## REHABILITATION FACILITIES FOR ADULTS

OTH makes vocational orientation available to all adult workers who have become disabled as the result of an industrial accident, a traffic accident, or an illness (psychological disturbances, tuberculosis, etc.) and must therefore change over to another occupation. As a rule the occupation chosen is one for which the working capacity of the disabled worker is considered to be adequate. These handicapped adults may either attend regular adult education courses or undergo training in special workshops.

All handicapped workers entering/re-entering open employment are first enabled, with the assistance of OTH, to undergo a period of on-the-job adaptation and induction.

## OUT-OF-COUNTRY VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Over the years OTH has established contacts with many rehabilitation centres operating in other countries. Sent to these centres are handicapped persons for whom relevant vocational rehabilitation cannot be provided in Luxembourg.

Source: Éducation nationale.

# Ireland

Prior to 1975 the whole field of vocational training and employment for the handicapped in Ireland was undertaken largely by voluntary bodies.

In 1973 the establishment of the Working Party on *Training and Employing the Handicapped* by the Department of Health radically altered the field of vocational rehabilitation in Ireland. The Working Party was requested to make recommendations for the creation of an effective and planned approach to the occupational rehabilitation of the handicapped. It recommended that facilities for training, activation, and employment be made available through statutory and voluntary agencies. The recommendations of the Robins Report, as it is now known, provide the framework within which vocational services are being developed.

The responsibility for providing training, activation, and employment services was firmly placed by the Robins Report within the Department of Health. The National Rehabilitation Board (NRB), as the executive agency of the Department of Health, is responsible for advising the Minister on all aspects of rehabilitation, coordinating the work of voluntary organizations engaged in rehabilitation and arranging for the provision of specialized services.

## Provisions for training and employment

The Working Party on Training and Employing the Handicapped defined handicap as 'any limitation, congenital or acquired, of a person's physical or mental ability which affects his daily activity and work by reducing his social contribution, his vocational employment prospects, or his ability to use public services'.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of this definition it was estimated that 15 000 out of an estimated 100 000 adult handicapped persons in this country would benefit from preparation and training for work.

It is estimated by the Workshops Standards Committee that there are now 5 500 places available for handicapped persons in various centres and institu-

tions throughout the country providing skilled and semi-skilled training, activation and sheltered employment.<sup>2</sup> These are distributed as follows:

- 2 600 places in industrial therapy units attached to or associated with psychiatric hospitals and catering for patients attending these hospitals;
- 1 625 places in centres catering for the mentally handicapped;
- 1 260 places in centres within the community catering for mixed handicaps groups;
- 50 places providing sheltered work for the blind and partially sighted.

## Special vocational services

The following list outlines the main categories of special provisions in the field of activation training and employment for the handicapped in Ireland:

### *Special training centres:*

centres in which training to skilled (including apprenticeship) and semi-skilled level is provided.

### *Community workshops:*

workshops having two functions:

- activation of handicapped persons for open employment;
- provision of long term employment for handicapped persons who have difficulty in obtaining or retaining open employment.

### *Sheltered workshops:*

workshops providing long-term employment for handicapped persons who have difficulty obtaining/retaining open employment.

### *Industrial therapy units:*

units attached to psychiatric hospitals for persons undergoing institutional care. They have two aims:

- to condition the individual to the work habit;
- to develop social habits.

### *Activation units:*

units attached to or associated with centres for the mentally handicapped and having the same objectives as industrial therapy units.

<sup>1</sup> *Training & Employing the Handicapped*, Report of a Working Party established by the Minister for Health, Dublin, 1975.

<sup>2</sup> *Standards for Workshops: Report of Standards Committee of the NRB* April 1978, pp. 1 and 2. This committee was established by the NRB in November 1975 in line with the recommendations of the *Report on Training & Employing the Handicapped* to monitor and set standards for workshops for the handicapped.

### *Day centres:*

centres on a non-residential basis providing facilities for persons capable of only a low level of productive work. The centres provide daily care and some occupational activities.

