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Open forum



Vocational training



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Access to vocational training in the Community countries

An important judgment of the European Court of Justice

Hans Albrecht Hesse

The 'Gravier Case' will probably be seen as a milestone in Community case law on vocational training. The press and publications specializing in matters of international law have of course given detailed coverage to this unique case, in which a French citizen took legal action against the Belgian Government. We could not, however, overlook this opportunity to reflect on the case and its possible effects on the mobility of European citizens within the Community.

We are printing an article by Luc Misson, who acted as counsel to Françoise Gravier in court, and an article by Hans Albrecht Hesse, Professor of Law at Hanover University.

The judgment of the European Court of Justice in the Gravier case of February 1985 is causing some disquiet in circles responsible for national vocational training policies. It may also result in some action being taken. The judgment confirms that Community law takes precedence over national legislation in the question of access to training. National legislation which makes it difficult for applicants from other Member States to gain access to vocational training on grounds of nationality thus falls within the scope of the prohibition of discrimination in Article 7 of the EEC Treaty. The significance of this statement is increased by the Court's definition in the Gravier case of the concept of vocational training for Community law, its interpretation being extremely wide and comprehensive.

Non-discrimination against foreigners seeking access to vocational training

With its judgment of 13 February 1985¹ the European Court of Justice decided that the imposition on students from other Member States of a charge or registration or enrolment fee as a condition of access to vocational training constitutes discrimination on grounds of nationality contrary to Article 7 of the EEC Treaty² where the same fee is not imposed on students from the host Member State. Where access to training institutions

in the Community countries is concerned, the Court's judgment is primarily important because it clarifies the prohibition of discrimination in respect of access and because it contains major statements on the interpretation of the term 'vocational training'. Both these aspects are discussed below.

The main features of the judgment are first considered and explained by reference to the relevant provisions of the EEC Treaty. The attempt is then made – chiefly from a sociological standpoint – to determine how significant the Court's judgment is in more general terms.

The background to the case and the legal arguments

Under Article 177 of the EEC Treaty a court of a Member State may ask the European Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling where a case pending before the national court gives rise to questions and doubts regarding the interpretation of provisions of the Treaty. In certain circumstances, of no interest here, a national court is even required to request a ruling.³ The judgment of the Court of Justice here under discussion is based on the first and second paragraphs of Article 177 of the EEC Treaty. It was prompted by a request from a Belgian court which, by an order of late December 1983, referred two questions to the European Court for a preliminary ruling. The Court gave its ruling in the abovementioned judgment of February 1985.

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Françoise Gravier, a French student, had brought an action before the Belgian court against the City of Liège seeking exemption from payment of an enrolment fee imposed only on foreign students. The student, whose parents live in France, went to Belgium in 1982 to study strip cartoon art at the Académie Royale des Beaux Arts in Liège as part of a four-year course. She refused to pay the special annual enrolment fee of over BFR 26 000 required of foreign students. This eventually led to the Academy's refusal to enrol her. As a result her Belgian residence permit was not extended. For the duration of the legal proceedings which Françoise Gravier then brought against the City of Liège, she was issued with a provisional registration certificate, enabling her to obtain a residence permit. Belgian law permitted the imposition of the special enrolment fee on foreign students. To succeed before the Belgian court, the French plaintiff therefore had to prove that Belgian law conflicted with Community law, which takes precedence over national law. The Belgian court was unwilling to state whether or not Community law was applicable and made its answer dependent on various interpretations. The essence of the European Court's reply will now be discussed.

The Court's arguments are based on Article 7 of the EEC Treaty, which – without prejudice to any special provisions in the Treaty – prohibits 'any discrimination on grounds of nationality' within the 'scope of application' of the Treaty. The

Court began by considering whether 'discrimination on grounds of nationality' had occurred in the Gravier case. In view of the unambiguous wording of Article 7 and the equally unambiguous preference given by the Belgian arrangement to home students over foreign students, there was no doubt that such discrimination existed and the Court had no hesitation in saying so.⁴ The real problem over interpretation in the context of Article 7 is raised by the second requirement: the discriminatory arrangement must fall within the 'scope of application' of the Treaty. This is less easy to determine. A glance at the 'principles' of the EEC laid down in the opening provisions of the EEC Treaty reveals that the Treaty seeks to establish a common market and thus primarily concerns economic policy. It is, of course, difficult to regard arrangements relating to access to training institutions as part of economic policy, perhaps even as one of its instruments. The problem is not, as is occasionally thought in Germany, connected with the difference in the quality of training institutions as a function of their level. It is related generally to all training courses, at whatever level, provided that they lead to qualifications or certificates which can be used to obtain employment. The problem with integrating vocational training policy into economic policy is that, if economic policy assumes the responsibilities of training policy, it cannot see trainees as anything but passive elements of economic calculations, whereas

in Europe at least the tradition of human and civil rights requires that the individual be respected as the active element in his training and that he be given any opportunity he cares to seize to engage in initial, further and continuing training commensurate with his inclinations, abilities, knowledge and experience without being restricted and hampered by what are often excessively short-term and short-sighted economic considerations.⁵

Although interpreting the provisions of the EEC Treaty which concern economic policy as applicable to the Belgian enrolment ruling thus posed problems, there was no lack in this case of attempts at legal constructs to this end. Attention focused mainly on Article 59 of the EEC Treaty, concerning the provision of services in the Community. If the Belgian enrolment ruling was to be seen as falling within the scope of application of the EEC Treaty by virtue of this article, it was essential that students – or, more generally, trainees – should be regarded as recipients of services. The decisive question in this respect, whether the provision of education and training facilities and programmes – by the State or a private body – can be considered the provision of a service within the meaning of Articles 59 ff. of the EEC Treaty, is disputed.⁶ In any event, to accept that vocational training is governed by the ruling on services is to accept the dominance of economic policy over vocational training policy, since their place in the text of the Treaty clearly indicates that the rulings on services contained in Articles 59 ff. relate to economic policy.

The arguments for and against the view that vocational training is governed by the rules on services need not be pursued here, since the European Court of Justice, in the search for provisions of the EEC Treaty under which vocational training law might be subsumed and so regarded as falling within the scope of application of the Treaty, finally opted for a different course. And it is an interesting one.

The European Court of Justice – in search of provisions of the EEC Treaty to cover the Gravier case – begins by resolutely confining the case to the financial barrier to foreigners seeking access to vocational training and compares this aspect of national policy and national law with Community law on the one hand and the common vocational training policy on the other. The legal arguments thus hinge on Article 128 of the EEC Treaty, which refers to the com-



VOLLMER

Attention focused mainly on Article 59 of the EEC Treaty, concerning the provision of services in the Community.

mon vocational training policy in a rather non-committal, vague way and is in need of greater precision – and forms part of the text of the Treaty that concerns not economic but social policy. In addition, and in every way related to Article 128, the nub of the legal reasoning becomes a kind of review of Community policy in the field of vocational training, beginning with the Council decision of 2 April 1963 laying down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy⁷, then listing various other documents⁸ and ending with the Council resolution of 11 July 1983 concerning vocational training policies in the European Community in the 1980s.⁹ The Court infers from this review that the common vocational training policy referred to in Article 128 is ‘gradually being established’ – which is intended to mean nothing other than that, after hesitant first steps, definite progress and a clear trend have now become discernible, and this, the Court explicitly concludes, has resulted in the common vocational training policy embracing any form of education which prepares for a qualification for a particular profession, trade or employment, regardless of the level of training and the general education content of the training programme.

Thus, having defined the standards relevant to its decision, the Court is able to advance three arguments to justify the conclusion that access to vocational training falls within the scope of application of the EEC Treaty and is therefore subject to the prohibition of discrimination under Article 7. The first element of the justification is Article 128 and the common vocational training policy to which it refers. The second is the gradual and expansive establishment of the common policy reflected in the resolutions and declarations of intent of the Council of the European Community, and therefore the national governments, which are set out in important documents. The third element is the reference to a number of the Community’s general objectives, such as ensuring the free movement, mobility and improvement of the living standards of workers – objectives which in the Court’s judgment are in the nature of fundamental rights of workers and their families.¹⁰

Once the legal arguments have been presented in this way, the conclusions with which the judgment ends come as no surprise. They appear as the typical expression of the art of legal reasoning. The final conclusions have the same logical cogency as the result of a mathematical calculation.

The real decisions, as a conscious and deliberate choice of alternatives, have already been taken: where the standards relevant to the decision have been interpreted and grouped has previously been described in the summary of the most important steps in the proceedings. This article ends with a discussion of the conclusions, the culmination of the legal arguments. They read as follows:

□ The conditions of access to vocational training fall within the scope of the EEC Treaty. The imposition under national policy or national law on students who are nationals of other Member States of a fee as a condition of access to vocational training facilities, where the same fee is not imposed on students who are nationals of the host Member State, therefore constitutes discrimination contrary to Article 7 of the EEC Treaty.

□ The term ‘vocational training’ covers any form of education which prepares for a qualification for a particular profession, trade or employment or which provides the necessary training and skills for such a profession, trade or employment, whatever the age and the level of training of the pupils or students and even if the training programme includes an element of general education.

Concluding remarks from a sociological standpoint

□ Like all written law, Community law develops through application. This is very clear from the EEC Treaty.

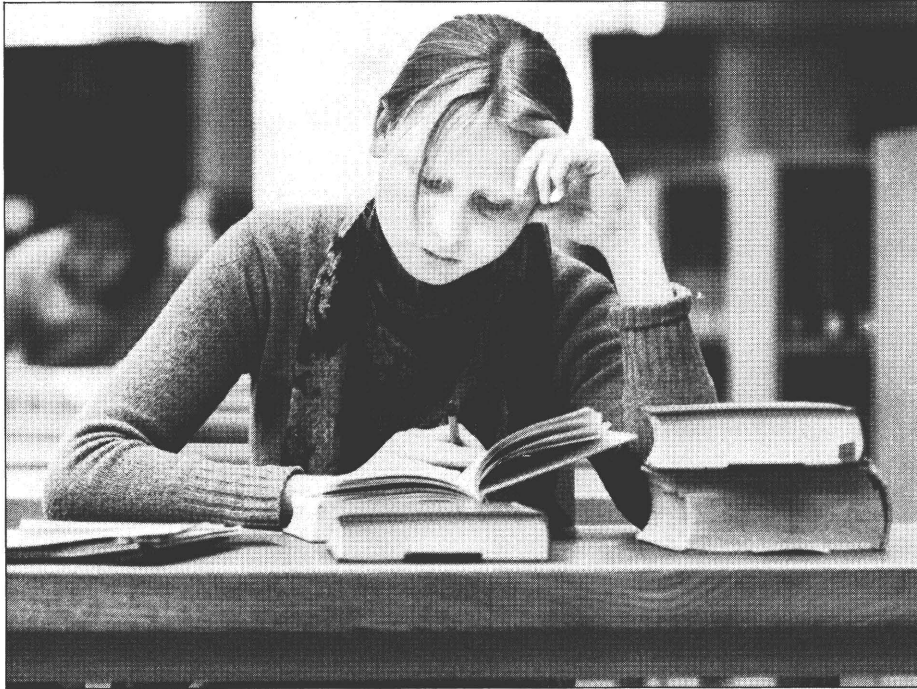
Many of its provisions do not become relevant until given practical form by the Community’s institutions. However, the original thesis means more than this. Application in this instance and in view of the case under review also means specifically application by judges and courts. To define the scope of common vocational training policy, the European Court of Justice has taken stock of major resolutions. But by drawing its conclusions from this and announcing them in its judgment, it has itself made a contribution to the further development of Community law on vocational training.

□ In the acquisition and utilization of qualifications, knowledge, abilities and skills it is common practice in Europe to make a distinction between general education and training which can subsequently be used in some way to earn a living. This distinction has become increasingly obso-

lete in present-day industrial society. At the beginning of the century Max Weber said that the student’s interest in his studies was not determined by the sudden awakening of a ‘thirst for knowledge’ but by the prospect of obtaining qualifications and certificates and using them professionally.¹¹ This is all the truer today, especially from the viewpoint of parents and pupils, but no less of those who formulate education and social policies, from the beginning of institutionalized education, irrespective of what has to be learnt before the sought-after certificates and qualifications can be obtained. It is therefore no more than logical that the European Court of Justice should opt for a very broad interpretation in its definition of the term ‘vocational training’ and refrain from making the level of training courses or the age of trainees a vital criterion. Although it has not completely eschewed the traditional assessment of ‘elements of general education’, it does point out – again, quite logically – that it must not be inferred from the inclusion of such elements that the education in question is not vocational training.

□ Occupations clearly reveal the close links between education and training policy on the one hand and economic and social policy on the other. Through occupations training programmes are transformed into opportunities for earning a living. Through occupation changes in working conditions and job requirements conversely influence education and training programmes. In view of the special significance of occupations in the economy and society, the freedom to choose an occupation is an elementary civil right. As a right to resist tendencies towards government control, it is particularly relevant in the question of access to training facilities. It can only perform its function as a basic democratic right if the concept ‘occupation’ is interpreted broadly enough and is rid of all pre-democratic constituents. With a number of riders and definitions the European Court of Justice has clearly announced its intention of regarding access to all educational facilities which are in some way institutionalized, be they based on initial, advanced or continuing training, as falling within the scope of Community law and of not making the prohibition of discrimination dependent on the quality of the training programmes or educational facility in question.

□ The legal tenets that solemnly and conspicuously affirm such basic and human rights of the individual as the right to move freely, to choose an occupation or to



GLASER

... that the European Court of Justice should opt for a very broad interpretation in its definition of the term 'vocational training'...

seize training opportunities without discrimination are not infrequently joined by the 'small print' added by the legislator or bureaucrats, restricting, revoking, countermanding the solemn and fundamental guarantees of freedom. The interests which governments pursue in their legislation or administrative practices do not always accord with the high ideals which they profess on ceremonial occasions when recalling their constitutions. The rights and freedoms laid down in constitutions must therefore be constantly asserted if they are not to lose their practical value. Anyone who applies to the courts for the protection of his elementary personal rights against legislative or administrative acts which restrict or contravene his rights and interests makes a significant contribution towards giving basic rights real meaning and ensuring that they are respected by legislation and administration. If such individual actions are to succeed, of course, there must also be judges who see their task as being to help the individual in his struggle to protect his basic rights.¹² With various judgments, and particularly that reviewed here, the European Court of Justice has shown that it sees its task as being to help enforce Community legislation on vocational training in the interests of the freedom and human dignity of the individual and especially in the interests of the free movement of workers and free access to training institutions within the Community where restrictive national

legislation or administrative practices cling to special arrangements for the nationals of the country concerned.

□ It is thus possible to conclude with a few words on the more general significance of the judgment in the Gravier case.

(i) Whether and to what extent national legislators and administrations are persuaded by the judgment to abandon rulings on access to training that discriminate against foreigners remains to be seen. A student from another Community country who reminds a Belgian university of the judgment can undoubtedly expect to be exempted from payment of the special fee imposed on foreigners. It is already questionable whether this will also apply in the case of students who do not invoke the judgment.

(ii) It is very doubtful that national legislators or administrations will conclude from the judgment that, in addition to special fees, they must abandon other forms of discrimination against nationals of other Member States seeking access to training facilities. The European Court of Justice has at least made it clear in the arguments in support of its judgment that it sees access to vocational training as a whole as falling within the scope of the prohibition of discrimination under Article 7 of the EEC Treaty. Discrimination against foreigners seeking access to training takes various forms,¹³ and the ways in which the Com-

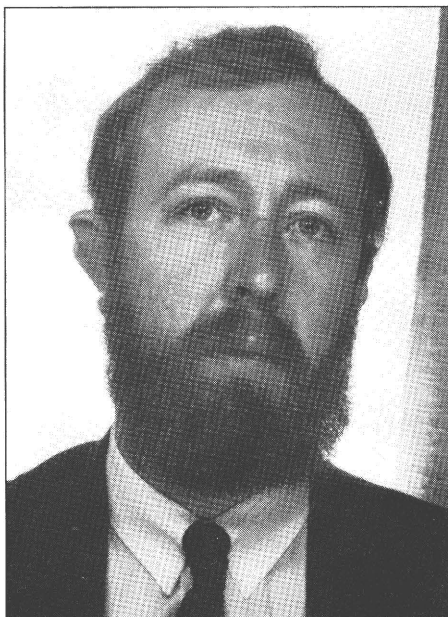
munity countries discriminate against foreigners need to be documented. There is now a particularly good chance of eliminating such discrimination with the aid of Community law if individual citizens of Community countries take up the cudgels against discriminatory national legislation in other Member States with the help of the courts and if they succeed in bringing their cases before the European Court of Justice. In this respect, associations and other institutions interested in seeing Community law and policy playing an effective role could also make a contribution to improving the chances of the Community's legislation on vocational training becoming effective by providing information and support.

Notes

- ¹ Case 293/83 (Gravier).
- ² Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, 1978.
- ³ Article 177, third paragraph, of the EEC Treaty.
- ⁴ In the proceedings before the Court the Belgian Government stated that, in imposing the special fee, it had taken account of the fact that the number of foreigners studying in Belgium was far higher than the number of Belgians studying abroad. The special fee was therefore intended to compensate the Belgian education budget. Be this as it may, it does not alter the fact that the arrangements chosen constitutes discrimination against those concerned on grounds of nationality.
- ⁵ HANS ALBRECHT HESSE: *Berufe im Wandel*, 2nd edition, Stuttgart 1972; *idem*: *Die Verrechtlichung der Berufe und die individuelle Handlungsfreiheit*, Beitr. AB 66, pp. 279 ff.
- ⁶ This view is rejected, for example by GROEBEN-BOEKH - THIESING - EHLERMANN: *Kommentar zum EWG-Vertrag*, 3rd edition, Baden-Baden 1983. Preliminary comments on Articles 59 to 66, Marginal Note 9, where the concept 'services' is restricted to entrepreneurial activities; similarly, Marginal Notes 1 ff. on Article 60.
- ⁷ Council Decision 63/266/EEC of 2 April 1963, Official Journal of the European Communities, 1963, p. 1338.
- ⁸ Regulation (EEC) No 1612/68 of 15 October 1968 on freedom of movement for workers within the Community (Official Journal, English Special Edition 1968 (II), p. 475); 'General guidelines' of the Council on the establishment of a Community action programme in the field of vocational training (OJ C 81, p. 5); Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 13 December 1976 concerning measures to be taken to improve the preparation of young people for work and to facilitate their transition from education to working life (OJ C 308, p. 1).
- ⁹ OJ C 193, p. 2.
- ¹⁰ European Court of Justice, Case 152/82 (Forcheri, ECR 1093, 2323), para. 11.
- ¹¹ MAX WEBER: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, textbook edition, Cologne-Berlin 1964, 2nd half-volume, pp. 735 ff.
- ¹² HANS ALBRECHT HESSE: *Das Recht der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Heidelberg 1984, pp. 164 ff.; Richard Schmid: *Letzter Unwille*, Stuttgart 1984, pp. 52 ff.
- ¹³ For example, the establishment of quotas for foreigners (6 to 8%) under German legislation on the allocation of university places.

The Gravier case

No 'customs levy' on training



Luc Misson

Background to the problem

Establishments of higher education in the Community are attended by five million or so students. Just over 50 000 of these students, 1% of the total student population, study in a Member State of which they are not nationals.

A larger proportion – 4.25% – of the student population in Belgium comes from other EEC countries. The percentages of foreign students by comparison with the total student population in other countries are as follows:

Italy	2.25 %
France	1.51 %
Germany	1.28 %
United Kingdom	1.10 %
Ireland	1.00 %
Netherlands and Denmark	0.80 %
Greece	0.13 %

In a move to reduce the number of foreign students in Belgium, the government introduced an extra enrolment fee chargeable only to students of foreign nationality whose parents are not domiciled in Belgium.

All education is free in Belgium, except for a small charge, called the 'minerval' paid by students at universities and in other forms of higher education. A very high 'minerval'

is now being charged to foreign students, depending on the level of education. At present, for example, it is up to BFR 15 000 in primary education and as high as BFR 250 000 for certain university courses.

This means that substantial sums have been levied by the Belgian Government since 1976, the year in which the 'minerval' was introduced. According to certain sources, almost a thousand million Belgian francs have been collected. The effects of this policy on the number of foreign students were felt immediately: the number of students from EEC countries enrolling in Belgian establishments fell from 6 152 in 1976 to 4 050 in 1980, a 33% decline (at a time of general growth in the population of foreign students in other Member States). There was a good deal of reaction to this policy but it proved impossible to persuade Belgium to change its attitude, despite a resolution tabled by European Parliament on 18 November 1982 calling on Belgium 'to end all discriminatory measures in matters of enrolment fees in education' (OJ C 334/93, 20. 12. 1982). A wide-ranging debate was sparked off on the problem: does the Treaty of Rome imply the free movement of students within the Community?

The Forcheri case

Mrs Forcheri, the wife of an official of the Commission of the European Communities working in Brussels, was studying to be a social worker on a course in Brussels. She

was asked to pay the enrolment fee. The matter was referred to the European Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling on the following issue:

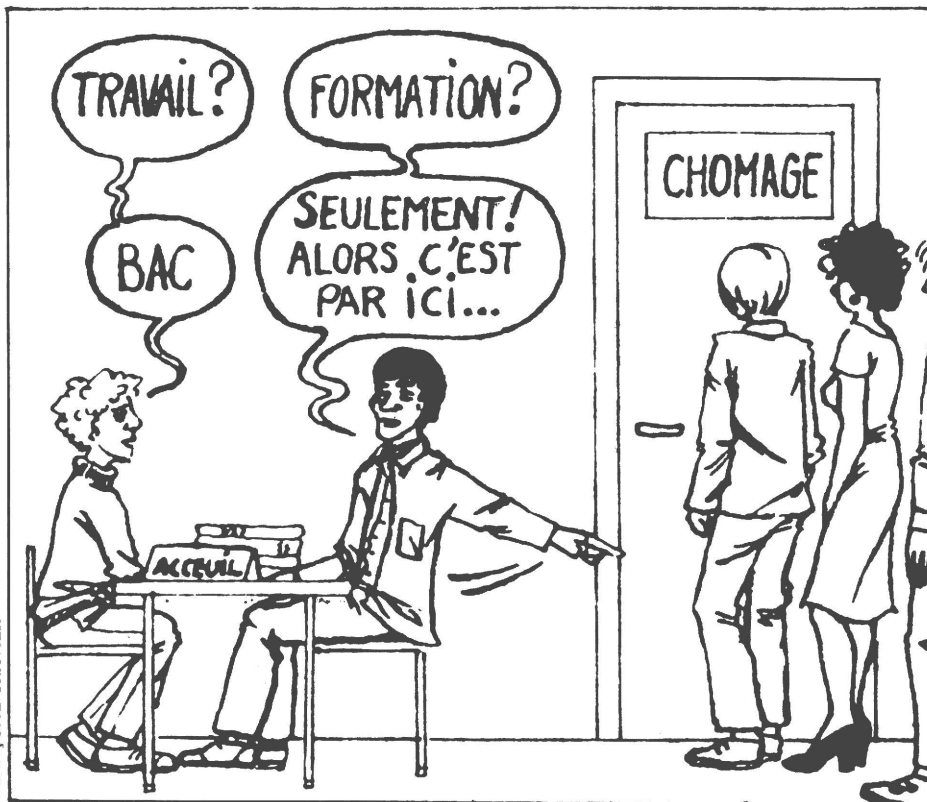
'When a Member State sets up educational courses, especially in the field of vocational training, to require the national of another Member State who is lawfully settled in the former Member State to pay an enrolment fee not levied on its own nationals wishing to take such courses constitutes discrimination on the grounds of nationality, which is prohibited by Article 7 of the Treaty.'

While certain Community regulations forbid any form of discrimination against migrant workers, or their children in matters of education, this Court judgment laid it down as a general rule that such discrimination is also unlawful when it is directed against any European Community national who is legally established in another Member State (as in the case of the wife of a Community official).

The Gravier case

Françoise Gravier, a young lady from Aix-en-Provence, wished to study the production of comic strips. Belgium has colleges with a good reputation in this field which also attract many foreign students. There are good reasons for this: 25 million copies of comic strip albums were printed in Belgium in 1983, 51% of Belgium's total publishing output. Of these albums, 75%

LUC MISSION – lawyer, whose firm is mainly concerned with international law, more specifically the freedom of movement of persons within the European Economic Community.



FRANÇOISE GRAVIER

Those receiving or benefiting from services may, according to Community law and Court precedents, move freely from one Member State to another and no restriction may be placed on their free access to services.

The most controversial and interesting point in this argument was that education is a service within the meaning of the Treaty despite being a public sector service.

□ Second argument

Article 7 of the Treaty states: 'Within the scope of application of this Treaty, and without prejudice to any special provisions contained therein, any discrimination on grounds of nationality shall be prohibited.'

Miss Gravier and the Commission argued that vocational training comes within the scope of application of the Treaty and that any discrimination in this type of education should be prohibited. Miss Gravier and the Commission cited, *inter alia*, Article 128 of the Treaty in support of this contention: 'the Council shall... lay down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market'.

The difficulty in this second argument was to persuade the Court that vocational training comes within the scope of application of the Treaty whereas, since the European Community is an economic community, policy on education and training is not included as such in the fields which, according to the Treaty, come within the purview of Community institutions.

The Court delivered its judgment on 13 February 1985, citing the following grounds for its decision:

■ The 'minerval' is indisputably a form of discrimination on the grounds of nationality. Even though the parents of foreign students do not pay taxes to help finance the Belgian educational system, the practice is still discriminatory since this fee is not levied on Belgian students whose parents do not pay tax because, for example, they live abroad.

■ The organization of education and policy on education do not as such come within the domains which, under the Treaty, fall within the purview of Community institutions.

were exported. A Belgian specialist weekly magazine such as 'Spirou' has a print run of 140 000 a week. At the time, there was no such specialist course of exactly the same type in France.

Miss Gravier therefore enrolled in the Liège Academy of Fine Arts, where she was asked to pay an annual enrolment fee of BFR 14 622.

She refused to pay this sum and brought proceedings before the President of the Liège Court of First Instance against the City of Liège (the authority responsible for running the Academy) and against the two authorities regulating the levy of the 'minerval', the Belgian State and the Belgian French-speaking Community.

The issues were once again referred to the European Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling, since the case raised a different set of problems from the points at issue in the Forcheri case. Before enrolling for the course, Miss Gravier had no links with Belgium and had no residence permit for this country.

The specific question raised by this case was couched in the following terms: is a European Community national entitled to access to educational establishments in the territory of another Member State on the same terms

as nationals of that State if he or she comes to that State for the sole purpose of taking a course of study there and can claim a residence permit neither as a migrant worker nor as the member of a migrant worker's family?

In other words, the issue at stake was the right of students to freedom of movement within the European Community.

The problem aroused a good deal of interest. Besides the parties themselves and the European Commission, the Danish and British Governments were parties to the proceedings, defending principles very close to those advanced by the Belgian State.

Miss Gravier and the Commission put forward two arguments:

□ First argument

Articles 59 *et seq.* of the Treaty of Rome permit no discrimination in the freedom of movement allowed to those providing and receiving services. Even when education is dispensed by the authorities or at the expense of the authorities, it is a service. There must, therefore, be free access to this service, and no distinction must be made between a Member State's own nationals and the nationals of other Member States.

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FRANÇOISE GRAVIER

■ On the other hand, 'access to and attendance of educational courses and apprenticeship, particularly when these are part of vocational training, are not extraneous to Community law'. The Court noted that, in addition to Article 128 of the Treaty, many pieces of Community legislation deal with vocational training.

■ The Court expressed its view that a common vocational training policy 'is moreover a vital element in the activities of the Community, whose aims include the free movement of persons, mobility of labour and an improvement in workers' standard of living. Access to vocational training in particular is likely to promote the free movement of persons in the Community as a whole in that it enables them to obtain a qualification in the Member State where they propose to engage in their chosen occupation and develop their particular talents in the Member State whose vocational education system offers the appropriate specialist studies.'

■ Since conditions of access to vocational training come within the scope of application of the Treaty, by virtue of Article 7 any form of discrimination concerning the conditions of access to such vocational education is prohibited.

■ The next step to be taken, said the Court, was to define the concept of vocational training to determine whether Miss Gravier is engaged on a course of studies that contributes to her vocational training.

■ The Court noted that, in its decision 63/266 of 2 April 1963, the Council had

pointed out that the purpose of the common vocational training policy was to 'enable each person to acquire the technical knowledge and skills required in the exercise of a given occupation and achieve the highest possible standard of training while promoting, especially with regard to young people, intellectual and moral maturity, civic education and physical development' (OJ 63, p. 1338).

■ The Court then went on to say that 'the concept of vocational training extends to the teaching of the art of comic strips dispensed by an establishment of higher education in the arts, if that teaching trains a student for a qualification for an occupation, trade or specific job or endows him or her with a special ability to engage in such an occupation, trade or job'. The Court pointed out that this definition applies 'whatever the age and standard of education of pupils or students, even if part of the educational syllabus consists of general education'.

The consequences of the Gravier judgment

The first consequence

The judgment upholds the right to the free movement of those wishing to take up vocational training.

There may be various advantages in this freedom of movement, depending on a person's individual position.

The main beneficiaries of this form of education will be those wishing to take up

specialist training. Any student interested in specific training has the right of access to educational establishments in any Member State on the same terms as its own nationals.

The implication is that Member States may be relieved of the onus of setting up establishments of specialist education if such establishments already exist in another Member State.

In an age of advanced technology, sophisticated scientific equipment and extreme specialization in research and education, such free access to education is of evident value.

It should be borne in mind that teaching at the level of higher education is often imparted by research workers. Free access to education, therefore, gives at least to some extent free access to the findings of research being done in other Member States. The foundations have thus been laid for a true common market in knowledge.

The second consequence

The precedent set by the Gravier case will undoubtedly facilitate freedom of movement for persons within the European Community.

Many occupations cannot be taken up by foreign nationals because they do not have the national diploma of the country in question.

It is well known that only slow and limited progress has been made towards the equivalence of diplomas in the Community.

If there is free access to education, therefore, a foreign national may obtain a Member State's national diploma, which in turn will enable him or her to engage in the occupation in question in that host country.

The third consequence

The Gravier judgment clearly states that there must be equal treatment not only in enrolment fees but also, more broadly, in all conditions of access to vocational training.

Although the point was not explicitly raised in the statement of the grounds for the judgment (it was debated at length in both written and verbal proceedings), the conclusion must be drawn that any form of discrimination on the grounds of nationality – for example, in matters of bursaries and entrance examinations – is forbidden.

No practice of any kind could possibly be tolerated which might, perhaps by a subterfuge less open than the 'minerval', be designed to make it harder for students who are nationals of other Member States to satisfy the conditions of access to vocational training.

The fourth consequence

If it was unlawful to introduce the 'minerval', the implication is that the fees levied in the past must be repaid to students. Many cases are already being brought before Belgian courts since the Gravier judgment.

In a law enacted on 21 July 1985, Belgium decided to reimburse only those students having served writs before 13 February 1985, the date of the Gravier judgment.

Further questions will probably be referred to the Court of Justice for a preliminary ruling in the near future, affording an opportunity to formulate its opinion on the law. In view of prior Court decisions on the effect of its judgments over a period of time, it is very likely that Belgium's obligation to make repayment will be confirmed.

What the Court did not say in the Gravier judgment

The Court, then, upheld the second argument advanced by Miss Gravier and the Commission. We have already outlined the first and far more ambitious argument to the effect that education is a public service to which nations of other Member States should have access. The Court did not deal with this argument, but it did not reject it. Miss Gravier's claim was upheld because the course she was taking was in vocational training, and the Court was able to sidestep the first line of reasoning.

Nevertheless, the whole problem still remains with regard to forms of education not coming under the heading of vocational training: pre-school education, purely academic education, adult education for older people, special education for the handicapped, etc.

Once the problem of education for other than vocational purposes is referred to the Court, as it inevitably will be, the court will have to give its opinion on the first argument as already expounded.

This argument is of great practical relevance to European integration: if the argument advanced by Miss Gravier and the Commission were to be accepted, the implication would be that any EEC national would have freedom of access not just to the education but to the public services of any other Member State.

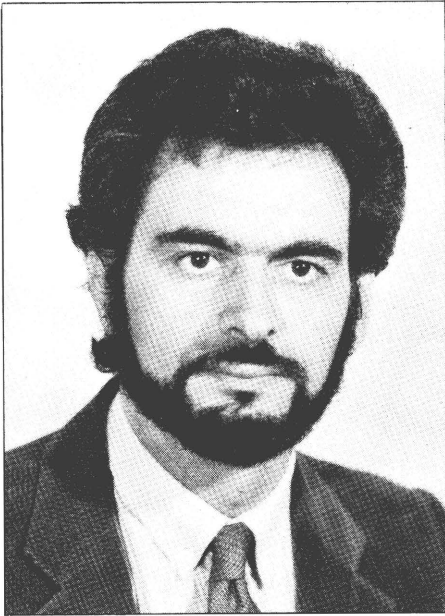
It should also be recognized that the concept of vocational training is still vague.

There is no doubt that vocational training embraces technical, higher and university education. In the case of general education, the purpose may not be specifically vocational but there is no denying that one of the most vital goals of secondary and even primary education is to produce adults who will be able to draw on what they have learned at school and play an active role in society. Basic education is of obvious value as a preparation for vocational training.

In short, sooner or later the Court of Justice will have to reply to the questions it was unwilling to answer in the Gravier case:

(i) is basic education, such as primary education, a service within the meaning of the Treaty to which freedom of access must be guaranteed?

(ii) does this education contribute to vocational training, which comes within the scope of application of the Treaty and in which no discrimination is tolerated?



A new culture for the computerized society:

the implications for vocational training

Nadio Delai

This article analyses the contradictions evident in a computerized society where the supply of information bears little relation to the demand.

Whereas the supply of hardware and software is over-abundant, demand is based more on an infatuation for computer technology than any awareness of the real needs.

Only by improving the level of social culture, with the help of new information technology resources, can the supply of information be better matched to the demand and a move forward be made from a 'data society' to an 'awareness society'.

In this general context, account must be taken of a series of implications for vocational training if new information technology is to be an instrument for growth rather than a disrupting force.

As things now stand, there has been a vast increase in the volume of facts and figures available and the rate at which they circulate (and this rate is bound to accelerate even further), together with a raising of the 'noise level'. There is a feeling that too much is available, and in some ways this leads to a relative decrease in the information conveyed (a trend that may gather momentum in the near future).

A recent survey on Italian households conducted by Censis showed that families are very much aware of the subject of information in their daily lives, a confirmation of the points made above. Their reaction to four statements is highly significant (see table).

Quite apart from this rising flow of facts and figures and 'background noise', we are also faced with a continuing growth in the resources – hardware and software – being brought into the market in the infor-

mation society. In practice, they tend merely to add to rather than to integrate existing resources.

The most immediate consequences of the situation are that:

- on the one hand, an exaggerated picture is conveyed of the 'knowledge society'; in many cases, this leads to confusion when planning for innovation, as it is difficult to discern what is simply in the minds of the inventors, what is on the drawing boards, what is experimental and what is actually being sold or is available for sale;

- on the other, it raises the expectations of every member of society and creates new needs, especially in matters of education and training: people expect higher quality and more personalized services, a trend that reflects the far greater individualism of our lives in society today.

As a preliminary conclusion, it could be said that we are faced with an *embarras de*

Reality and myth

If we look around us to find what could be termed today's 'knowledge society', the most striking factor in the society we observe and live in is that it is highly fragmented rather than a true society of knowledge.

DR NADIO DELAI, Director of Censis (Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali), Rome.

	Agree on the whole
■ 'You have to be far better informed in life today than in the past, especially if you have a family to manage.'	95.9 %
■ 'Sometimes you get a little confused because you don't know who (individuals or agencies) to turn to to get the information you need.'	77.5 %
■ 'Even when you get it you don't know whether it is the right information.'	73.1 %
■ 'Sometimes you feel you have too much information and this in turn may be very confusing.'	68.7 %

richesse, and an even greater abundance may be expected in the future. The technology on offer – goods, services, information, training – is proliferating; at the same time, the widespread, proliferating demand is becoming ever more segmented, fragmented and individual. It seems that we will have to cope simultaneously with the growing fragmentation of both supply and demand, a glaring absence of ways of bridging the gap between suppliers and users and a growing risk of confusion and disorientation. Indeed, one sometimes feels that our society is still one of isolated facts and figures, which have not yet been ordered to promote a true ‘knowledge society’.

If we are to construct a realistic scenario we must recognize that that on the one hand ‘the future is already with us’ (in our attitudes, in the facilities available, in our culture as it exists today) but that, on the other, we must still set goals for the future. We must turn what are merely ideas or intuitions into reality, for example looking to the future in symbolic terms by restating the myth of technological innovation.

In our efforts to construct a realistic scenario, however, we must formulate far broader hypotheses. There are at least four avenues to be explored:

- how to bring about greater unity in what is now a fragmented supply (especially the supply of information) and demand (individual needs and expectations);
- how symbolic communication, which is an ever more marked feature of the information society, can gradually be brought into sharper focus;
- how a ‘society of intangible goods’ can gradually be developed in which information acts as a ‘binder’ and is merely one of many service sector components;
- finally, how to increase awareness among users in an effort to bring about a true bridging culture, in the face of today’s ‘culture of supply’ which is still largely detached from and independent of Italy’s social culture.

Avoiding misconceptions and choosing the right resources

The first steps in our march towards an informatics society should be to discard the misconceptions to which we are all somewhat prone and, through appropriate train-

ing, equip ourselves to face up to the challenges of innovation in our society.

First of all, let us look at some of the misconceptions often implicit in our way of thinking. We shall set these out in summary form (a check-list, we might say), knowing that they still operate in some way or other – in whole or in part – in our collective consciousness when the subject of new information technology arises:

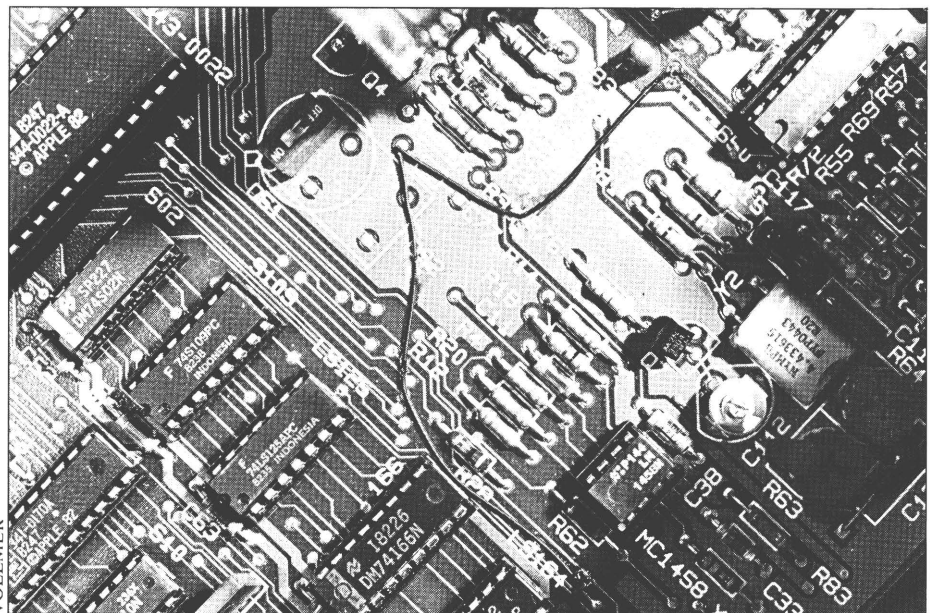
□ **The idea that complexities can be ironed out:** there is an urge to simplify (information, communication, society, culture and training) and an assumption that things can be simplified through the ‘spontaneous momentum’ engendered by the hardware, as if the supplier market were logical enough on its own to solve the growing complexities, pinpoint what is important and marshal the facts in the light of its own logic. A typical illustration of the individual and collective attitude towards supply and the tendency to overrate its potential is the way people ‘fall in love’ with the hardware and the way it works, and then acquire and use far too much, regardless of what the user really needs or is capable of using. Those people have an unwarranted faith in the capacity of the system as a whole to sort itself out and to simplify things of its own accord.

□ **Technological reductionism:** we seem to be gradually losing sight of the fact that communications, far from being a compact, unified whole, are a wide and varied network consisting of a multiplicity of

media ranging from the simplest (such as the printed page) through media such as radio and television to the highly sophisticated (information and telecommunication technologies). Ways of ensuring that those media are integrated and synergetic have to be devised, improved and promoted. When we speak of technological innovation we tend to gloss over the great diversity of what in fact exists – and that diversity is growing. We overlook the pressing need for overall direction, which will help to create a single ‘control board’ so that optimum use can be made of the wealth and diversity of all these resources.

□ **The appeal of the computer:** computer science in particular is being assigned tasks which are undeniably beyond its potential. It is spoken of as the new *lingua franca*, as a new cultural foundation for man’s education, as potentially going beyond mere information-handling in all its forms, which will not only persist but multiply. Above all, there is a tendency to look on computer science as almost a philosophy: rather than being a means to an end, it is surreptitiously becoming an end in itself. In reality, the language of the computer is only of today’s many service sector languages, which should all be used to develop a ‘society of intangibles’ – the sort of society towards which we are moving.

□ **Loss of perspective in matters of innovation:** because the flow of information is so abundant and fragmented, a picture is conveyed in which all technical innovation



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... looking to the future in symbolic terms by restating the myth of technological innovation.

seems to be 'concertinaed' in the present, irrespective of whether it is already here and in use, barely in the design or testing stage or no more than a twinkle in its inventor's eye. In other words, there is a tendency to make no distinction between what exists and is in common use and what is still in the realms of the potential, for which the time scale is very diverse. As a result, everything is viewed as two-dimensional and without depth of field, as if it were a smoothly unrolling film being projected on the screen of everyday life, or as if all innovation were already available to everyone.

□ **The idea that disorder is a negative quality:** it is a basic, inherent concept that 'noise' and confusion are undesirable and should be tidied up as quickly as possible, perhaps using information and communication resources themselves for this purpose. The simple and the clear-cut exert a very strong attraction, especially as we are trained to think rationally and are placed under such great pressure by the complexities and confusions of real life. And yet we must learn to live in a fragmented society with more and more poles of reference, a society in which message is piled onto message and needs and expectations are segmented, a society that will have no single centre of gravity, a society of divergences in which points of temporary equilibrium will be dispersed.