### *Vocational training units:*

units attached to special schools for the mentally handicapped provided with the assistance of the Department of Education. The objective is to introduce the handicapped school leaver to the world of work.

### *Assessment units:*

special units providing facilities for the assessment of persons over a period of 6 to 12 weeks. It provides

- (a) general assessment of the person;
- (b) detailed assessment in industrial and commercial activities.

## Community workshops

Until the Robins Report provisions for sheltered employment tended to be for specific groups of handicapped persons. The basis for the new structure was to be totally different. It was recommended that in future selection for training facilities be on the basis of aptitude for training and not subdivided according to the type of disability. The new structure of community workshops and training centres were to be basically 'integrated'.<sup>1</sup> Within this system community workshops would have the dual role of

- providing activation training,
- providing sheltered employment for those capable of achieving a certain level of productivity.

Despite the emphasis on this integrated structure, it was accepted that there would be a continuing need for separate units at mental hospitals and centres for the mentally handicapped person where work activation facilities are required. However, community workshops were to cater for mixed handicapped groups.

The Rehabilitation Institute provides the vast bulk of the places currently available in community workshops and training centres throughout the country. Although other organizations provide community workshop facilities, many of these are for particular groups of the handicapped population.

There has been a rapid expansion in the number of places available in such centres over the past few years. There are currently a total of 1 263 places in rehabilitation centres alone, and the estimate for September 1979 is 1 363 places. Additional places are provided by other organizations around the country; however not all of these could be classified as Community workshops in the sense of the term as defined in the Robins Report.

The Workshop Standards Committee recommends that such workshops should aim at providing a minimum of forty-five places, with the facility to expand to meet local needs if required. The Committee recommends an increase to 3 000 in the number of places available in community workshops, and these additional places should be developed over a period of three years from 1978 to 1980 inclusive.

## Sheltered work

The Robins Report recommended that one of the functions of community workshops was to provide long-term sheltered employment. However, only those capable of ultimately achieving a level of output not less than one-third of that of an able-bodied worker should continue to be employed.<sup>2</sup>

The Workshop Standards Committee states that the greater need is for sheltered work. Consequently they recommend an initial ratio of 2:3 activation:sheltered work to be achieved during the first two and a half years of operation and a ratio of 1:2 thereafter. Their report also states that in larger urban areas where the demand for rehabilitation services is such that workshops with the sole function of providing sheltered work can be maintained, these should be developed. However, it is anticipated that in rural areas particularly the community workshop will cater for all local needs in the one centre.

Much of what is classified as sheltered employment around the country is little more than occupational activity. There are some workshops, many for mentally handicapped persons, which provide sheltered employment.

Apart from establishing the ratio of sheltered work places to activation little work has been done on the provision of

sheltered employment in Ireland. The Workshop Standards Committee suggests that the inclusion of the two functions in community workshops creates operational difficulties. It emphasizes the need to investigate the operation of such workshops thoroughly and set up a pilot scheme in two of the workshops to do this.

More information is needed both in terms of the take up of sheltered work facilities and the effectiveness of the current structure in meeting long-term needs. Equally a response from the Government on the sheltered work situation, its development and its financing, is urgently required.

## Vocational training centres

These centres, which are jointly assisted by the Department of Education and the Department of Health, provide a vocational training course primarily for moderately handicapped school leavers but also for some mildly handicapped school leavers. The age range of trainees is generally 18 to 21 years, though some of the trainees are older. The courses, which last for periods from 18 months to two years, are aimed at preparation for sheltered and open employment. The general focus of the courses is on social training and training in work skills. A range of activities is provided, for example occupational therapy, domestic economy and home management, woodwork, horticulture, art, and remedial teaching. The training programme includes work experience and there is an emphasis throughout on vocational assessment. There are at present ten centres providing approximately 450 places. The general guidelines relating to the establishment of further centres is that there be a minimum of 40 trainees; however, some centres have been established with fewer than this number of trainees.