This list of misconceptions shows that, in tackling the subject of technological inno-

vation, there is a need to raise the cultural threshold of society as a whole. We must be conscious of the simplified primary reaction mechanisms that tend to occur whenever we are faced with something new, a technological challenge or a 'strong', pervasive prospect. If we are to cope with radical change in our way of life we must be mentally prepared, able to reconcile the product we are offering with the concepts, attitudes, ways of living, expectations and needs of individuals and institutions today. All this must be done when events are occurring before our very eyes; indeed, we ourselves are protagonists caught up in those events and changes, faced day by day with contradictions that we must understand, interpret and resolve.

If we look at the ways in which new information technology interrelates with the training system, we can identify at least three weak points:

■ here again, the logic of supply prevails over the logic of demand, with producers still knowing little about the nature of demand and users' needs;

■ new ventures are springing up and practical experience is being accumulated, borne on a wave of enthusiasm. That enthusiasm, however, is not being properly channelled, nor is optimum use being made of the benefits through sound evaluation of actual achievements;

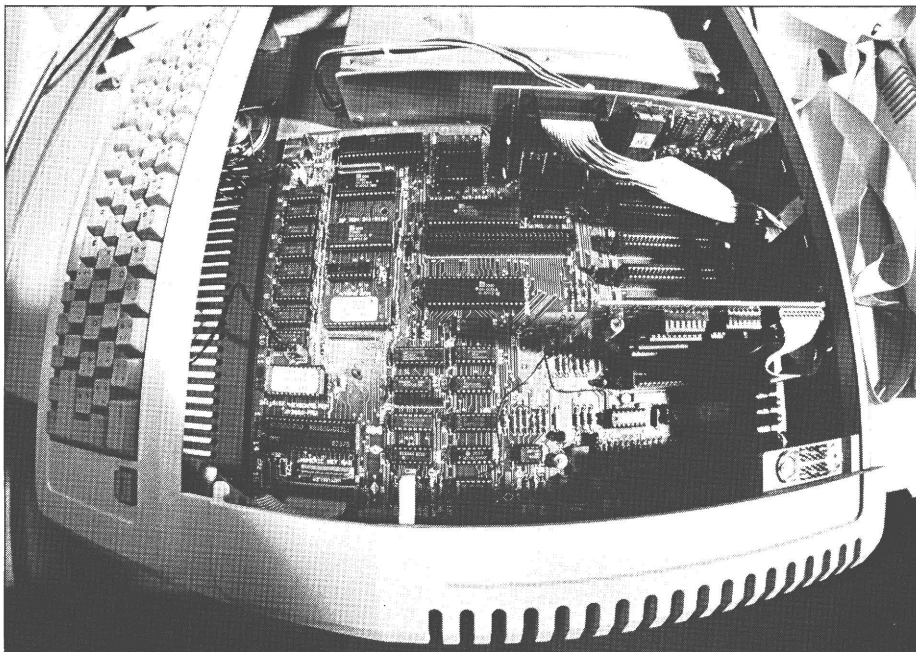
■ on the demand side, users still find it hard to gain a clear picture of the phase through which they are passing, a phase in which there are great cyclical changes and into which new information technology has to be integrated.

To summarize, once again it seems that two forces – the supply of resources and the social demand for those resources – are moving along parallel lines with little communication between them.

Trainers too will have to face up to a set of challenges if they are to integrate new information technology in an optimum way. The following are a few of the many possible approaches that could be adopted and the resources that could be used:

□ **Attention should be focused on the vital role of learning:** because of the growing emphasis on quality and the rapid and simultaneous spread of the many forms of training on offer in vocational training as in other fields of education, more and more attention is being paid to the learning process, whereas in the past the stress has traditionally been on teaching.

□ **The demand for training in all its diversity should be met and encouraged:** as the network of needs and expectations gradually extends, the response should be to provide educational itineraries mapped out for each individual to fit in with his work and social life. With more specific regard to computer science, we are and shall always be faced with widely differing standards of knowledge and needs. Most people are 'passengers on the computer train': in other words, they need only to learn the essentials, and products and processes have to be very much geared to them. Others may be defined as 'drivers on the computer train': they need to know more but do not necessarily want to go into fine detail regarding the hardware and software available. Finally, there are what we might call the 'computer train mechanics', who need far more detailed technical knowledge and want to learn about the mechanics of hardware and programs. Training for the first type of user will be easily the most common, for it is closely linked with developments in the service industry and service occupations. It should also be borne in mind that each new informatics job brings in its wake at least two other service sector-type jobs in order to channel the informatics product within the organization in an efficient and effective manner.



... the flow of such abundant and fragmented information conveys a picture of reality ...

VOLLMEIER

□ **An informatics environment should be created:** the promotion of links between technological culture and social culture in the training field will help to create a widespread informatics environment satisfying different users with differing needs as well as the same users in different environments. Creating an informatics environment for teaching means that the mentality and equipment must be available for choosing, assessing and combining the optimum teaching resources (both computerized and non-computerized), thus adding to the culture of the information society.

□ **The central role of planning in teaching should be recognized:** all measures in the field of new information technology as it applies to training will care for the ability and resources to ensure that the parties involved can plan the education process. The greater the planning ability at grassroots level, the easier it will be for practitioners to create, make use of and evaluate their own teaching aids. The weaker the planning logic at grassroots level, the more necessary it will be to provide structured products and indeed to promote the learning of planning logic through the new computerized resources.

□ **Service sector languages should be developed:** the spread of new information technology is only one feature of our economic and social development, but on its own it is and will be a foreign body which cannot easily be 'digested'. In some cases it may even in some ways disrupt development within its context. As we are bound to see a marked development in various service sector environments, it will be necessary to train new users in the languages of these environments so that the new information technologies are immersed in a sort of 'service bath'; this will help to render acceptable a resource that would otherwise be seen as cold, alien and not really in line with the end users' true needs.

□ **There should be a strategy on backing up the new training resources:** it should become a priority to design and test out methods of introducing new training tools. Thought should be given to the fair distribution of funds between the acquisition of tools and training, preparation and the promotion of awareness of practitioners directly and indirectly involved. We do not want to see a repeat of what happened with audiovisual aids; we do not want our school cupboards to be piled high with dusty computers.

Under recent plans for the introduction of informatics into the education and training system of various European countries, the ratio is at least 2:3 in favour of the latter. In practice, it should be borne in mind that this back-up strategy is not confined to operator training as such but extends to the production of actual 'research and development prototypes' applied to education and training.

Gaining recognition of a complex cycle

Preparing for a society with a growing information component implies paradoxically less concern with informatics and far more concern with the intrinsic nature of the current social process. We are faced by an economic and social change in which at least three major factors are evident in the various intervention sectors:

■ proliferation in both the supply of goods and services and the network of needs, expectations and attitudes on the demand side, to a point at which great surpluses are created and will have to be taken into account in economic, organizational and cultural spheres;

■ growing individualism, as evidenced by the desire for tailor-made goods and services, greater personal choice and more individual permutations of tangible and intangible consumption;

■ a move towards the intangible in society, with an increase in the production of services by comparison with tangible goods and also an increase in the proportion of symbolic representation for the purpose of social exchange within the various goods and services.

To gain recognition of the complex cycle before us, we must recognize that it is also reflected in education and training. It is now becoming established and is linked with certain changes in educational systems which may be summarized as follows:

■ a gradual shift away from quantitative growth within education and training and towards quality. The focus now tends to be on the results of learning rather than the service being provided and the organization of machines (teaching problems);

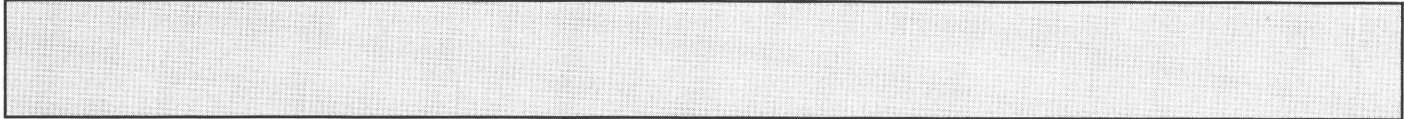
■ a shift away from what used to be, all things considered, a simple, compact demand for education and training to an

ever more segmented (and even fragmented) demand, to which there must be an increasingly personalized response; educational routes must be mapped out to suit the individual rather than being standardized;

■ education and training will no longer be supplied from a single source (mainly a public sector service), as the supply (of both subjects and resources) becomes far more varied, thus broadening the education system and creating a need for an efficient, widespread machinery for choice, permutation and personalization.

Gaining recognition for the complex cycle means more than merely taking note of these trends (both in general and in the more specific field of education): fresh thought should also be given to certain trends now taken for granted. It might be a good thing to shed certain concepts as if they were cages in which our minds are imprisoned. First of all we must rethink the *myth of speed*, the idea that everything will happen so fast as to be instantaneous. The challenges that seem to be created by this acceleration are hard for us to understand or meet. In fact, however, new technology may entail lengthy, sometimes extremely lengthy, timing. For example, when preparing teaching materials for use on the computer it can take 40 to 400 hours' work to create a one-hour lesson. Individuals are also very slow to familiarize themselves with new media and resources. Only after a prolonged period to allow users to become accustomed to those resources does their time-saving potential become apparent. In the teaching sphere, this is very important as it somewhat restricts the scope of new information technology and draws attention to the learning processes upstream.

The second consideration relates to the (fairly pervasive) prevalence of what we may define as 'strong and structuring' energies. The most striking example could be the data bank as it is known today. Information in itself is a 'light energy' and as such it could be classified as one of the flexible learning processes. The strength that is normally conferred on a 'data-banked' information structure, on the other hand, makes it an example of the rigidity and compactness that are hard to reconcile with personalized learning methods. It is seldom easy to convert 'banked' information into knowledge. This may be one of the greatest challenges facing us: can we make use of the



potential of today's and tomorrow's information by channelling it towards real knowledge that can be used to the full as part of the process of individual learning?

Finally, there is a third factor which should be reconsidered: the prevalence of the 'solution culture' over the 'problem culture'. We live in a world of growing complexity (faced by more and more day-to-day pro-

blems) in a world where one set of problems rapidly gives way to others. In the teaching sphere, it is increasingly rare for any pre-packaged solutions to be appropriate for the problems that arise. There is a growing need to view problems as in a state of continuous flux. In other words, what we need are people capable of 'keeping on their toes', people who are instructed on how to react rather than being given ready-made

solutions. What is needed in this world is to stimulate a taste for discovery and a desire to learn, for these are vital characteristics in a true 'knowledge society'. To achieve such a society, we must sort out the fragmented information and piece it together so that it points out significant routes. When that 'knowledge society' is reached, only one more gradual step is needed before we become an 'aware society'.

Hybrid skills

Different solutions to a problem

Duccio Guerra
Norbert Wollschläger

Industrial robots are being used in increasing numbers in production. The car industry is the pace-maker in this trend. As technology becomes more complex, job requirements grow. 'Traditional' skills are hardly enough for the maintenance and operation of highly productive and cost-intensive machinery. What are needed are 'hybrid skills', certain combinations of skills in various specialized fields. As there are no ready-made training courses for hybrid skills at the moment, firms must themselves try to train workers to handle new technologies when they are introduced. Taking a German and an Italian car manufacturer as examples, the article describes two different approaches to the problem.

The people who today decide whether a company should introduce new technologies also decide how many employees will be needed in the future and what skills they must have. Technological change will not benefit the company economically unless it not only solves the technical problems but also takes account of the impact on the workforce (Lederer/Buresch, 1980: 305). But ensuring that the skills needed for new technologies are available, and remain available, is often more difficult than solving financial, technical or organizational problems. Any new machine brings change to the workplace and calls for new knowledge and skills to operate it: the more extensive and complex the new production technology, the greater the impact on vocational training.

The problem

When the discussion turns to technological change, automation in the car industry

always springs to mind. For the general public this has been a common association of ideas since Chaplin's 'Modern Times'. And rightly so. With mass production, automation has spread to many sectors of industry, but it has never been so successful as where it first began.

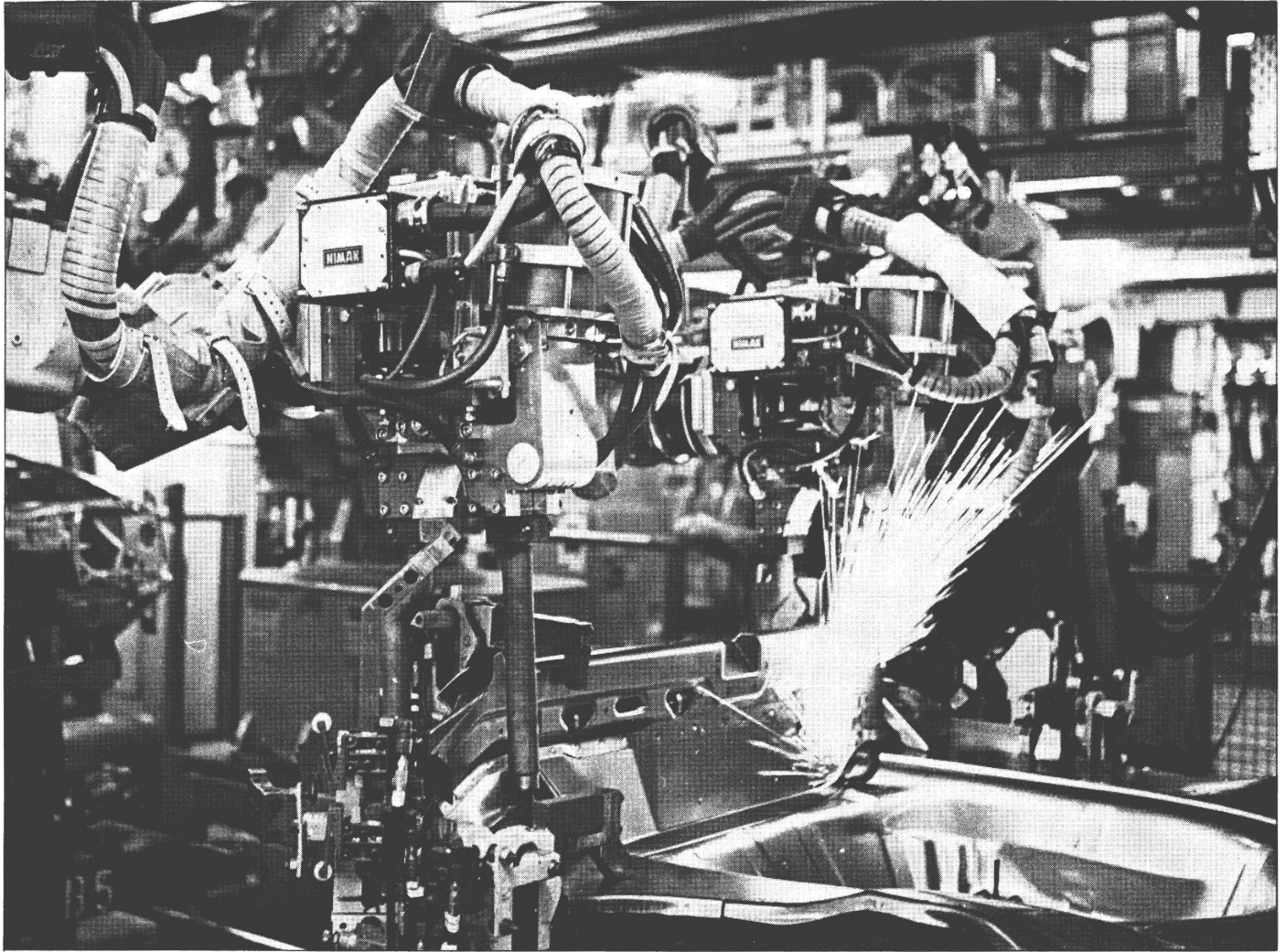
In recent years production methods, the organization of work and company policies in car production have changed radically. Latterly the major European car manufacturers have seen the market shrink with the revival of the American car industry and the sudden emergence of Japanese competitors. The margins in competition today are very narrow, and success depends on the ability to supply products of increasing technical sophistication at moderate prices. Because of unbridled international competition in virtually saturated markets, the car is probably one of the few products to have suffered little from the successive waves of inflation. To ensure commercial success, the manufacturers have been forced to invest heavily in the improvement and replacement of production technology and above all to optimize production structures in their plants. Robots have moved in, and many workers have moved out.

Anyone who has compared a conventional car assembly line, manned by a multitude of workers, with an automated line, where few jobs are still done by human beings, will certainly appreciate the fundamental change in skills associated with the introduction of robots. As the technology in highly automated areas of production becomes more complicated, job requirements increase. To meet these requirements, higher and, in some cases, new qualifications are needed. Such skills as manually loading, adjusting and unloading machines where few processes are automated are increasingly giving way to such tasks as controlling, monitoring and maintaining. The emphasis is shifting from physical to mental demands.

To minimize the down-time of very cost-intensive machinery, workers must have special skills. 'The machine operator should, for example, be able to eliminate minor faults himself as quickly as possible and not have to call in the maintenance staff immediately (time wasted), and where major faults or defects occur, he should help the maintenance people as best he can (it is 'his' machine)' (Krischok, 1984: 183). But 'traditional' skills are hardly enough for the maintenance of such machinery. The new technologies combine the principles of hydraulic, pneumatic and electrotechnical functions. Their control and programming systems are becoming more and more complex. The malfunctioning of a machine may be due to a mechanical, electrical or electronic defect. To trace the cause and eliminate the fault, specialists in the maintenance of electrical and metal parts must work together. Each should understand the language of the other's occupation and be familiar with the interface to ensure optimal cooperation in eliminating the fault (ibid.). Such combinations of skills from different areas of specialism (e.g. metal/electrical/data processing) are generally known as 'hybrid skills'*. Put simply, hybrid skills are nothing more than certain combinations of different abilities and skills. They are not acquired together but through training in different occupations.

In the past vocational training courses were so arranged that skills in only *one* occupation were taught (Beck/Brater/Daheim, 1980: 67 ff.). In terms of the economics of training, this was fully justified. A man learnt to be a fitter *or* an electrician, one or the other, but not both. At present there is no ready-made 'hybrid occupation' in which the various skill elements are already

* Hybrid (Lat.): mixed, from different origins, consisting of different components.



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... next to an automated line, where few jobs are still done by human beings ...

combined to form a qualification package – half mechanic, half electronics specialist.

However, with hybrid skills now becoming increasingly important for the routine maintenance, servicing, care and installation of production machinery and even influencing the economic success of the new technology, employers must have appropriate solutions at the ready. From the European standpoint, the question is how comparable companies are coping with this situation. What adjustment strategies – which may differ from one country to another – are firms pursuing to ensure their workforce is adequately trained to handle new production technologies when they are introduced? This question is dis-

cussed in the following, taking as examples a German and an Italian car manufacturer, BMW AG in Munich and Alfa Romeo in Arese, near Milan*.

The two companies

Founded at roughly the same time, both companies have been making cars for over 70 years. They compete in the same markets

* The authors wish to thank Alfa Romeo SpA, Arese, and BMW AG, Munich, and especially Mr G. Medusa, Mr C. Agazzi, Mr L. Schmid and Mr J. Buresch for their kind assistance, without which this article would not have been possible.

for the same kind of buyer. The cars they produce are almost identical in image, the BMW and Alfa Romeo marques standing for cars of high quality and performance. Products and buyers in both cases are so similar that an Alfa could be called an 'Italian BMW'. Clearly, the production methods used in Munich and Arese are also similar. At both plants considerable sums have been invested in recent years to improve and update the range of vehicles and engines and optimize production structures. New technologies (robots, NC/CNC machines, flexible production systems) have greatly increased automation at both BMW and Alfa Romeo. This technological change has affected the mechanic in Munich and his counterpart in Milan alike.

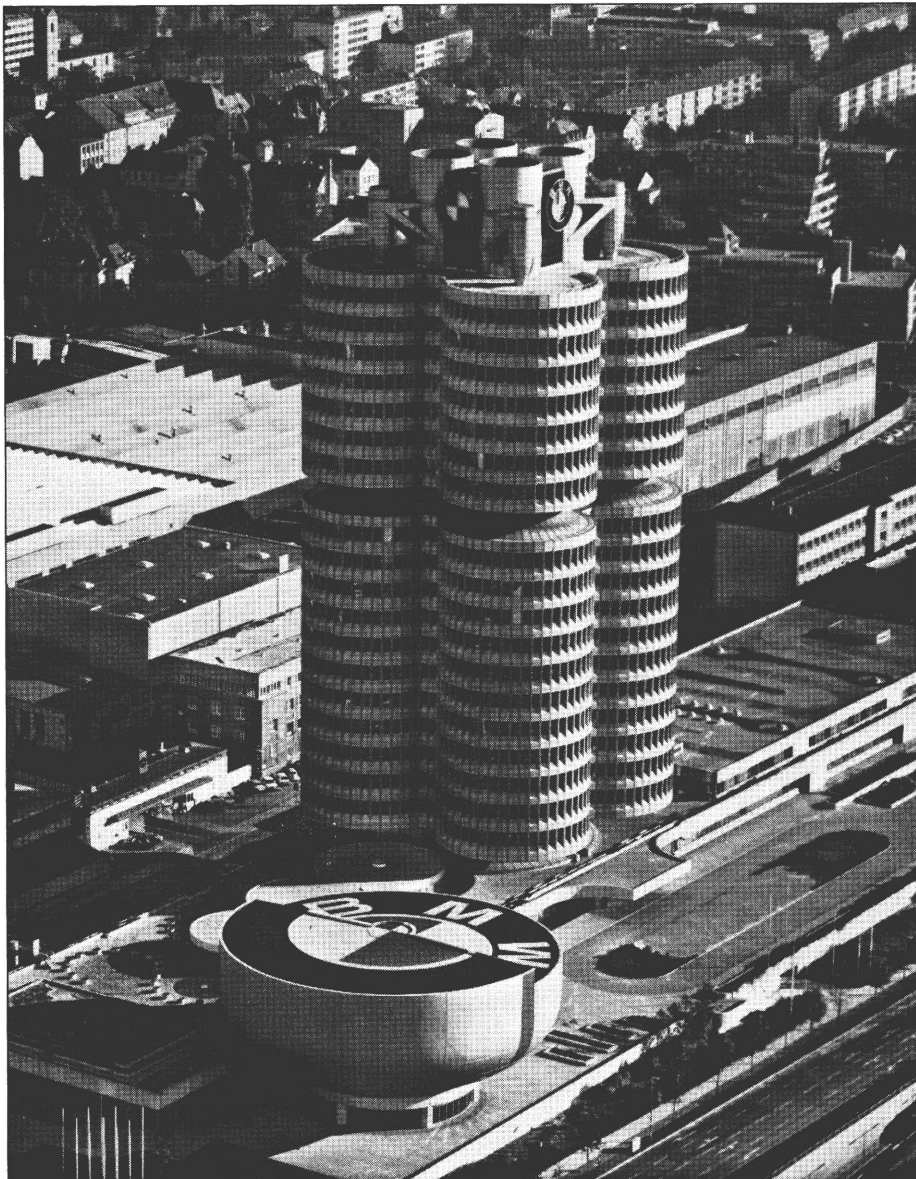


Even in 1979, when highly automated production began, it was clear that the new production structures would trigger off a chain of personnel policy decisions. Specifically, this meant a wage system adapted to the new production structure and the needs of the workers, a change in the management structure, suitable shopfloor career structures, and selective training measures for production workers and in initial vocational

training. It was assumed that 80 to 85 % of the skills required at BMW could be provided through training in a recognized occupation, the other 15 to 20 % consisting of skills which are needed because of the new technologies and changes in work structures but for which appropriate training courses do not yet exist (Buresch, 1983: 22 f.). There was no occupation that met the specific requirements arising from the planned technological change in production at BMW. Furthermore, stringent safety regulations forbid mechanics to work on electrical systems operating at more than 60 volts, this being strictly the reserve of qualified electricians.

It was thus clear that the planned technical changes at BMW would necessitate some

adjustment of vocational training courses to this trend. But there was no guarantee that this could be done in the Federal Republic of Germany, or at least not within a reasonable period. In-company initial vocational training is governed by Federal legislation. For each recognized occupation there is a training regulation, laying down minimum qualitative criteria which firms providing training are required to observe. The minimum standards must be such that they can be met by firms organized and structured in different ways. Consequently, training regulations do not take account of new technologies until they are at least in the process of being generally introduced in the majority of firms that provide training (Krischok, 1984: 183). Training regulations are not a suitable means of allowing for future technological change.



BMW

It takes a minimum of two to three years to design a course of initial training and draw up a training regulation to cover it. As the initial vocational training itself takes another three to four years, BMW would probably have had to wait until 1990 before a standard type of initial training (in an occupation yet to be created) produced the skills it needs (Buresch, 1983: 25). It was therefore decided to join two existing courses end to end and create a special set of BMW skills, those of the 'hybrid skilled worker'. The employers' association to which BMW belongs and the trade union representing its workers were, however, far from enthusiastic about this new type of skilled worker. To qualify for training as a hybrid skilled worker, an employee must have completed his initial vocational training as a fitter (2½ to 3 years), which is then followed by another two years of training in electrical engineering and electronics. These are separate courses of training, each with its own training contract and final examination. The 4½ to 5 years of training easily exceeds the time normally spent in in-company training and is almost as long as a university course in engineering. BMW looks for particularly suitable young people with an above-average level of performance, making its selection at the end of their (first) period of training as fitters. Financial incentives, a higher standing in the company and better career prospects motivate young people to follow up their initial training as fitters with a second period of training in electrical engineering and a third in electronics.

So far BMW has produced just under a dozen hybrid skilled workers. 'Hand-

picked' and highly skilled, they count among the elite of the maintenance personnel. Many of them have changed their blue collars for white. Anyone who has been motivated and trained in this way wants something better: he soon becomes an electronics expert. For the company the 'greatest threat' is the fluctuation of hybrid skilled workers. BMW's personnel planners would like to see them spending five to seven years in maintenance. They have mixed feelings about their apparent lack of success in this respect. Although equally disappointed and pleased with the careers of their hybrid skilled workers to date, they refuse to abandon the model and are looking to the future, hopeful that they can still succeed in teaching a full range of metallurgical and electrical/electronic skills in a single course of initial vocational training.

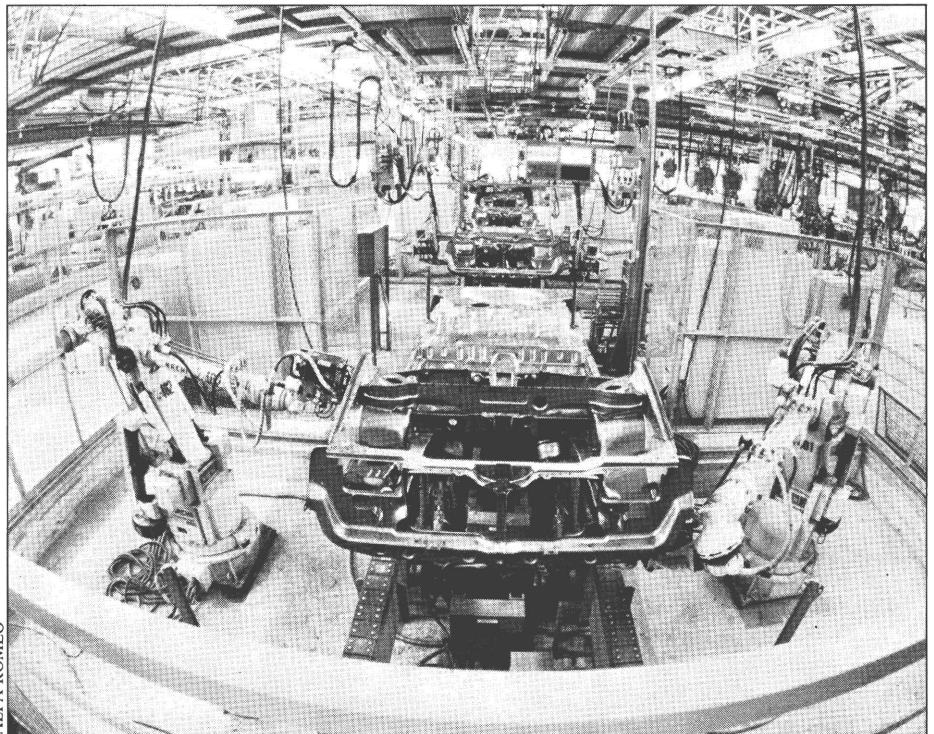


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What BMW's plant in Munich has already done, Alfa Romeo in Arese really has still to do. Automation will not begin in earnest until 1987, when the new assembly line for the Alfa 75 goes into operation. This explains the difference in the time scale adopted by the two companies in tackling the problem, the German related to the present, the Italian to the future.

When Alfa Romeo began restructuring some of its production processes, it encountered the same problems as its German competitor. The new production methods would require a set of coordinated skills in mechanics and electrical engineering/electronics, hybrid skills which the Italian training system could not readily provide either. A new term was coined, 'mechatronics', a cross between mechanics and electronics. But as it was intended to mean more than the mere combination of traditional skills, it was found unacceptable. Alfa Romeo now call the men who will be responsible for assembly line maintenance 'conduttore di impianti' (line operators). And they will have a higher level of basic theoretical knowledge than skilled workers, putting them roughly on a par with technicians. The Italians do not consider the hybrid skilled



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worker created by BMW suitable for their purposes. They are relying on the new technologies themselves to diagnose the causes of faults in the future. But all this is still a dream. Robots have already been installed at Alfa Romeo too. The Italians have temporarily solved the current, transitional problem by stepping up the continuing training of operating and

maintenance personnel: more electronics for mechanics and more mechanics for the electronics experts. For Alfa Romeo the problem is not so serious that a provisional solution of this kind is ruled out. When a machine stops, an alarm sounds and a 'group', which includes mechanics and electronics specialists, hurries to the scene to eliminate the fault collectively.

In Italy the amendment of the Vocational Training Act (Act No 845 of 21 December 1978) will result in the regionalization of initial vocational training, i.e. it will be assisted, monitored and, in some cases, provided by the regional authorities. Firms are also recognized as places of training. In theory, their activities should be covered by the regional vocational training plans. In practice, they not infrequently develop into independent forms of training, provided to meet the firm's own requirements. The vocational training system is, moreover, very fluid and not so rigid as in the Federal Republic. Despite certain legal constraints, there are areas of considerable flexibility in adjustment to specific needs. In brief, while training is a kind of second skin for Germans, it is a tailor-made suit for Italians (if a comparison is admissible).

Conclusion

Two similar companies are solving the same problem in very different ways and yet with the same result. BMW cannot invent any new qualifications of its own or adapt existing qualifications to the peculiarities of its new production technology, unlike Alfa Romeo. The Italian company's 'mechanic' skills (or whatever they may be called) are a kind of new suit, which the employee can wear outside the firm that made it without needing to worry about recognition. The hybrid skilled worker, on the other hand, would be 'naked' without formal training certificates, since a new, unrecognized qualification would be of no use to him outside BMW.

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Vocationalism in higher education:

A new and an old idea

Ian McNay,
Peter Raggatt



*In May 1985 the British government published a consultative document on higher education policy: **The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s**. The principal thrust of its proposals was that higher education should become more vocationally oriented. The methods proposed included shifting the balance of courses towards science, engineering and technology, linking higher education with industry and commerce through research and by developing closer connections with local industry and business. Similar policies are being encouraged in other European countries. This paper discusses some of the reasons for this development. It examines particular features of the British proposals, their weaknesses, and the emerging forms of control over higher education in the UK. It concludes by arguing that the main issue is not whether but how higher education will become more vocational.*

For 20 years higher education policy in the UK has been based on the principle established in the Robbins Report that 'courses of higher education should be available for all those qualified by ability and attainment and who wish to do so' (Robbins Report, 1963). Though some voices were raised against this largely on the grounds that standards would decline if higher education was significantly expanded ('more will mean worse'), the principle was supported and sustained by a broad pluralist consensus. The principle came under increasing pressure as resource constraints followed economic recession from the mid 1970s; the consensus finally cracked with the return of the conservative government in 1979.

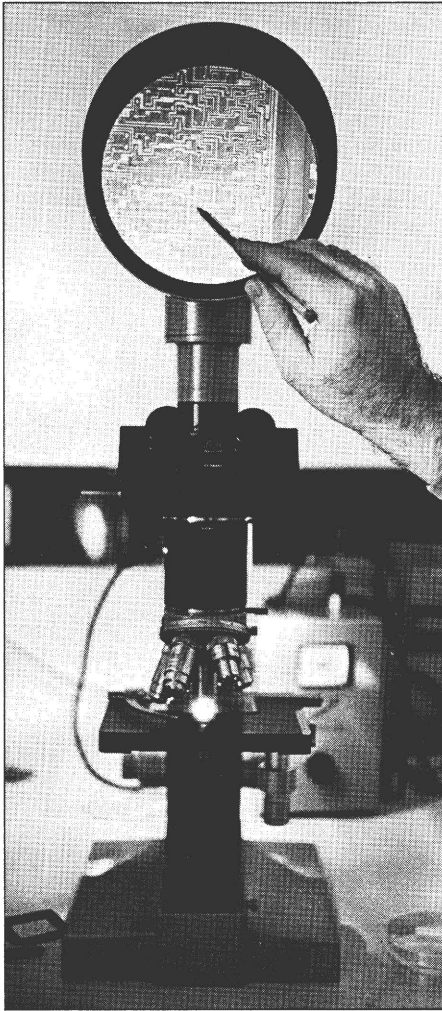
The election manifesto had stressed the need to reduce public expenditure. This obviously held implications for higher education funding but there were few other clues about how higher education would be affected. Since that time two other concerns have become prominent. The first is the strongly instrumentalist view which government takes of higher education. In this higher education is valued in terms of its contribution to national economic needs; performance is measured in terms of the output of qualified manpower. This has directly challenged the liberal-humanist

values of traditional academia and has led many within the system to see higher education policy as driven by, and made to serve, economic policy. The second concern is with the control and management of higher education and is not unconnected with instrumentalism. Indeed it can be argued that the changes in how higher education is controlled at the national level are necessary to institutionalize instrumental values.

Both concerns are evident in the latest and most detailed government proposals for higher education policy: *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s* (1985) which provides the main focus for this paper. It is, however, clear that higher education policy is on the agenda of many other countries in Western Europe. We therefore start with a brief review of the conditions that have precipitated this activity and helped to shape the proposals for reform.

European characteristics and responses

In the post-war period higher education has become heavily dependent on public funding. In recent years governments have sought to contain and then reduce public expenditure. This is in part a response to economic recession which has affected industrial countries since the mid 1970s but it also derives from the collapse of belief in Keynesian economic theory which dominated policy making in the 1960s. The several factors that have contributed to this



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decline have been outlined by Neave (1984) as the notion of the overloaded state, the crisis of the welfare state, and the legitimization crisis. The first raises the question of whether large central bureaucracies are effective mechanisms for delivering a wide range of social policies; the second relates to the doubts that have arisen as to whether the resources generated will be sufficient to provide for welfare provision premised on principles of universalism; the third notes what Halsey (1979) in respect of the UK has termed the 'rotting of public confidence in public institutions' which has major consequences for public regard and funding of education, raising, especially, questions of value for money. These factors shift interest from demand-led policies, in which funding is provided to service a demand, to expenditure-driven policies in which funding is limited and, in the contemporary context, is

increasingly in terms of the government's economic priorities. Expenditure-led policies are widespread though the phenomenon is not uniform.

A second feature is a pressure for greater instrumentalism. This is manifested in the shift towards science, technology and other areas which have potential value to industry and business and in a new stress on professional education. Governments have encouraged these developments in a number of ways which reflect the various forms of control over higher education. It may redistribute academic posts by funding early retirement in some disciplines and/or provide funds for posts in other disciplines which are deemed relevant. France, Italy and the UK illustrate different aspects of this strategy. In the UK the government has no direct power to affect the curriculum of a university but by providing funds for 'new blood' posts which universities are able to bid for it has established 488 posts in natural sciences, engineering and medicine in the two years 1983–85 plus 30 in biotechnology and 126 in information technology (Shattock, 1984). During the same period 103 'new blood' posts were established in arts. In the process of instrumentalizing higher education education in the traditional humanistic sense of *Bildung* is eroded and the relationship between education and occupation has become the key problem of university education' (Goldschmidt, 1984). This was perhaps a predictable consequence of mass higher education but universities were still unprepared for it and still resist it. Among the many curriculum questions that the development poses is the appropriate balance between theoretical study and periods of practice and, *igitur*, who should decide the balance. Research activity has similarly moved towards applied studies and research which is in the national interest. This is perhaps best illustrated in France where research has been separated from education and linked to the Ministry of Industry (Bienayme, 1984). Furthermore as public funding is reduced there is an increased need for researchers to accept contract research which by its nature tends to have a utilitarian purpose and is controlled from outside.

Also to be noted are changes in the balance and forms of control in higher education. In some instances these are a product of new laws, as in France, Greece and Spain; elsewhere existing legislation has been used for the same purpose. Their general effect has been to strengthen the power of the

state. This is achieved by, for example, introducing new agencies for monitoring and evaluating teaching and research and for planning and coordinating policy. Within this framework institutional autonomy and initiative has often been encouraged and changes which have given more power to the lower teaching ranks, as in France, Greece and Spain, may be seen as a mechanism which will facilitate curriculum innovations – within the guidelines. The UK has not had much recourse to legislation but has made increased use of regulations, circulars and ministerial directives issued with the authority of Parliament but without its foreknowledge.

Finance has been an additional and effective form of control. While Ministers of Finance have had a considerable influence on education policies Ministers of Education have had direct effects by funding curriculum developments and research which conforms with state priorities. In a number of countries governments have strongly encouraged closer links between universities and their local communities – a development that links instrumentalism and control and has previously been a characteristic only of the non-university sector.

A more intangible issue is the question of esteem, the value accorded higher education. This has several aspects. First, it reflects a move away from a neo-Keynesian consensus on social policy – higher education is no longer perceived as the sole channel for providing developed human resource potential for the economy. Higher education then moves down the pecking order of priorities for investment. Second, the balance of esteem within higher education changes with a blurring of distinctions between 'noble' (university) and 'ignoble' (non-university) institutions (Furth, 1982). This is reflected in shifts in student choices of where to study and in the allocation of government funds. In the UK the number of entrants to full-time study in the universities has fallen since 1982 and has been overtaken by those pursuing courses in other institutions. Additionally, there is a shift in the type of studies followed at university with job relevance being a factor affecting student choice. Third, in some countries there appears to be less demand for higher education among potential students.

Finally, we must note that the context in which higher education policy is being formulated is one in which the number of 18 year-olds will decline very sharply in almost all Western European countries in the next



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ten years (Greece, Ireland and Spain are exceptions). Countries with an unrestricted entry to higher education may welcome relief on overcrowded lecture halls and laboratories; in Britain, with selected entry, present policy anticipates university closures rather than extended access.

The British picture

The immediate policy context is set by a series of reports published in autumn 1984 and spring 1985. The government's main advisory bodies are the University Grants Committee (UGC), and the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education established by the conservative government in 1981 (NAB). In 1984 the UGC (1984) and NAB (1984) produced reports advising on future policy for their sectors and, notably, a joint statement of principles in the first major cooperation between previously competitive sectors. Subsequently in May 1985 the government issued its consultative document *'The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s'* and invited comment on its proposals.

The unifying theme of the government proposals was value for money defined in the Green Paper in terms of more efficient use of fewer resources, higher standards and greater 'relevance'. In the remainder of this article we will examine the implications of this tripartite message for three areas of policy: clients and access, corporate curriculum emphases and control. These three are interconnected: government wants more students to seek a relevant education and expects institutions to respond to such a demand; it wants institutions to offer more relevant courses in the expectation that students will respond. Neither is a new initiative but neither has succeeded in the past. Accordingly government is reviewing the ways in which it funds provision and regulates policy at the initiation stage and during implementation.

Access and the clients

The reduction in the levels of funding, a consequence of expenditure-led policy, effectively overturned the Robbins principle. The percentage of qualified leavers

from upper secondary education who did not continue to full-time higher education rose from 12 % in 1981–82 to 18.5 % in 1983–84 and in 1985 the higher education minister acknowledged that some 30 % of people gaining university entrance qualifications in 1984 did not enter full time higher education courses. The non-progression rates differ by sex. In the period covered above, (1981–84), the rates for men went from 5 % to 11 %, for women from 21 % to 26.5 %.

The second major action by government on access was to undermine the principle that 'courses of higher education should be available for *all* those who *are able to benefit from them* and who wish to do so' (our emphasis), which the UGC and the NAB had recommended in place of the Robbins principle, while seeming to support it. The Green Paper (DES, 1985) agreed that the reformulation 'provides an appropriate future guideline for determining access to higher education' but subject to 'important caveats'. The most important of these was that 'so long as taxpayers substantially finance higher education, the benefit has to be sufficient to justify the cost'. As the Green Paper effectively redefines the client

for higher education as the State and not the student (in contrast to the Robbins principle), 'benefit' is also narrowly conceived and the criterion will be used to exclude even those qualified by attainment if their chosen course is deemed 'inappropriate'. Even the demographic downturn, although allowing some 'modest increase in opportunity to enter university . . . should not lead to automatic admission to the universities, and particularly onto humanities courses of those who might be more likely to profit . . . from the vocational and technological courses offered by the public sector'.

The importance of education throughout life is acknowledged in the Green Paper which also encourages deferring entry to higher education. There are, however, no incentives to encourage these developments. For those in work the Green Paper blithely suggests that employers should pay the fees. Yet, at the same time it notes that British employers are much more reluctant to do this than their European counterparts, a fact that has been demonstrated again in a survey by the Manpower Services Commission (MSC, 1985). And if they study part-time they will get no help with fees, nor will they have any tax-relief. The impact of financial control will affect institutions' responses to the admission of mature students as indeed it has already. The commitment by NAB and the public sector colleges to the admission of mature students is not shared by the universities. Thus despite a 6 % increase in full-time students in higher education the numbers aged 25 or over fell by just under 1 000 (1 %) between 1981 and 1983 (CSO, 1985) as universities restricted entry to maintain unit costs. The drop was almost entirely among men, and their numbers also fell on part-time courses in all sectors except the Open University. The traditional universities see their first priority as being to school leavers. Indeed, one of the major technological universities – Aston in Birmingham – has announced a policy of concentrating exclusively on this market, eliminating all mature applicants, and those offering technical qualifications gained outside school.