## Open employment

### TRAINING PROVISIONS IN ANCO

In line with its recommendation that 'as many as possible of the handicapped should be trained in association with able-bodied workers' the Working Party on Training and Employing the Handicapped recommended that AnCo should have the main role in the provision of training for the handicapped on an integrated basis with the able-bodied. In addition to providing training in its own

<sup>1</sup> *Training & Employing the Handicapped*, op cit., p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Op. cit., paragraph 6. 6.

centres the Working Party recommended that, where appropriate, AnCo should make arrangements with selected industrial firms or technological colleges for the training of handicapped persons.

AnCo's policy is to provide training for handicapped persons who have been assessed as suitable for open employment and who can take their place alongside able-bodied trainees throughout the training process.

This number will always be small, and AnCo is willing to meet whatever demand there is. AnCo has provided for the training of 300 handicapped persons in 1980 out of a national target of 11 100 people for that year. Since the inception in 1975 by AnCo of its pilot scheme to train handicapped persons on an integrated basis with the able-bodied the number of such trainees has been increased progressively from 50 in 1975. It is also possible that handicapped people are being trained in AnCo who are not classified as handicapped.

## QUOTA SCHEME

In May 1977 the then Government announced the introduction of a Quota Scheme for the employment of disabled persons in the public sector. The target set was a 3 % quota, to be achieved over a period of five years. The Scheme was confirmed by the present Government in December 1977, and an interdepartmental committee was set up to deal with problems arising in the implementation of the Scheme and to monitor progress.

## Identification, placement and assessment services

### IDENTIFICATION

The Working Party on Training and Employing the Handicapped recommended that the Director of Community Care (DCC) should have the duty of ensuring that all persons in his area suitable for occupational rehabilitation are brought to his notice by the various institutions and voluntary organizations concerned, general practitioners, social workers, public health nurses, assistance officers, and others. This identification would be facilitated by the fact that health boards already have details of persons in receipt of a disabled persons maintenance allowance (DPMA). In 1977 there were 24 000 persons in receipt of a DPMA.

It was also recommended by the Working Party that procedures should be established under which suitable cases in receipt of long-term benefits under the social welfare acts should be notified to the DCC by the medical referees who periodically review the medical condition of those in receipt of disability benefits. Such procedures have not as yet been established. In September 1978 there were approximately 13 000 people in receipt of invalidity benefit and 5 000 in receipt of disablement benefit. It is estimated that the numbers suitable for vocational rehabilitation would be approximately three or four hundred per annum.

### PLACEMENT SERVICE

The primary link between the handicapped person and vocational rehabilitation services is the placement officer. The placement service is part of the network of services supplied by the NRB which comprises medical and vocational assessment, a placement service for handicapped adults, and a youth employment and advisory service for handicapped young persons of school-leaving age.

The objectives of the placement service are

- to help handicapped persons obtain and hold suitable employment including sheltered employment;
- to arrange training or education for them where it is considered necessary as a preparation for employment;
- to promote equal work opportunities on their behalf and to seek a fair share of the available employment for them.<sup>1</sup>

The placement officer has an extremely important part to play in the rehabilitation process, starting from the assessment of the handicapped person and continuing until the person is placed in employment.<sup>2</sup>

There are at present 22 placement officers based throughout the various health boards. To facilitate identification and assessment, it is proposed to appoint one placement officer to each of the 32 community care areas in the country.

In 1977, 1 899 persons were referred to the placement service; 50 % of these were physically handicapped, 31 % were

mentally ill, and 19 % were mentally handicapped. Five hundred and twelve, or 27 %, of these referrals were placed directly without work preparation or training (32 % of the physically handicapped, 22 % of the mentally ill, and 23 % of the mentally handicapped). Five hundred and sixty, or 29 %, were placed in training centres operated by the Rehabilitation Institute and by AnCo (25 % of the physically handicapped, 34 % of the mentally ill and 34 % of the mentally handicapped). Two hundred and twenty persons were placed in employment from training.