The switch to vocationalism

Like many other European governments the British Government's hopes for economic recovery, some would say its rebirth, are pinned to high technology. Education policy is conceived wholly within this frame-

work, as the servant of economic policy, as the producer of scientists, engineers and technologists. The premise and policy in the Green Paper is explicit: 'The government believes that it is vital for our higher education to contribute more effectively to the improvement of the performance of the economy'. And 'The government is particularly concerned by the evidence that the societies of our competitors are producing, and plan in the future to produce more qualified scientists, engineers, technologists and technicians than the United Kingdom.'

Rejecting the free market philosophy that guides its economic policy it is determined to control the supply side of higher education:

' . . . the government believes it right to maintain a distinct emphasis on technological and directly vocational courses at all levels, leading to a switch in output in favour of graduates and diplomates with corresponding qualifications'.

It expects 'the proportion of arts places in higher education to shrink'. and perhaps most explicitly links the future of higher education to manpower development:

'The future health of higher education – and its funding from public and private sources – depends significantly upon its own success in generating the qualified manpower the country needs'.

Moreover the government is categorical that research activity should be more closely linked with industry, commerce and the public services, and that more funding should come from private sources, i. e. contracted research.

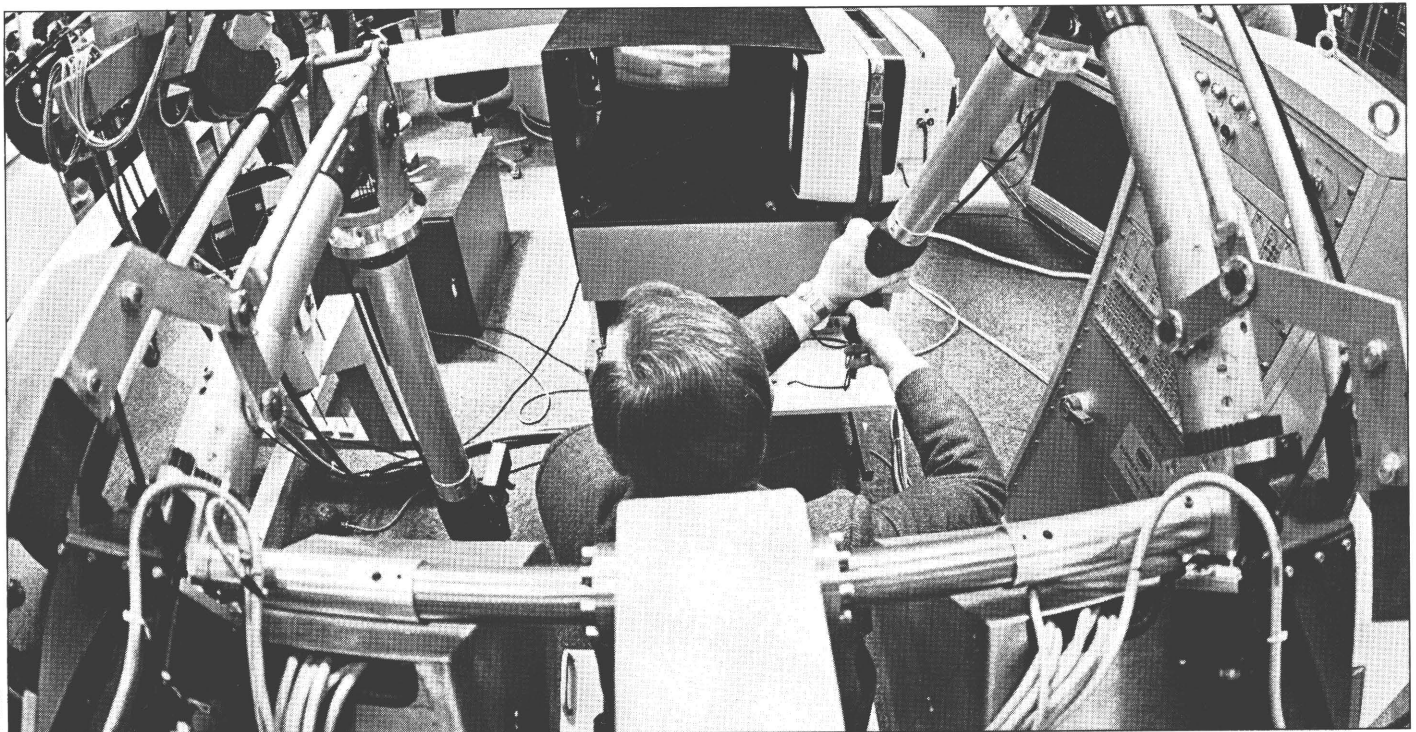
The message of the Green Paper is not new. Over a century ago the Samuelson Commission was set up because of widespread concern about the inability of industry to compete with European rivals and concluded in 1984 that 'no portion of the national expenditure on education is of greater importance than that employed in the scientific culture of the leaders of industry' (Samuelson, 1884).

Similar reports and government policy papers have appeared at intervals throughout this century and the tone of the recent Green Paper may reflect exasperation at the failure of the universities to respond. One post-Robbins chairman of the UGC reflecting on the period admitted to a sleight of hand: 'the government asked for more scientists and technologists. What they got was more scientists' (Personal communica-

tion). The bias appeared again in 1981 when the technological universities were hit hardest by the cuts selectively distributed by the UGC. Subsequently the biggest fall in new home entrants to university degrees was in engineering and science – 870 (3 %); in arts and social studies it was only 80 (less than 0.5 %) (UCCA, 1985).

The failure is both an old and a new one. As d'Iribarne (1983) pointed out to a Cedefop conference it was in the mid-19th century that the concept of 'a technological culture, laying the foundations for vocational education' was first mooted. But in England, higher education was dominated by a social land-owning elite which despised anything tainted with 'trade' and clung to a classical base while the French and Germans developed engineering and economics as applied sciences. This is reflected in the backgrounds of top managers and the status of engineers. The British Government accuses education of anti-business snobbery, but a counter accusation can be made against industry and commerce where the proportion of graduate managers is low. Those that have degrees are more likely to have them in the liberal arts compared to France and West Germany where there is a high proportion of graduates, with most coming from a background in engineering or business economics. There is also a difference in the occupational prestige of engineering – 'very high' in France, 'high' in West Germany and 'low' in Britain (Swords-Ishwood, 1979). This is unfair at least to Scotland which has a long tradition of vocational education on a broad base and whose folk heroes include Telfer, Watt and Macadam – engineers all. What this underlines is that there is a broad social dimension to the problem of the 'switch' to vocationalism.

Other educational issues separate Britain (or England) from other European countries. First, the narrowness of upper secondary and university education. It is illustrated by a remark by a senior manager of a computer company at a recent seminar: 'our graduate job applicants are becoming better and better qualified, and less and less competent'. His complaint was about lack of the competitive nature of education and the narrowness of single discipline degrees which reduce skills of synthesis from a broad experience. This relates to the second defect levelled at British universities' engineering – that it is top theoretical and lacks the German commitment to breadth, theory and practice – the concept of *Technik*. The



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... 'our graduate job applicants are becoming better and better qualified, and less and less competent'.

third problem is one of elitism. English universities have remained elite and apart and Scottish universities have become so under the Anglo-centric UGC. The whole higher education system is still highly selective. Perhaps this could be overcome by reversion to the old Scots model of a more broad-based secondary education and more open access rather than the severe restrictions on student numbers enhancing elitism which is current policy for the future. It seems unlikely. What is intended is, rather, a change in control mechanisms.

Control of policy

The Labour Government 1964–70 shied away from reforming the universities. Instead they left them in an 'academic reservation' and developed an alternative sector – the Polytechnic – which were to be committed to vocational and professional courses, part-time students, local communities – all the things the universities had neglected. They were to be 'socially responsive' and generally accountable at local level to elected councils in their role as local education authorities with academic validation by a national body. Policy in this non-university sector has been coordinated from 1982 through the NAB whose major

committee is chaired by a central government minister and its total funding level set by central government. The locus of control is clear.

Student numbers in this sector now exceed those in the universities. There is a far greater emphasis on applied studies courses, links with local industry and commerce – a matter of 'prime importance' for institutions of higher education according to the Green Paper – and there is high quality applied research. It seems probable that these institutions will gain in prestige in government eyes, as they slowly have done with students. The polytechnics then fulfil many of the characteristics advocated in the Green Paper. Vocationalism is a virtue rather than a negative value and polytechnics have been 'rewarded' with a greater measure of academic self-determination.

The universities, however, are resistant to vocationalism. They have not yet accepted that mass higher education is inevitably accompanied by an increased involvement in and responsibility for occupational training. A corollary of this, as Goldschmidt (1984) suggests, is that the boundary with the non-university sector becomes more permeable; the university becomes increasingly integrated into post-secondary education. The universities are hugely dependent

on government funding. If they do not move in the direction indicated by government two possibilities exist: their funding will be further reduced and polytechnics will be the beneficiaries or government will be more directive. External accreditation is one mechanism that might be used to limit university autonomy. It already exists for teacher education. It could follow for other professional areas. This would formalize the proposition in the Green Paper that employers should advise on the 'design and content of higher education courses directly relevant to jobs'.

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How should a vocational policy linked with regional development be planned?

Guy le Boterf

Regional and local authorities are being given more and more responsibility for vocational training. This article suggests a set of working hypotheses and methodological guidelines for the engineering of vocational training projects that reflect regional development problems and needs, as a contribution towards the formulation of those new models for analysis and decision-making called for by the agents for development in the community.

A contribution to the formulation of a methodology

The uncertainties of the economic environment, a growing desire on the part of the agencies concerned (employers, local authorities, etc.) to be able to respond quickly to contingencies and grasp opportunities at the right moment, as well as the generally acknowledged need for training measures to be closely linked with economic and social projects: all these are important factors in the quest for ways of further decentralizing decisions on vocational training. Both in countries with a tradition of decentralization (such as Germany, Great Britain and Italy) and in countries where decision-making has hitherto been highly centralized but where there may now be a discernible reversal in this trend (as in France), training and apprenticeship on an unprecedented scale are vital because of the changeability of the international economic situation and the uncertainties inherent in that situation.

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In order to meet their obligations, past and future, in matters of vocational training, regional and local authorities must be able to look to new models for analysis and action. Those models will not be evolved unless a considerable effort goes into planning and research.

If the decisions reached by these authorities are to be soundly based and interlinked as part of a single coherent policy, the authorities must:

- have replies to general questions relating to regional training and apprenticeship needs;
- pinpoint the specific contribution they themselves could and should be making towards satisfying those needs.

The purpose of this article is to suggest a set of working hypotheses and methodological guidelines for the formulation of vocational training projects linked with regional development problems and needs.

The questions to be answered

Before regional training needs can be identified, replies should be obtained to the following questions:

- *In which sectors of the economy is a special training effort called for? What are the key sectors for the region's economic growth?*
- *What type of job creation projects would best match the skills available among the region's working population? How could those skills best be harnessed?*
- *Which levels of training should be given preference? Should the stress be on different levels of training depending on the economic sector?*
- *Are certain forms of training common to different sectors?*

■ *Which training measures would best promote the formulation of economic projects and the creation of new enterprise?*

■ *What can be done to promote the rational allocation of existing training resources?*

■ *Do skills exist in the region that match the demand now or in the near future, or are needed in the light of economic projects or current technological change?*

■ *What can be done to whet the appetite for vocational training in the region, given that it is a source of future wealth?*

■ *Looking at existing training, which schemes should be reinforced? What new schemes should be encouraged?*

■ *What action should be taken in view of developments in basic and continuing training systems?*

■ *What short, medium and long-term goals should be set for regional training policy?*

■ *What priorities should be defined? What decision-making criteria should be set? What strategic options should be chosen? Which decisions might have a demultiplying effect?*

These are difficult questions and, since decentralization is so recent, it is hard to draw conclusions from past experience. In this article, we shall confine ourselves to an exploratory approach, starting with a few working hypotheses and referring to a few methodological guidelines which should be tested and developed in the light of experience.

Some working hypotheses

- The following points should be borne in mind in considering the problems of region-

al development, especially the relationships between employment and training, in all their complexity:

■ *The multiplicity of parties and variables involved* creates a complex network of interactions in which various types of strategy and rationale converge and in which the effects of decisions are to an extent unpredictable.

■ *The heterogeneity of regional economies.* The impact of technological change, qualifications, strategies and relative progress differs depending on the economic sector (types of farming, branches of industry, etc.), the parties involved (large companies, small business, craft enterprise, service firms, etc.), manpower categories (levels of skill) and legal status (partnerships, nationalized enterprise, private firms, etc.). Investment and employment decisions and the ensuing recruitment and training requirements are based on those factors and follow their own logic; one party's solution is unlikely to be the right solution for another. Each region has its own special features, and a specific model of development should be sought for each one. This diversification of models of regional development is a national requirement.

■ *Trends in workforce mobility are reflected in behaviour patterns* that differ from one occupational category to the next: middle management, for example, moves readily from one region to another, whereas

blue-collar and clerical workers tend to move within a more limited geographical area.

■ *Local socio-economic situations are not closed systems.* Their nature and evolution are greatly influenced by their relationships at regional, national and even international levels. A company that is a subsidiary in a large group, for example, has to abide by decisions taken at national level; the nature and impact of a new technology depend on outside sources; the size of a market and the constraints imposed on it are not bounded by the local horizon; the centres where economic and financial decisions are reached are often located elsewhere; regions or job catchment areas exercise reciprocal influence; employers' associations and trade unions are part of nationwide structures; and local development is naturally affected by the overall economic situation.

■ *The very complexity of concepts of qualifications.* A qualification used to be defined in relatively simple terms: the ability to carry out clear-cut tasks in a standardized manner in a given work station as part of a specific job regardless of the environment. Now, however, a qualification is seen as a corpus of knowledge and skills that is used to understand and master an 'occupational situation' and to relate that situation to its environment and the production process as a whole. There is a social, technical and economic dimension to a vocational

qualification, which is no longer confined to slotting into a given work station. It includes the ability to participate in change in a work situation. With today's technological and social changes, a Tayloristic or Ford-type approach to the organization of labour is no longer valid; there is a move towards greater scope for initiative and better use of existing human resources.

Occupational qualifications are not acquired solely by going through formal education and training channels but also through the process of socialization in the environment to which one belongs. They are obtained in real-life work, through the network of one's relationships and from the exchange of information. Training is only one of many factors influencing the acquisition, retention and development of qualifications.

The theory of work as envisaged in process books and by methods specialists takes only partial account of work as it is done in real life by operators or executives. Technology transfer in developing countries has shed clearer light on qualifications, showing that down-to-earth know-how and a broad ability to use one's own initiative are absolutely vital to the production process. Job skills of this kind are often under-rated and are not featured in job planning and training models.

Finally, qualifications should not be viewed in purely individual terms. To a growing extent job skills are 'collective' and acquired at group level (workshops, services, projects, etc.) where, due to the influence of technological change, there is a changing pattern of relationships between the traditional phases of planning, setting up, performance, inspection and maintenance. The group plays a vital role in the transmission and adjustment of knowledge and expertise at work and in maintaining skills even though individual members may leave and other people may be brought in.

■ *There is no rigid equation between training and employment.* No one kind of training exactly matches a certain kind of job, and one kind of training may well lead to several different jobs. The age of training/job balances is now over. They 'incur a risk that has not been averted in many regional studies, despite the undeniable value of such surveys. By relating the number of people emerging from training courses to the numbers finding jobs, they suggest that there can be an ideal situation in which the number of people trained can be exactly



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... middle management, for example, moves readily from one region to another whereas blue-collar and clerical workers tend to move within a more limited geographical area.

equated with the number obtaining employment.

Job/training balances are based on an assumption that there can be steady progress from training to job experience and then to permanent employment²¹.

Current research has revealed the vital need to look rather to the qualitative relationships between job skills and work systems that are equipped to use all the skills being developed in the population by modern training².

As work systems become more complex, standards of social and occupational qualifications and general education must be raised ever higher. The specific need for widespread technical literacy at every level of qualification and employment should not be under-estimated.

□ Because the training problems linked with regional development are so complex, a more enlightened approach is needed. It should not be confined to a quantitative, mechanistic analysis or a statistical attempt to achieve a close match between the flow of trained people and the list of jobs to be filled.

‘The aim of a regional analysis of training needs should be to *reduce uncertainty* rather than predict facts and figures. In a context in which there are so many contingencies,

forecasting can no longer be seen in its traditional sense of a description of the future couched in figures. A review of past trends may often supply more detailed information, and a very detailed description of the current situation may sometimes be preferable to too vague and generic a description of a trend. In either case, the choice of method will depend on the end objective, in other words to reduce uncertainty as to trends in the medium-term future to the extent feasible.²³ The aim is to formulate and implement a probabilistic approach in order to:

- *identify tendencies and changes;*
- *discern the constraints within which action is feasible;*
- *understand the logic of change or developments in the regional economy;*
- *identify the various protagonists in the economy and their strategies;*
- *identify key points and strategic variables with a view to channelling training systems or measures.*

An approach of this kind may help to state the problem of training in global terms and relate it to the working population in a region: what qualifications are needed in creating and backing up new schemes and new models of development? What economic projects, what new job creation

schemes will help to make optimum use of existing qualifications?

□ Given the present circumstances, regional development will not take place merely because the authorities – national or regional – would like it to happen. It will come about only if there is a combination and a convergence of a twofold planning approach: from the top downward, which in many cases will be sectoral, and from the bottom upward generated by grassroots initiative, guided rather by local geographical and inter-sector considerations.

Regional and local development will be generated only by means of momentum-imparting projects likely to mobilize agencies in the local economy (companies, service firms, associations, consular bodies, local authorities, etc.). The economic crisis and the trauma caused to communities suffering from unemployment in regions dependent on a single, declining industry point up the need for an alternative model of growth. Training designed to produce narrow specialists or people equipped to do only one specific job has helped to create a cultural pattern of dependence that conflicts with the current need for the active and broad-ranging involvement of human resources in the search for solutions. Regional economic development calls for protagonists at every level who are capable of



Regional and local development will be generated only by means of momentum-imparting projects likely to mobilize agencies in the local economy

generating schemes, taking the initiative, networking, identifying and grasping opportunities; in a word, what is needed is entrepreneurialism. Training has an active role to play in generating and boosting this type of dynamic energy.

With this in mind, it is vital to involve local agencies in the search for information on the links between economic development, qualifications and training, and in publicizing the findings. The action taken by these agencies will be all the more pertinent if they have the information they need. A participatory approach to development problems and development-related training is needed not for ideological reasons but because it is more economically effective. No doubt we should go further in this direction if we are to avoid the 'effects of social absenteeism'; although it is hard to measure the economic cost of such absenteeism precisely, it would impose a heavy burden.

Training at regional level is also a way of involving the protagonists in the definition of goals for development projects.

Methodological guidelines

Having outlined some working hypotheses we can go on to suggest a number of *methodological guidelines*. The aim is to define and select the *criteria* that should be taken into account in choosing, directing and supporting training measures and resources that will best contribute to renewed regional economic development.

When planning for continuing training measures and the subsidizing of apprenticeship, the time scale at which we should be looking is about five to ten years ahead. Schemes for upgrading skills or retraining for new skills should be designed to achieve fast results, whereas vocational training for those entering the working world should be a longer term matter.

The guidelines are as follows:

- Understand the changing pattern of local development**, more specifically:
 - discern trends in local development, with an analytical breakdown of those trends by sector and existing economic units;
 - evaluate the potential of the region's resources;
 - relate the region to other regions and the country as a whole;



Understand the changing pattern of local development.

- analyse regional resources and constraints by comparison with priorities set out in formal national planning;

- identify the economic schemes that need to be supported by training;

- identify the main parties and partners involved in the development of occupational and social qualifications in the region's population;

- define the situation on the labour market;

- distinguish between 'momentum-generating' sectors and 'problem' or declining sectors;

- quantify the need for jobs;

- describe the main existing 'streams' and their strengths and weaknesses.

- Know the facts about the working population**, i.e.

- its size, structure, evolution and turnover;

- unemployment and jobseekers;

- movements on the labour market;

- factors affecting the labour market such as migration, the inflow of young people into the working world and job mobility;

- the location of employment.

- Know the facts about the acquisition of job skills**, i.e.

- analyse what happens to people after their basic training, apprenticeship and further training;

- chart the flow of funds for training and apprenticeship measures;

- find out about the qualifications and skills of the working population in general, not just the groups emerging from school and training courses;

- build up a picture of the distribution of qualifications and skills;

- determine which population groups are being reached or are untouched by the traditional training channels;

- identify the main recruitment trends;

- find out about training establishments and their trainees.

By cross-referencing all this diversity of information (and only the main types are mentioned in this article), criteria can be defined for use by local authorities and agencies as guidance in subsidizing vocational training and apprenticeship. The criteria would relate to local authority policy on such matters as:

- Joint efforts to support the least advantaged social groups and place them on a more competitive footing;

- *What remedial action should be subsidized? At which level of skills? At which level of the economy?*

- *What measures should be undertaken jointly with the basic training system?*

- Support for incentivating and backing up joint local and regional developments:

■ Are training/development measures needed?

■ What type of training/development measures should be encouraged and supported?

■ To what type of economic schemes should they correspond?

■ General education and training:

■ What general educational background do population groups need in order to acquire occupational and social skills?

■ What type of general training measures deserve priority support?

■ To which measures in the field of scientific and technical training should support be given?

■ Choice of sectors to which priority should be given through the provision of appropriate training:

■ What training should be provided as a priority in agriculture, industry, transport,

craft industry, finance, commerce and the service industry in general?

■ Training content and methods:

■ In training for the various sectors producing goods and services, which subjects should be given priority?

■ What are the best teaching methods for imparting those subjects and which should be encouraged?

■ Levels of qualification:

■ In each individual sector, to what levels of skill should preference be given?

■ Does the priority in matters of skill levels differ from one sector to another? Is there any one priority for the regional economy as a whole?

In coming to the end of this very short article, we realize how great are the problems to be solved and, by comparison, how summary are the proposals we have made. Ours is no more than a contribution towards the methodological research whose

urgency and priority are becoming clearly evident now that the agencies within the community, such as regional and local authorities, are faced with new responsibilities in matters of vocational and continuing training. Fresh analytical and decision-making models must be devised. The engineering of regional development-linked training will probably be one of the guiding forces in research and action by training practitioners.

Notes

¹ G. DUCRAY: 'Systèmes de travail et évolution de l'emploi' ['work systems and the evolution of employment'] in 'L'évolution des systèmes de travail dans l'économie moderne' ['The evolution of work systems in the modern economy'], CEREQ (Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Qualifications), CNRS (Centre National de Recherche Scientifique), 1981.

² G. DUCRAY, op. cit.

³ M. DE VIRVILLE, 'L'analyse spatiale des rapports entre formation et emploi' ['Spatial analysis of the relationships between training and employment'], in *Droit Social*, No 2, February 1979.

The improvement of continuing vocational training and adult education

Challenges and possible solutions

Burkart Sellin

The comparative studies which Cedefop has so far made of continuing training and adult education in the Member States of the European Community paint a clear picture of the situation in the early 1980s. For the most part, however, it is not a very flattering picture*:

■ Despite various promising beginnings in some Member States, the structure of continuing training still seems to lack the cohesion that is required if it is to react promptly and adequately to the different interests and needs of the various target groups, i.e. the cohesion that should exist between the continuing training provided by public and private bodies;

■ although provision is made everywhere in legislation, collective agreements and social welfare law for the social and material facilities needed to enable older workers to take part in continuing training, they do not appear equal to the task of contending with the process of structural change in the labour market and affording protection through investment in the continuing training of the workers affected;

■ the sections of the population most seriously threatened by unemployment, such as women, foreigners and older workers with comparatively few or obsolete skills, are least assured of the right and access to continuing training; the content and structures of continuing training are hardly attuned to their needs or their experience of work and life;

■ continuing training is all too frequently seen as short-term adjustment to new circumstances, methods of organizing work, technologies and jobs rather than as a more

general investment in people with a view to their participating actively in society and working life, this enabling them to influence the abovementioned process of change, explore new areas of work and become involved in related democratic decision-making processes.

The aim of continuing education and training, like any other form of training, is to give people a good chance to develop, not simply to enable them to adjust to changing conditions. It is also designed to free them from forces they do not understand, from constraints or irrational dependence. These goals should also be pursued in continuing (vocational) training that is geared to teaching, extending or updating skills used in working life, since the acquisition of occupational skills is becoming increasingly inseparable from the teaching of general and social competence. The line drawn between intellectual and physical work that was partly the outcome of the industrial division of labour, but has always been artificial, is called in question by recent developments in the industrial production process and the service sector.

A more comprehensive form of continuing training of this kind is, however, still largely denied the majority of the population and most workers. Certain categories – women, foreign workers, the unskilled and skilled wage- and salary-earners whose jobs have been de-skilled in the work process, by assembly-line work and mindless and repetitive tasks, for example – hardly ever benefit from continuing training. After all, with the growing capital-intensity of their jobs, whether in industry or commerce, their employer's consequent insistence on loyalty to the firm and the rise in labour-intensity, there is little chance of their con-

tinuing their training outside the firm or at inter-company level however hard they may try. In many cases, they are offered continuing training or retraining only when they are about to lose or have already lost their jobs.

Periods of high unemployment are also accompanied by a reduction in in-company continuing training, since employers have a large potential workforce to choose from. At the same time, the further training and retraining facilities offered by the employment authorities are often cut back, because more unemployment benefit and assistance has to be paid out. Public budgets, too,



Periods of high unemployment are also accompanied by a reduction in in-company continuing training . . .

* See also the bibliography on page 32.

frequently become restrictive, attaching more importance to consolidation than to spending public money on a forward-looking labour market policy – even though, objectively, public continuing training bodies should be adopting an anticyclical approach. In these circumstances, continuing training is seldom geared, quantitatively or qualitatively, to the interests of the working population or to economic and social regeneration, which can only be achieved with the support of those directly concerned, not against their will.

Continuing training thus faces a threefold challenge:

■ The social and material conditions should be created to enable adult employees, women and foreign workers, especially those who did not obtain a qualification recognized socially and in the labour market during their initial training, to participate in a kind of training in or outside the firm that takes account of their interests and needs. Special industry-wide collective agreements, leave arrangements for a certain percentage of the workers in a firm, sector or region and appropriate agreements at company level might prove suitable for this purpose. Such arrangements might also be included in the debate on work time along with the reduction of the working week and early retirement.

■ Continuing training in- and outside companies and at inter-company level should be greatly expanded and its quality improved to take account of participants' interests and needs. The structures of continuing training provided by public and private bodies and by trade union and employers' organizations should be more closely coordinated.

■ Technical schools and colleges, i.e. formal secondary and university education, should open their doors wider to the further training of workers; new methods of linking work and learning might be devised (cf. the debate in the Community on alternance training incorporating continuing training, Cedefop, 1984).

Given a comprehensive structure of this kind and improved social and material conditions, without which the effective participation and motivation of hitherto largely untouched sections of the population will be impossible, gainful and social activity might eventually result in a redefinition of paid work, in which 'unemployment' and 'full employment' no longer have a place in the traditional sense, since the continuing training of workers would be regarded as a

component part of 'work' on the grounds that it requires a considerable effort on the part of older workers and should be remunerated accordingly. Certain legislative provisions and tax incentives would, of course, be needed.

In this way the unemployment insurance funds and parts of the social insurance system might eventually be converted into a joint initial and continuing training fund to enable appropriate training opportunities to be developed and made available. Tax incentives should be offered to firms and individual workers so that it is in both their interests for workers to participate in continuing training. Participants should also have more say in continuing training schemes to ensure that their interests and needs are considered. It is particularly important to prevent participation in continuing training from being seen as a kind of sanction or resulting in a new form of marginalization for certain sections of the population. Public assistance and the nature and scale of funding must, however, be flexible enough to cater for the different target groups. The expenses of some groups will have to be met in full because of their limited resources, others will be required to make a contribution, for which tax incentives should be provided. There are enough unemployed teachers and university graduates and also unemployed workers with practical experience for a cohesive continuing training structure of this kind to be made available.

A greater say in in-company continuing training should thus be joined by a funding arrangement which allows both for continuing training organized by the firm, with due account taken of the worker's interests, and for government assistance that gives the worker the option of participating in continuing training outside the firm or at inter-company level. As a matter of urgency and irrespective of the financing question, arrangements should also be made to enable workers to take part in fairly long periods of continuing training while retaining the right to return to their old jobs.

The problems young people encounter when making the transition from school to working life appear to be closely linked, *inter alia*, to the problems connected with the continuing training of adults. The many unskilled jobs still done by adults would be very suitable for young people without any practical experience. At present, many of these jobs are blocked because the older workers do not have alternative career prospects. Appropriate continuing training could provide such alternatives for these workers without their having to worry about their jobs and livelihood. For their part, young people could initially take on simple work even if they had relatively good school-leaving certificates, in the knowledge that they would not be tied to such jobs for life. The organization of work could thus be made more flexible to take greater account of individual interests and would not be excessively attuned to the



The problems young people encounter when making the transition from school to working life.

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firm's interest in making its workforce more flexible with a view to improving productivity and competitiveness but also to the individual's interest in bettering himself, which would benefit the economy as a whole. New ways of linking part-time work, short-time work or job-sharing with continuing training would be possible if the time gained by reducing working hours could be used meaningfully for the more comprehensive training of the individual. Not only women and weaker groups in the labour market would be interested in such work-time arrangements. In other words, the segmentation of the labour market into a stable core area and peripheral areas could be reduced or prevented: workers who want advancement and tend to be professionally oriented could also achieve self-realization both in and outside the firm.

The Member States, the two sides of industry and, not least, the Commission of the European Communities have recognized the problem. New initiatives are being launched to increase awareness and to explore new avenues for action. Having conducted comparative studies for a number of years and organized several conferences, Cedefop can perhaps help to ensure a fresh start is made on a social dialogue between employees' and employers' organizations and relevant government agencies at all levels, local, regional, national and Community-wide, so that the challenges outlined may be accepted and appropriate solutions devised. For its part, the Commission plans to submit a proposal for the development of continuing vocational training and adult education to the Council in 1986.

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In Belgium

Daniel De Norre

There is a great diversity of adult vocational training in Belgium, much of it being provided by the public sector, although many other agencies such as employers, trade associations, unions, universities and private entrepreneurs also make a considerable contribution.

This article takes a critical look at recent developments as regards the two mainstays of official policy in this field:

Formation Professionnelle des Adultes, an adult training agency coming under the Office National de l'Emploi (ONEm – the national employment board); and the system of paid leave for educational purposes.

Formation Professionnelle des Adultes (FPA)

With a budget of FF 3 112 million in 1984, FPA has 63 training centres, 926 instructors and almost 30 000 trainees. Formation Professionnelle des Adultes is an agency set up by the Office National de l'Emploi (ONEm) and run by an employers/union management committee. Since 1980, under the institutional reform law enacted on 8 August 1980, it has been under the supervision of seven national, language community and regional ministries.

FPA is an agency used for intervention measures on the labour market. Its function is to offer a prompt and flexible response to

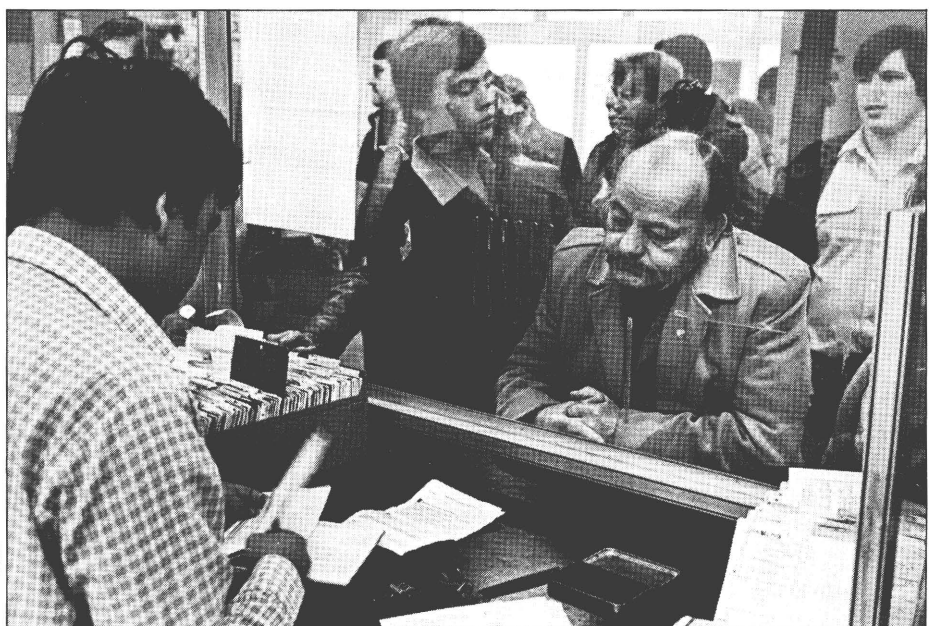
the needs of workers and employers. Its goals are vocational and its specific aim is to place people in employment.

Today FPA is going through a period of upheaval and it is gradually changing in nature: its responsibilities are being transferred to the language communities (Flanders and Wallonia) and the regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels); its budget is being reduced, with a 25 % cut in per capita spending since 1980;¹ it is having to cope with qualitative and quantitative growth in training needs; and tendencies are emerging that represent a departure from its traditional objective of promoting job placements, employment and entrepreneurialism.

Two inseparable functions: training and placement

When the language communities were given responsibility for vocational training and the regions responsibility for placement, the two courses of action were divorced. In fact, however, if they are really to lead to employment they should be fully integrated.

The supervisory authorities seem to have become aware of this need, for they have now agreed to set up a single institution within each community/region, to be given responsibility for both training and placement.



NETWORK

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Two inseparable functions: training and placement.

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This is a sound decision, although care should be taken to ensure that, in practice, there is a genuine resolve to work together and that close links are forged on political, administrative and operational levels.

Financial constraints: choosing the priorities

Dwindling financial resources and a growing need for training: these two trends are in conflict but, since they are ineluctable, they have to be reconciled.

If they are to be reconciled, the goals must be clearly defined so that priorities can be set:

- priority for training directly geared to the jobs market in order to satisfy employers' needs;
- priority for training linked with development or the introduction of new technology;
- priority for cooperation with other training agencies such as the educational system and employers.

FPA's primary purpose: placement

Options that represent a departure from FPA's primary mission are being taken up, giving it new functions:

- 'training for life', based on offering general education and training to unemployed young people, those of low scholastic achievement and the long-term jobless;
- the creation of alternative forms of employment – in training/retraining units – based on collective retraining programmes for groups of workers who have been made redundant.

However interesting and useful they may be, these new courses of action raise several issues.

Regarding the first point, is it really FPA's proper role to provide this kind of training? In other words, is it reasonable to think that FPA, whose structure and resources were designed with job placement in mind, can become a tool for 'social action'?

Provided that the system is given the requisite resources in terms of qualified staff and the money to carry out the task without failing in its primary purpose, the reply to this question is 'yes'.



'Training will be socially effective only when it rediscovers its economic purpose . . .'

Unless these conditions are met, however, the answer should inevitably be 'no'. Alternative solutions should be sought to the problems, especially as in any case the responsibility lies with the community. Would it not be more appropriate to bring in other agencies that are entirely competent to tackle such tasks: the Ministry of Education, for example, which is directly responsible for young under-achievers emerging from the school system?

'Training will be socially effective only when it rediscovers its economic purpose, in other words when it is geared to the employer's needs.'

Regarding the second point, are training/retraining units credible? Are the results they achieve, in terms of job creation, worth the substantial investment outlay?

The reply to this question is far from clear.

It is hard to identify placements and jobs specifically arising from the many schemes run by these units, although the available figures seem to show a disappointing return on the investment. An estimate of the results achieved by the eight units set up to date, catering for 906 workers, is:

- individuals retrained for other jobs 31.9% (the degree to which the units have been instrumental in bringing about this result is not clear)

- new jobs created 13.4%

Although the true cost is substantial, precise figures have not been made public. Under these circumstances, it is obviously difficult to arrive at a strict evaluation of the experiments. An assessment of this kind is essential, however, and there is an urgent need for plain figures to be made available on expenditure and the number of jobs to which it leads.

Paid leave for educational purposes

In 1973, the law allowing employees to be released to accumulate 'study-hour credits' gave the (part-time) community education system a virtual monopoly in continuing education. To make the system effective and attractive, of course, certain adjustments should have been made: the subjects taught should have been attuned to the learners' aspirations and employers' needs, the timing of courses should have been made more flexible, courses should have been made far shorter, there should have been greater flexibility in the sequence of training and teaching methods should have been made more suitable for adults.

Very little was done and that little was limited, piecemeal and 'just to test the water'. As a result, after an initial surge of

enthusiasm, continuing training quickly entered a 'self-destruct mode'. Together with other factors, the unsuitability of the training infrastructure certainly contributed to a great measure towards this outcome.

Law of 10 May 1973 (part-time release for study)	
Number of beneficiaries, 1973 - 1984 ³	
Academic year	Number of beneficiaries
1972 - 1973	3 314
1974 - 1975	20 599
1976 - 1977	17 887
1978 - 1979	15 171
1980 - 1981	16 353
1982 - 1983	11 201
1983 - 1984	8 566

The amending law of 22 January 1985 replaced this part-time release system by an arrangement whereby employees are entitled to take a period of paid leave for the purpose of studying. The principles are:

- the kind of study for which applications are considered includes general education and in-company or sectoral vocational training;
- an employer/union board has been set up to approve training curricula;
- ceilings have been set for the number of hours' leave that may be taken per year for the purpose of vocational training (240 hours) and for education (160 hours);

- when scheduling study leave, allowance must be made for needs associated with the organization of work within a company;

- the State contributes 50 % of the earnings of employees taking leave for vocational training, or 100 % if the leave is for general education.

This is of course a technical reform but, more than that, it represents a change in policy: from now on, sector and in-company vocational training is also covered by the arrangement. It is a fundamental innovation in that it could be said to return continuing training to the sphere of the employers.

A proper return

This is a beginning of a shift of emphasis back to a renewed concern for the employer as the source and beneficiary of its employees' vocational abilities.

'If continuing education is merely an end in itself, if it develops along its own lines regardless of what is needed at work, we are wide of the mark. Its true *raison d'être* is to place itself at the service of the company, to help implement the employer's plans, to be one of the tools for implementing company strategy. Its goal is to help the company succeed. It is of benefit only if it is totally integrated in a company's schemes.'⁴

A link to be forged

If continuing education is to be integrated with an employer's plans, the employer must regard itself as an 'educational system' in its own right.

That system will be linked with continuing education by a series of practical measures that, taken all together, will give the employer the capacity to train and thus satisfy its personnel's training needs on a continuous basis. The training will be technical in nature but it will also help to convey information to employees, raise issues and spark off debate in such a way as to engender a company spirit and momentum.⁵

This educational capacity may be peculiar to one employer or shared among several employers, for example within a given sector of the economy or within a local community.

The new system of paid leave for education will help to promote this solution.

¹ LEROY R., Louvain Catholic University, 'Le financement de la formation professionnelle in Belgique' ['The financing of vocational training in Belgium'], EEC, Cedefop, Berlin, August 1984.

² PERISSOL P.-A., Regional Councillor for Ile-de-France, quoted by Le Monde, 28. 3. 1985.

³ Source: Employment Ministry.

⁴ CANNAC Y., quoted by CNPF-Patronat, the journal of the employers' association, No 462 November 1984.

⁵ ARCHIER G., SERIEYX H. 'L'entreprise du 3ème type' ['the third type of enterprise'], Editions du Seuil, Paris, p. 91.



In Italy

Luciano Osbat

Although there is no real adult vocational training system in Italy, a growing number and a wider range of training opportunities are being made available to adults. Vocational training was defined and regulated in 1978 by the State in Law 845 ('Framework law on vocational training') which expanded on the vocational training powers transferred to the regions by parliament in 1972. Although the delegatory law and the framework law of 1978 defined and specified the aims of vocational training and regional powers in this area, two forces which have been acting on institutions in general have led to the current content of the vocational training system. On one hand, continuing economic developments and the far-reaching changes which these have brought about as well as the need for rapid changes in workers' occupational skills and abilities have led employers to make specific demands on the system which has also had to bear most of the cost of the training programmes requested when entire sectors of production have gone into recession. On the other hand, the different training demand from vocational training consumers has highlighted the substantial rigidity and inadequacy of a system which was very slow to react from within and make those changes which the social and economic framework was continually making necessary.

Both these factors are still at work and we are just beginning to see the initial results of closer links between vocational training and market needs and a more consistent relationship between training needs and consumer demand.

Much greater attention is now being paid to vocational training for adults, which accounted for a very small part of the overall picture up to the end of the 1970s taking, in most cases, the form of in-house training in larger concerns.

Vocational training schemes aimed at adults are currently being organized by the State, by the regions (using their own funds as well as grants from the European Social Fund), by public and private enterprise (self-financed in some cases) and by private bodies and companies which offer training. These schemes vary widely depending on their particular aims and the type of body which organizes them. Consequently it is not possible to pinpoint an adult vocational training policy, i.e. an overall and consis-

tent strategy at work in Italy, or to see any future prospects for a policy of this type.

The State which continued to play a considerable part in the school education of adults (both as regards the completion of compulsory education and adult literacy programmes) until recently, is now taking the first major steps towards in-house schemes designed to train and upgrade its staff by setting up institutions covering all the various branches of the civil service (Scuola superiore della pubblica amministrazione - Civil service college) or specific institutions for each sector.

The vocational training system in the regions is still largely centred on providing young people leaving compulsory education with initial job skills.