Youth employment and advisory service: Young people under the age of 18 are referred to the youth employment and advisory service for vocational assessment and guidance in relation to further education, training, and employment. In 1979 there were 16 youth employment advisers based throughout seven of the eight regional health boards. There is a very close involvement by the advisers with special schools for the mildly mentally handicapped in the operation of work preparation and experience programmes. Over 50 % of the referrals to the service are mentally handicapped, for the most part mildly mentally handicapped, and approximately 40 % are physically handicapped. The proportion of mildly mentally handicapped persons referred is increasing with the development of the service and in particular its involvement with an increased number of special schools.

### ASSESSMENT

The Robins report recommended that initial assessment should be undertaken by the DCC and a National Rehabilitation Board placement officer. While this type of assessment is adequate for the majority of handicapped persons, a more extensive assessment is necessary in some cases. The services available for such assessments are:

- day assessment;
- assessment at the National Medical Rehabilitation Centre, The Cental Remedial Clinic, and St Anthony's Rehabilitation Centre (all in Dublin).

Day assessment involves the participation of a medical officer, a psychologist and a placement officer. Such a service is available in Dublin for the eastern part of the country and on a sessional basis in Cork and Galway. In 1977 the number of persons referred to this service was 144. Assessment at the National Medical Rehabilitation Centre is available for

<sup>1</sup> NRB Annual Report and Accounts, 1977, p. 8/9.

<sup>2</sup> The importance of this role is emphasized in the Robins Report, op. cit., p. 8.



those with serious physical disability. One hundred and forty-eight persons were assessed in 1977. To facilitate prolonged assessment (6 to 12 weeks) where necessary, the Working Party on Training and Employing the Handicapped recommended that a special assessment unit, similar to the industrial rehabilitation units in operation in the United Kingdom, should be established.

Such a unit has not been established to date.

## Financing of training and employment facilities

Over the past four or five years there has been extensive and growing financial investment in the field of training and employment for the handicapped. This investment has been primarily in training facilities for open employment as outlined in the Robins Report. Financing of developments takes place in a variety of ways but primarily through the following sources:

- Department of Health/health board funding;
- European Social Fund;
- Voluntary organizations, where involved.

The Department of Health and the health boards are involved at various levels in the financing of community workshops and training centres. From 1 April 1979 there is a capitation grant operative of:

- IRL 315 per annum for community workshop trainees,
- IRL 350 per annum for skill training centres.

In addition the Rehabilitation maintenance allowance of IRL 18.80 (payable to trainees who are training away from home) and the disabled persons' maintenance allowance are paid into the centres on behalf of the trainees, who subsequently receive 'wages' in lieu of these maintenance payments.

The health boards also provide commuter tickets for trainees or help in other ways towards the provision of transport.

In terms of capital investment both the relevant health board and the Department of Health, (the latter through NRB) provide support.

The European Social Fund has been a major innovation in the vocational rehabilitation scene over the past few years. However, its assistance is primarily for projects and people geared towards open employment. It is very important that such support, vital as it is for ongoing development, will not be the sole determinant of the direction which all vocational rehabilitation services will take. If this happens, people who are not capable of going into open employment even with training and rehabilitation will tend to lose out and sheltered work will not be given the recognition necessary to develop it as an integral part of vocational service.

It should be noted that there is no accurate, comprehensive information available on the total number of people who are handicapped in this country. Despite this there is data available in relation to specific groups such as the mentally handicapped, the blind and spina bifida. Many voluntary organizations have statistical information on the particular groups they serve or can provide estimates based on the prevalence of the disability in other countries.

A census of mentally handicapped persons was undertaken in 1974.<sup>1</sup> This information has formed the basis for planning services for mentally handicapped persons. It is clear that regularly updated basic information is essential. To achieve this a community care based record system is now being established.

There is not at the present time accurate information on the number of physically handicapped people in the country. However, efforts are being made by the health boards to collect basic information in relation to this group.

*Source:* Information contained within is based on extracts from *Major Issues in Planning Services for Mentally & Physically Handicapped Persons* commissioned by the National Economic and Social Council and completed in Summer 1979. AnCo, Dublin.

By Sile O'Connor & Pauline Faughnan.

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<sup>1</sup> Mulcahy M., *The Prevalence of Mental Handicap in the Republic of Ireland 1974*. Medico-Social Research Board, Dublin.



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