GLASER

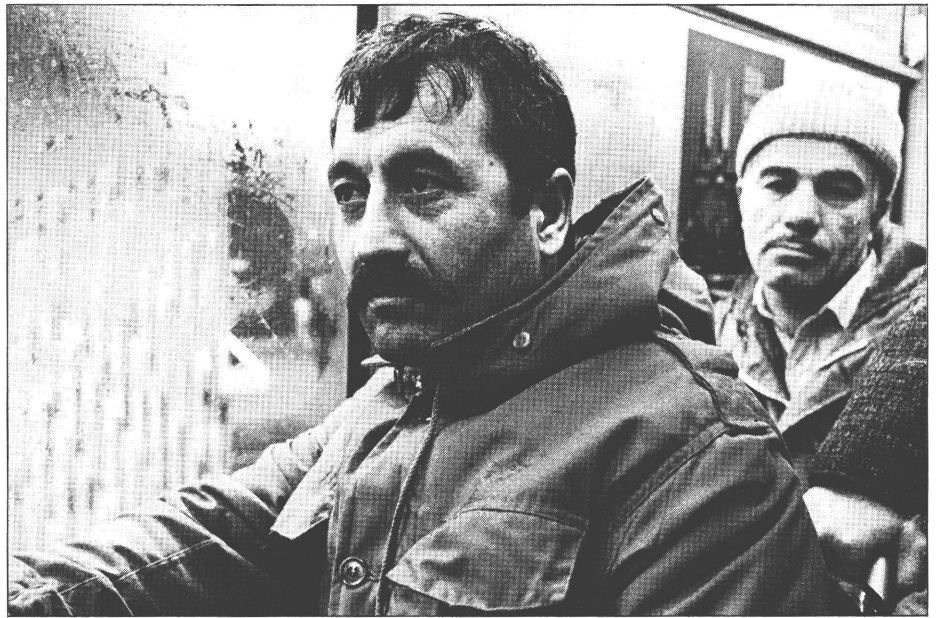
... highlighted the even more substantial increase in unemployment amongst young people and women in particular . . .

PROF. LUCIANO OSBAT
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Within the general problem of unemployment, the implementation of Law 285 of 1977 highlighted the even more substantial increase in unemployment amongst young people and women in particular as well as young people with diplomas and degrees who had few or no vocational skills and found it difficult to accept job offers which did not match their level of education. Problems of this type were confirmed in subsequent years as youth unemployment reached critical levels. These problems compelled the regions to take decisive action on vocational training in order to provide closer links between training programmes and the specific training needs of sectors of production within each region, giving rise to activities linked increasingly to specific training projects in addition to traditional basic training schemes. It was precisely this new way of dealing with training activities and their new aims which highlighted the demand for schemes designed to remould the occupational skills of workers particularly in small and medium-size enterprises unable, themselves, to bear the cost of training schemes.

From 1980–81 onwards, Isfol (Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori – Institute for the development of vocational training for workers), in its annual report on the position of vocational training in Italy in relation to the state of the labour market, began to give figures for the number of courses for adult workers funded by the regions. The information given in this source highlights the slow growth in this sector: in 1980–81 adult workers accounted for 54 100 of the 261 000 trainees on regional training schemes; in 1981–82, 60 000 out of a total of some 250 000 trainees and in 1982–83, 95 600 out of a total of more than 300 000 trainees. The breakdown of courses in 1982–83 was as follows: refresher training (55% of all adult workers), upgrading (22%), specialization (16%), retraining and advanced training (7%).

Employers, particularly in the larger public and private concerns, have, as mentioned above, been offering vocational training for some time, although training of this type is almost exclusively aimed at the refresher and advanced training of their own staff. Since the early 1970s many of these employers have been compelled to lay off increasing numbers of their workers as a result of reorganization and far-reaching changes in the structure of production, in the hope that workers would, during this



... would be able to attend training schemes designed to provide them with skills.

period, be able to attend training schemes designed to provide them with skills for the new jobs and activities which they would be required to undertake after the recession. This programme has not, for the most part, been carried through since employers have lacked the ability to plan suitable training schemes and the public structures designed to assist in setting up these schemes have not operated correctly.

This has taken place despite the fact that training has occupied a comparatively important place since the initial action taken by the State to assist workers left without jobs after the Second World War. Law 264 of 1949 ('Provisions relating to training for work and the assistance of involuntarily unemployed workers') established, for example, the need for vocational training aimed at the 'training, upgrading, advanced training and retraining of workers who, as a result of unemployment or the events of the war, need rapidly to relearn, upgrade or convert their technical skills, adapting them to the needs on efficient production, the needs of the domestic labour market and the possibilities offered by emigration'. This was one of the fundamental premises on which the vocational training system in Italy was based. From 1974 onwards, when the recession began to make itself felt in Italy, as well as in other EC countries, and led to increasing unemployment, the need for a closer link between the threat of unemployment and the organization of the vocational training system

became evident again, unfortunately without receiving a suitable response either in terms of course contents and training methods or increased training opportunities. The most common response has been to make the social security system responsible for the upkeep of workers temporarily laid off, with an almost complete disregard for those training programmes which the situation required and which were provided for by law. The 'Cassa Integrazione Guadagni' (Earnings supplement fund) has made this possible.

The 'Cassa', set up by Decree Law in 1945 has had its procedures and aims successively updated and makes it possible to lay off workers without dismissing them permanently even in the case of workers who are surplus to requirements with the cost being borne by the Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale – INPS (National institute of social security), i.e. by the State. The 'Cassa' also provides for training activities during the period in which the worker is laid off. Law 164 of 1975 which updated previous legislation in this area, established that 'Regional Labour Offices, having consulted the trade union organizations involved, shall promote suitable schemes, drafting proposals for the creation of vocational training or retraining courses'. However, this specific aspect of the law has only been implemented sporadically.

Moreover, in recent years, use of the Cassa Integrazione Guadagni has increased con-

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tinuously: 500 million hours authorized in 1981, 563 million in 1982,¹ 750 million in 1983.² In the period March-April 1984, CENSIS (Centro Studi Investimenti Sociali – Social Security Research Centre) estimated that a total of 412 000 employees were registered with the 'Cassa', a fifth of whom were on 'zero hours', i.e. were no longer even working for their employer for one hour.

The limited number of adults taking part in publicly run vocational retraining schemes (less than 10 000 adult workers in 1982–83) has been discussed above. If workers attending schemes carried out in these and other private vocational training institutions (estimates show that this involves no more than a few tens of thousands of people) are added to this figure, a very clear picture emerges of the failure to provide those training activities which should have been associated with the entry into force of the Cassa Integrazione Guadagni.

Public concerns and the major industrial companies have been quicker to react to the challenge posed to vocational training by the threat of unemployment. Certain con-

tracts agreed between union organizations and the Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi – ENI (National Fuels Agency) from 1981 seem to be particularly representative of an innovative trend likely to provide greater benefits in the future and could be a reference point for vocational training policies aimed at dealing with these specific problems. Under the terms of these agreements, a series of training schemes have been set up in order to provide staff who are surplus to requirements in ENI group companies with new skills designed to meet the requirements of new production activities run in their initial stages by ENI itself or its affiliated companies and becoming independent shortly after.

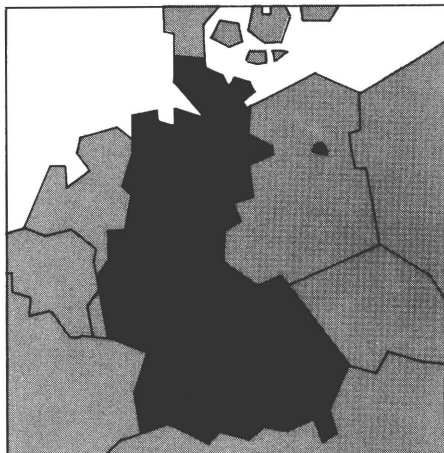
Montedison, one of the major industrial groups in Italy, is moving in the same direction with similar schemes in the Brindisi area in Apulia designed to absorb staff from its petrochemical plant which is being reorganized by providing suitable training enabling these workers to be employed in the same field in small-scale enterprises agreed with local representatives of industry.

In recent years, a number of collective wage agreements in the public sector (a sector in which there is practically no risk of redundancy) have contained provisions linking pay increases with attendance of vocational upgrading and training activities (teachers) or regulating schemes for the occupational retraining of employees (staff of the Azienda Autonoma delle Strade [State Office for Roads and Motorways], town clerks, State police etc.). Institutes, organizations and private profit-making companies are offering increasing numbers of high-quality opportunities for adult vocational training. Institutions offering correspondence courses are taking the first steps towards offering the type of adult training for which the regions or other public bodies are pressing, by means of the correspondence teaching system. However, no figures are available for this type of training which is to some extent still at the experimental stage.

¹ 1983 ISFOL Report, Milan 1984, pp. 94–95.

² 1984 ISFOL Report, op. cit., p. 47.

³ *Le iniziative locali per l'occupazione* (Local job creation initiatives), edited by R. Cibin and L. Saba, Milan 1985, p. 39.



In the Federal Republic of Germany

Manfred Leve

The following is not a full description of vocational training for adults in the Federal Republic of Germany. It does not cover, for example, the many continuing training schemes run by firms and administrations for their own employees or the area of vocational rehabilitation. The article focuses on schemes assisted by the Federal Institute of Labour (Bundesanstalt für Arbeit).

Provided that the legislative requirements are satisfied, financial assistance may be, and is, granted for participation in vocational training schemes for adults ('individual assistance'). Similarly, institutions providing vocational training may, and do, receive financial assistance ('institutional assistance'). These two types of assistance are essentially based on the Labour Promotion Act of 25 June 1969 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 582), last amended by the 1985 Employment Promotion Act of 26 April 1985 (Federal Law Gazette I, p. 710). The Federal Institute of Labour is responsible for the enforcement of the Labour Promotion Act.

It is a self-governing, public-law corporation that is totally independent of the government. Its governing body is tripartite, consisting of representatives of the employees, the employers and the public bodies.

Apart from assisting vocational training (and vocational rehabilitation), the Federal Institute of Labour has the following tasks: occupational guidance, placement, measures to preserve and create jobs, the payment of unemployment benefit and redundancy benefit after an employer's bank-

ruptcy, and labour market and occupational research. The Federal Institute, which has its headquarters in Nuremberg, maintains a dense network of branches throughout the Federal Republic: 9 Land employment offices, 146 employment offices, 482 suboffices and other, special units ensure that the local and regional structure is taken into account.

At the Federal Institute's headquarters, guidelines on assistance for vocational training are compiled, the general organization of work is planned and work aids for the employment offices are devised.

The activities of the Federal Institute of Labour are financed from employees' and employers' contributions. Its 1985 budget amounts to some DM 33 000 m. At a total population of about 61 m and a potential working population of 27 m, an average of 2 265 000 people in the Federal Republic of Germany were registered as unemployed with the employment offices in 1984 (unemployment ratio: 9.1%). In the first half of 1985 registered unemployment averaged 2 407 000 (unemployment ratio: 9.7%).

According to the micro-census carried out by the Federal Statistical Office in 1982, 25% of the gainfully employable population in the Federal Republic of Germany had not completed their initial vocational training. This group is overrepresented among the unemployed: the latest structural study of unemployment (September 1984) showed that 49.4% of workers registered as unemployed had not completed their initial vocational training.

The poor labour market situation in the last few years, the structural changes in industry and administration and the consequent changes in the demands made on vocational training and in the structure of registered

unemployment have meant that vocational training measures have also had to change. The 1985 Vocational Training Report (p. 91) aptly states on this subject:

'When labour was in short supply and the economy was growing, continuing vocational training under the AFG was primarily a forward-looking measure, designed to improve the occupational mobility and adaptability of the labour force, and so maintain a high level of employment, and to provide the individual worker with the skills he needed for advancement.'

As the difficult employment situation has persisted, however, the legislation on assistance and the assistance provided have been increasingly geared since the mid-1970s to the reduction of unemployment and so to the earliest possible reintegration of the unemployed.'

In the assistance granted to individuals for participation in vocational training a distinction is made between 'free' measures and measures 'to order'.

Free measures are initiated and provided by various training bodies (e.g. chambers of trade and industry, private schools, adult education centres, employees' and employers' organizations). The employment offices ensure that the training offered is suitable for adults, as required by the Labour Promotion Act. If this is the case, participants in such measures can obtain financial assistance provided that they too meet the requirements of the Act. Many workers take advantage of such training opportunities, on their own initiative or at the suggestion of the employment offices. Employed workers hope to safeguard their jobs in this way or to better themselves, unemployed workers to find jobs by improving their qualifications.

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If existing training capacities are unequal to the task of teaching the skills required, especially by the unemployed, or of eliminating deficiencies in previous vocational training, training bodies organize vocational training for the employment offices 'to order'.

Of the participants in such training schemes in the first half of 1985, 89.1% were unemployed before beginning their training, as compared with only 33.8% in the case of the 'free' measures. This shows that measures 'to order' are largely used for the vocational training of the unemployed, while the 'free' training measures concentrate mainly on the traditional career occupations.

At the employment offices the guidance officers are generally responsible for giving advice and information on all aspects of vocational training and the situation and trend in the labour market.

The guidance officers obtain their information by evaluating regional media, questioning experts outside the Federal Institute of Labour and maintaining contact with firms and chambers of trade, industry, crafts, etc. They also assess offers of employment received. Further invaluable help is provided by the findings of model vocational training institutions (e.g. the Vocational Advancement Centre in Essen) and such research institutions as the Federal Institute of Labour's Institute for Labour Market and Vocational Research, the Vocational Training Institute and the employers' and employees' research institutions.

The goals, content, methods and duration of vocational training measures are carefully attuned to target groups and labour market requirements. In many cases, socio-pedagogical back-up is also needed because of the psycho-social damage that has been suffered (as a result of long-term unemployment, for example).

The various schemes — an overview

Measures to improve placement prospects

In view of the financial restrictions on individual assistance (the subsistence allowance paid to someone participating in a scheme has, for example, been the same as unemployment benefit for some time) and the consequent absence of financial incen-



At the employment offices the guidance officers are generally responsible for giving advice and information . . .

tives, guidance officers often need to provide a great deal of information and use considerable persuasive powers, especially when dealing with unskilled workers, for whom learning is particularly arduous, before they will agree to participate. The information and guidance courses that have been possible since 1979 following an amendment to the AFG have proved very helpful in this respect. During these courses, which last for four to six weeks, 15 to 20 participants at a time are told about the labour market, occupational areas, training opportunities and the financial assistance they can obtain. This scheme has been a success. It has resulted in increased willingness to attend training courses even among groups that have taken no interest in the

past and improved participants' self-confidence, which has a favourable effect when they come to apply for jobs.

Where vocational training schemes are concerned, the AFG makes a basic distinction between in-service training, retraining and in-company familiarization. In-service training presupposes knowledge that can be used in an occupation and builds on previous vocational training or practical experience. It includes measures to identify, preserve or improve occupational knowledge and skills or adapt them to technological developments, and advancement-oriented in-service training. Retraining paves the way for the transition to a different occupational activity. In in-com-

pany familiarization the worker has a contract of employment under which he is taught knowledge and skills in addition to those usual in the firm concerned with a view to improving his occupational mobility.

In-service training and retraining schemes can be broken down as follows:

■ **Measures for the vocational training of workers who did not complete their initial training and do not have adequate practical experience**

In such training basic skills that can be used in an occupation are taught. It is also intended for young people without vocational qualifications. Sequential training measures are also available. For example, a course of basic training in metalwork (6 months) is followed by various specialization phases. These measures do not in themselves lead to the award of certificates in a recognized occupation.

■ **Measures to enable older workers to obtain final certificates in a recognized occupation**

Workers who have sufficient practical experience (twice the duration of initial training) can take the final vocational training examination organized by the relevant chamber of trade and industry or crafts and so obtain the final vocational certificate. These measures thus pave the way for the final vocational training examination. The curricula vary according to the participant's prior knowledge or lack of knowledge and are geared to the examination requirements.

■ **Measures to identify, preserve, improve or adapt the occupational knowledge and skills of workers who completed their initial vocational training or have adequate practical experience**

With the growth of unemployment, these measures have increased substantially in number. They are specifically designed to adjust knowledge and skills to technological developments.

Apart from functional knowledge and skills, such skills not directly related to the job as the ability to cooperate and communicate, abstract and logical thinking, adaptability to innovations and social behaviour are taught. The line between 'general education' and 'vocational training' is necessarily fluid in these measures.

■ **Retraining measures leading to a certificate in a recognized occupation**

The object of retraining measures may be the award of a vocational training certificate in a recognized occupation. The target Group in this case consists largely of unemployed workers without vocational training certificates. The curricula and objectives are guided by the national training regulations governing the various occupations. Other aspects are often included to cater for additional knowledge and skills required in the labour market, in the area of the new technologies, for example. Retraining courses are mainly attended by unemployed workers (81.1%).

■ **Advancement-oriented in-service training**

Advancement-oriented in-service training measures include in particular training to technician, manager or master craftsman level. The proportion of participants previously registered as unemployed is very small. As the financial assistance provided for the advancement-oriented in-service training of people in employment and not in danger of losing their jobs is very limited (for some time the subsistence allowance paid to such participants has normally taken the form of a loan), the number of participants has declined or stagnated in the last few years.

■ **Simulated business enterprises and workshops**

Simulated business enterprises and workshops have been able to increase their capacities considerably in recent years.

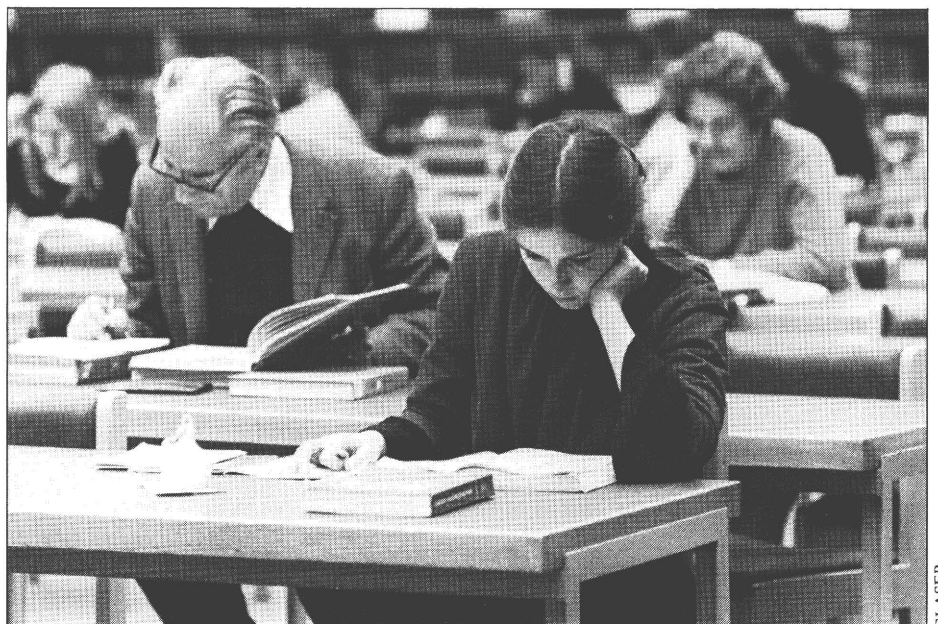
As places of learning, simulated business enterprises are designed to refresh and improve practical commercial knowledge and skills. They have formed a ring with two head offices and engage in fictitious business with one another. The head offices perform the tasks of the tax and customs authorities, the health insurance funds, mail distribution and the bank, and service the affiliated simulated enterprises in matters relating to vocational teaching and business administration.

A simulated business enterprise normally has 15 to 30 posts. In some it is also possible to obtain a training in occupations recognized by the State.

Simulated workshops are used to teach basic occupational skills and also to establish whether participants are suitable for a planned course of retraining, to prepare them for external examinations, to provide retraining and to maintain occupational knowledge and skills and adjust them to technological developments.

■ **In-company familiarization**

In-company familiarization takes place on the job. The employer is required to conclude with the employee a contract of



At present some 222 400 people in the Federal Republic of Germany are receiving help from the Federal Institute of Labour to take part in vocational training schemes . . .

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employment for a period longer than an agreed period of familiarization. While the employee is familiarizing himself with the job, the employers receives a contribution towards his labour costs, known as the 'familiarization allowance'. How much the familiarization allowance amounts to and how long it is paid depends on how unproductive the employee is in the job concerned. A comparison is made with the performance of an employee who is completely familiar with the job. The allowance amounts to a maximum of 70% of the employee's wage and can be paid for up to a year. It has proved to be a successful placement aid.

Other vocational training measures for adults, which in principle similarly qualify

for assistance from the Federal Institute of Labour, are back-up vocational training and distance studies.

At present some 222 400 people in the Federal Republic of Germany are receiving help from the Federal Institute of Labour to take part in vocational training schemes: 164 800 in in-service training, 50 200 in retraining and 7 800 in familiarization schemes (compared to last year's total of 213 500 and 157 800, 49 900 and 5 800 in the three schemes respectively.)

The Institute's 1985 budget includes DM 3 715m for the individual assistance of adults in vocational training (excluding the vocational rehabilitation of disabled per-

sons) and DM 35m for institutional assistance, making a total of DM 3 747m (compared to DM 3 531m for individual assistance, DM 35m for institutional assistance and a total of DM 3 566m last year).

Considerable importance is attached to the vocational training of adults. The Federal Institute of Labour makes a constant effort to improve quality in cooperation with, above all, the organizers of the measures, the employers' and employees' representatives and the trade associations. But it is also concerned to increase the number of participants, especially the unemployed and workers who did not complete their vocational training, while maintaining high standards.



In the United Kingdom

Alan Gordon

Adult training provision in the United Kingdom is currently in a state of transformation. An increasing awareness of the importance of vocational training and retraining initiatives for adults on the part of employers, employees, trades unions, civil servants, educationalists and politicians, has been stimulated by the publication of a number of key reports in the past four years. A number of these have drawn attention to deficiencies in existing arrangements for adult training, whether for the employed or unemployed. They have made unfavourable comparisons between the United Kingdom and other industrialized countries in the extent and direction of vocational training for adults, and have emphasized the importance of adult training for economic development and labour market flexibility. This article discusses a number of these key issues.

In the Manpower Services Commission's (MSC) 1981 consultative document 'A New Training Initiative', one of the three major training objectives for the United Kingdom was:

'to open up widespread opportunities for adults, whether employed, unemployed or returning to work, to acquire, increase or update their skills and knowledge during the course of their working lives'. (MSC, 1981.)

It is only since 1983 and the publication of the MSC document 'Towards an Adult Training Strategy' that the spotlight has been turned away from youth training and towards adult training in the UK. Since then

it has become apparent that the UK lags behind other countries in the seriousness with which it deals with vocational training for adults.

The extent of adult training, employers and employees attitudes

Estimates differ as to the amount of vocational training for adults that takes place in the United Kingdom. The 1984 government White Paper (HMSO 1984) on training estimated that UK employers spent UKL 2 500 million on training in 1980 – about 1 % of GNP – and that 1.5 million people were undergoing some form of

training. A recent survey estimated that in 1984 the private sector of industry spent UKL 2 030 million on training. This averages out at UKL 575 a year on average per trainee, and UKL 200 per employee (Department of Employment 1985). The sum of money involved represents just 0.15 % of turnover. This contrasts unfavourably with the resources being devoted to such training by other industrialized countries, including France, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and the United States. The amount of private sector resources being devoted to training has been sharply criticised by the MSC, who have pointed out that private industry is spending just UKL 4 per person per week to train and retrain the UK workforce.



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The 1984 government White Paper on training estimated that UK employers spent UKL 2 500 million on training . . .

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In spring 1985 there were 3.3 million people registered as unemployed . . .

According to information collected for the MSC (MSC 1985), in the United Kingdom 69 % of employees had no training in the previous year, and a quarter of all establishments had provided no training of any kind in the last year.

High performing businesses had increased their involvement in training by 25 % in the five years to 1984 (MSC 1985a), whereas low performers reduced their training by 20 %. It is now widely accepted in the UK that training excellence is positively associated with good business performance, both for individual companies and for the nation.

Poor attitudes towards adult training have also been found among employees. Recent research carried out by MORI for the MSC into the attitudes of adults towards training revealed what the MSC termed a 'disturbing naivety' towards the need for training and retraining. It was found that while 48 % of employed people expected major changes in their job content over the period to 1990, only 31 % felt that they would require training to cope with such changes. Among unemployed people looking for work, 40 % thought that training would enhance their prospects of getting a job. But only 11 % had received advice on training opportunities.

In a period where an adult training strategy is being developed, and emphasis is still being given to increasing employers' and employees' awareness of the need for

training and retraining, perhaps it is not too surprising to find less than positive attitudes towards vocational training for adults. It is clear, however, that a great deal still has to be done to bridge the gap for employers between their perceived need for training and their actual commitment to it, and, for employees, to instil in them a recognition that front-end training at the start of their working lives will no longer be sufficient. For the unemployed, training and retraining can be a way back to the employed labour force.

The labour market context and the current provision

In spring 1985 there were 3.3 million people registered as unemployed (13.7 % of all employees): the seasonally adjusted figure was 3.2 million. In addition 650 000 people were on special government training and job creation measures. The stock of notified unfilled vacancies stood at 156 000, which is estimated to represent approximately one-third of the vacancies.

Out of a working population of 27.4 million, then, 3.3 million were registered unemployed and 24.1 million employed. Those employed comprised 11.9 million male and 9.3 million female employees and 2.5 million people were self-employed. The remainder were in the armed forces, and

are treated separately in the collection of manpower statistics.

In spite of such high levels of unemployment, many employing organizations in the United Kingdom still report shortages of some staff. In a recent survey, 57 % of companies reported difficulty in recruiting employees with particular skills, experience or qualifications. Of *these* companies, 71 % were now looking to in-company training to solve their recruitment difficulties. (Department of Employment 1984.) It is clear that adult vocational training for the unemployed, employed and re-entrants does have some contribution to make in alleviating unemployment in the UK.

Adult vocational training in the United Kingdom is currently imperfectly coordinated. There is a range of full-time and part-time courses in educational institutions from higher degree courses downwards that have adults among their students. Companies carry out vocational training and retraining to meet their own (and occasionally other employers') skill needs. There is direct provision of funding and courses on the part of the MSC, directed at the unemployed and the employed. At present it cannot be considered that these various elements add up to a coherent strategy, although attempts are currently being made to adopt a more coordinated approach to adult VET.

The main provisions discussed are, for the employed, the Professional Industrial and Commercial Updating Programme (PICKUP), OPEN TECH, the Open University, the Training for Skills Programme, higher education provision and employers' activities. For the unemployed there are two main types of adult training provision, the Training Opportunities Programme (TOPS) and the Community Programme. It should be pointed out, however, that there is not always a neat division between training for the unemployed and the employed, e. g. the Open University has unemployed participants, and employed people are eligible for TOPS support on courses. Each of these initiatives is discussed in turn, before further attention is given to the development of an adult training strategy for the future in the UK.

The Professional, Industrial and Commercial Updating Programme (PICKUP) was launched in May 1982. Its aim is to encourage education and training institutions to provide relevant courses for those in work. The particular focus is on post-experience and updating courses, with the PICKUP initiative assisting universities, polytechnics and colleges to develop courses and appropriate teaching methods to meet the needs of local employers. It is attempting to ensure that the education service provides more relevant and flexible courses, responding to the requirements of industry and commerce (HMSO 1984). In its first year (1984-85) the PICKUP initiative, funded mainly by the Department of Education & Science (DES), together with the MSC, funded 17 large and over 100 small scale schemes. Examples of the larger projects include a scheme to tackle the UK shortage of computer software engineers, an advanced manufacturing techniques training programme, and a high street training shop acting as a drop-in information centre on training and education opportunities and backed by local firms, colleges and the chamber of commerce. The cost was UKL 1.3 million. For 1985-86 the level of funding has been increased to UKL 2.9 million.

Over 60 projects have been started under the OPEN TECH scheme, which aims to promote training and retraining opportunities for employed adults, at management, technician and supervisory levels. OPEN TECH was launched by the MSC in 1982, and provides funds for other organizations to start projects that help employees learn new skills without

interrupting their working routine. The particular feature of this scheme is that it uses open and distance learning methods such as home study texts, video and audio tapes. The programme has two key tasks:

- to both open and widen access to existing education and training opportunities;
- to make possible new education and training provision for needs which can best be served through open learning.

Its particular features, in addition to its distance learning techniques, are that OPEN TECH is project based, collaborative, developmental and vocational. It also aims to meet identified labour market needs. A priority has been technological updating in subjects such as robotics, microelectronics and information technology. It is estimated that about 6 000 employed people participated in OPEN TECH in its first year with a budget of UKL 3.75 million. By 1986 it is expected that the numbers involved will rise to about 50 000 (HMSO 1984).

The *Open University* uses distance learning methods to run its programme of education and training courses for adults. Its courses network comprises a mix of vocational and non-vocational programmes. Approximately 100 000 people study with the Open University each year, of whom 40 % are studying on courses outside the degree-level

programme. Over 120 degree level courses are offered, many of which can be used for updating purposes. There is also a growing range of short courses being used for training, retraining and education for living. The Open University is increasingly being used by employers as part of a standard training package. Of particular note is the Open Business School which, in conjunction with PICKUP (see above) had 1 600 students for its first courses which started in autumn 1983. In addition, since the launch of its microprocessor awareness course in 1981, over 25 000 managers in industry and commerce have taken part. Both employed and unemployed people take part in Open University long and short course programmes.

The recent discussion (i. e. Green) paper on the future of *higher education* in the United Kingdom referred to the role of universities, polytechnics and colleges in adult education (HMSO 1985).

The Green Paper has little enthusiasm for state financial support for adult training in higher education, preferring instead that employers should meet the costs of courses that meet their specific requirements, and with adult students in employment making a 'substantial' contribution towards their own courses. Employers, in particular, are urged to accept their responsibilities for adult training more fully.



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The Open University uses distance learning methods to run its programme . . .

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The point is made that:

'The unemployed deserve, and receive, special attention' (HMSO 1985).

However, other than where fees are waived for the unemployed (usually at the initiative of individual institutions) or where TOPS support is available for specific courses, participation by unemployed adults on such courses can be problematic in the UK. In order to receive unemployment benefits, individuals have to be available for work. If they are registered for a full-time or substantial part-time course in higher education they do not meet the test of availability. There are no plans to change this in order to permit unemployed people to participate more fully on adult training courses in higher education.

TSPA

The Training for Skills Programme (TSPA) cost UKL 50 million a year, mainly in grant aid to employers to assist them organize training schemes for employees.

A particular concern with TSPA is a possible displacement effect, in that the state may be paying employers to do the training that they would have carried out even in the absence of grant aid. The MSC themselves consider that the Training for Skills Programme has made 'only a marginal and often short term impact'. (MSC, 1983)

Employer initiatives

The benefits of retraining, in particular, have been spelt out in a recent report from the National Economic Development Office (NEDO 1985), that had as its focus retraining for electronics skills:

- retraining, as well as improving skills and job performance, can boost employee confidence and commitment to change, and is a sign of company commitment to the future;

- retraining can be an effective alternative to redundancy;

- retraining can lead to improvements in job design and the use of scarce high level skills.

It is pointed out that the costs of retraining need not be high, and the benefits, accruing over the short, medium and long terms, can be substantial. The NEDO (1985) report concludes that:

'A failure to invest in retraining and change is, however, a failure to invest in the future'.

The report gives examples of just what individual employers are doing to retrain and update their staff, e.g. providing electronics skills to electricians, training assembly workers to be test technicians. Examples of other good training practices are also now being given prominent attention in the United Kingdom in order to encourage other employers to adopt good training practices, or any training at all (see, for example, Department of Employment 1984). With an increasing awareness of the need for employee training, one might reasonably expect a substantial increase in employer initiatives in the coming years.

TOPS

In 1983/84 over 66 000 adults in the UK completed courses sponsored by the Training Opportunities Programme (TOPS). Increased emphasis is now being given to training in the new technologies, small business opportunities and in work preparation training. Over UKL 200 million is spent each year on training unemployed people under TOPS.

Participants in the TOPS programme are a mixture of those in employment and wishing to acquire new skills (or update old ones), the registered unemployed and those planning to re-enter the labour market. In the early 1980s these first two groups, of similar sizes, represented up to nine in ten of those applying for TOPS courses. Women trainees, in particular, viewed TOPS courses as a method of re-entering employment after a period of time in child-rearing. In a 1981 follow-up survey of TOPS trainees, which took place 15–17 months after the end of the course (MSC 1981a), 80 % were in employment and, of these, 60 % were in jobs where they used the skills acquired. Only 6 % had had no job in the time since leaving the course. In the past four years, the proportion finding work have fallen markedly, leading to the TOPS programme being the subject of close review. At present it is TOPS that represents the MSC's biggest contribution to the training of unemployed people.

Community Programme

The Community Programme started in October 1982, providing temporary

employment for long-term unemployed adults on projects that are intended to be of benefit to the community. Its target group is people aged 18–24 who have been unemployed for over six of the previous nine months, and those aged 25 and over who have been unemployed for at least 12 of the previous 15 months.

In 1982/83 the Community Programme found temporary work for 40 000 unemployed people. In 1983/84 the number participating had risen to 113 000 at a cost of UKL 400 million. In spring 1985 the number of places on the Community Programme was expanded by 100 000 to 230 000, at an additional cost of UKL 140 million.

Unemployed people on Community Programme schemes will not normally spend less than three months but cannot spend more than 12 months on the programme, with approval for individual schemes being given for 12 months at a time. For approval a project should involve work that would not otherwise have been carried out.

The Community Programme is explicitly an unemployment alleviation and work experience measure, and is very different from the other schemes discussed in this article, in that it invariably at present contains no training element whatsoever. It is included in this article since it is the single largest programme for the unemployed, and yet, in spite of the apparent recognition at the highest levels of the importance of adult training for the unemployed, it remains a work creation measure. The instructions to those proposing new schemes are clear on this point:

'As a Community Programme sponsor you will *not* be required to provide training'.

Those sponsors who do wish to organize training either have to relate it to the work of the community project or to organize training that would improve the individual's prospect of getting a permanent job. No additional money is paid to those sponsors who do organize training – indeed any costs of training have to be borne out of the sponsors operating costs element and through a UKL 10 wage reduction (maximum) for the individual concerned.

This rather discouraging approach to the training of Community Programme participants may be changing, however. In the Manpower Services Commission's consultative document 'Towards an Adult

Training Strategy' and in its proposals for action, it has been suggested that basic training and work preparation should be linked with work experience through the Community Programme. If adopted, in future the Community Programme could include up to 13 weeks' work preparation or basic skills training.

An adult training strategy

The current strategy for adult vocational training in the UK has been encapsulated in three key documents published since 1983 – the MSC's 'Towards an Adult Training Strategy' and 'Adult Training: Proposals for Action', and in the government White Paper 'Training for Jobs' (see references). Adult training provision is still in a state of flux, however, with decisions on a number of key issues, including the training content of programmes for the unemployed and funding arrangements, including the use of loans, still to be resolved.

In terms of objectives for adult VET, however, the issues are rather clearer. The main aim is to secure a sufficient supply of individuals on the labour market with up-to-date skills, particularly in the new technologies, and to assist individuals, including the unemployed, to cope with change. To meet these aims the MSC is

restructuring its own training provision, starting in 1985/86, into two programmes. This restructuring has already been supported by the UK government (HMSO 1984). The first programme will be industry-focused, providing the employed and unemployed with job-related training directed to ascertained labour market needs. The second programme aims to give assistance to the unemployed who may need to improve their chances of finding work after long spells of unemployment. This second programme may use altered TOPS and Community Programme schemas as suitable vehicles for delivery. Under the two programmes, it has been estimated that, in future, 250 000 people would be trained each year (one-half of whom would be unemployed). According to the White Paper (HMSO 1984), this would represent a substantial increase on existing MSC training provision – up from the 110 000 trained in 1984, 80 000 of whom were unemployed.

Alongside this restructuring, and the maintenance of adult training programmes such as PICKUP and OPEN TECH, a national campaign has been mounted to raise the awareness of all the parties concerned of the need for vocational training for adults in the UK.

'We need to upgrade the skills of those already in the labour force, both employed

and unemployed, and to enable and encourage them to adapt to change'. (HMSO 1984)

The need for adult training has now been recognized: fulfilling that need is going to take rather longer.

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The comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community:

Documentation of essential Community texts

Michael Schelzky

The following attempts to outline developments in the recognition and comparability of vocational training qualifications with the aid of essential documents published by the Community and its institutions.

Seen as a whole, the recognition problem has four different, but related, aspects: the recognition of qualifications for employment purposes; the recognition of non-academic vocational training qualifications; the recognition of diplomas for academic purposes; the recognition of periods spent at school for general education purposes.¹

The document that is basic to all these aspects is the 'Treaty establishing the European Economic Community', in which the recognition problem is placed in the broader context of the free movement of persons, services and capital and the social policy.² Apart from Articles 48 and 49 (freedom of movement) and Article 128 (establishment by the Council of general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy), Article 57 is particularly important, it being the only article to refer explicitly to recognition: 'In order to make it easier for persons to take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons, the Council shall . . . issue directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications.³ For the same purpose Article 57 (2) requires the Council to 'issue directives for the coordination of the provisions laid down by law, regulation and administrative action in Member States concerning the taking up and pursuit of activities as self-employed persons.' The activities of the

self-employed specifically referred to in Article 57 are banking, medical and allied, and pharmaceutical professions.⁴ On the basis of Article 128 of the EEC Treaty and with the aim of preserving the fundamental rights of freedom of movement and the freedom to provide services and of implementing a common policy of effective vocational training, the Council adopted a decision on 2 April 1963 laying down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy.⁵ To ensure the achievement of the objectives formulated in the 10 general principles, an Advisory Committee was also set up in the Commission. The eighth general principle states that a common vocational training policy must be so framed as to enable levels of training to be harmonized progressively. It calls on the Commission to cooperate with the Member States, 'according to requirements', in drawing up in respect of the various occupations which call for specific training a standardized description of the basic qualifications required at various levels of training. 'On this basis, harmonization of the standards required for success in final examinations should be sought, with a view to the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents confirming completion of vocational training.' The work begun as a result of this decision did not, however, produce the desired results – as the Commission informed the Council – because methodological experience first had to be gained, the distinction between short-term measures and longer-term objectives (such as the approximation of training levels and structures and the mutual recognition of vocational training qualifications) was not

sufficiently clear, and not enough resources were available. The Council then compiled 'General guidelines on a Community programme of action in the area of vocational training'.⁶ The new programme to be submitted to the Council by the Commission with the assistance of the tripartite (governments, employers and employees) Advisory Committee for Vocational Training saw the ultimate objective as being a common vocational training policy. As regards the harmonization of training levels, the guidelines urge that, quite generally, the real significance of the various diplomas for the individual's professional career be considered and that a method of facilitating the mutual recognition of diplomas awarded after a given course of training be devised.⁷ With a view to mutual recognition in the short term, the first steps required by the guidelines include the following: adoption of a common terminology for actions at Community level; analysis of vocational training by level of training and major industrial and work categories; development of suitable methods of approximating levels of training. With the aim of further encouraging work on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of qualifications, the Council adopted on 6 June 1974 a resolution recognizing that the directives on the right of establishment are of importance in connection with education policies and that education policies should make a positive contribution to freedom of establishment, particularly with regard to the liberal professions⁸. In the resolution the Council expresses the wish that future work be guided by the desire for a flexible and

qualitative approach and approves a further guideline which, while recognizing the differences in training courses in the Member States, finds that 'the final qualifications giving access to similar fields of activity are in practice broadly comparable'. From this it is concluded that directives on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and on the coordination of the conditions of access to the professions 'should resort as little as possible to the prescription of detailed training requirements'. To this effect, the resolution recommends the compilation of lists of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of qualifications recognized as being equivalent and the setting up of 'advisory committees'.

Despite the measure proposed, the Commission felt the Community's progress towards the recognition of vocational training certificates was too slow: 'radical differences in the structure and organization of vocational training in the various Member States had made comparisons very difficult, and rendered it virtually impossible to achieve any conclusive results.'

At the Commission's request the Institute for University Studies submitted a scientific study on the 'Approximation of Levels of Training in the Process of Harmonizing Vocational Training in the European Community' in 1973, an extended version following in 1974.¹⁰ The authors – Gabriel Fragnière and Burkart Sellin – see the purpose of their study as being 'to facilitate as far as possible a comparison of the systems in the various countries' and 'to establish a common reference framework which enables future developments to be covered.' They took as their basis the professional qualifications themselves rather than the training courses from which they derive. Apart from adopting this innovative methodological approach, the study proposes a Community structure of five training levels, which, with account taken of the length and objective of the training, largely correspond to semi-skilled work, skilled work, skilled work and the levels of training achieved by technicians and technical college and university graduates.¹¹ As two stages in the process of approximating training levels in the Member States, the authors propose the 'joint formalization and application of a global structure of levels' and a 'comparison of qualifications and the achievement of transparency in each sector of the economy and occupational field'.¹² The study led the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training to set up a tripartite 'Expert Group for the

Approximation of Training Levels'. The technical work was transferred to the 'European Centre for the development of vocational training' (Cedefop), which was founded in 1975, explicit reference being made to the recognition problem in the regulation establishing this organization. On the subject of a concerted approach to vocational training problems, Article 2 of this regulation reads: 'The Centre's activity in this respect shall deal in particular with the problem of the approximation of standards of vocational training with a view to the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents attesting completion of vocational training'.¹³ In 1978 the Centre began forming groups of experts (one per Member State and one each from European organizations representing industry, crafts and trades, and the trade unions), their task being 'to deduce from the practical conditions prevailing in the trade, the occupational requirements which must be met in practice, and to ascertain whether and to what extent the skills and knowledge required in the practice of the profession are taught through systematic training in the Member States'.¹⁴ The expert groups base their work on the Sedoc system, a Community classification of occupations that was developed to facilitate exchanges of workers.¹⁵ So far reports have been drawn up on the 'electrical trades', 'motor vehicle trades', 'the hotel, restaurant and catering trade', 'construction' and 'agriculture', which '(a) describe the practical occupational requirements to be satisfied by skilled wage- and salary-earners in some 60 individual occupations, (b) establish what certificates and training methods are required for these occupations in the Member States and (c) make recommendations regarding the comparability of certificates of occupational qualification with a view to the mutual recognition of the right of access to occupations'.¹⁶ The work so far done by the expert groups, which for practical reasons has been confined to selected occupational groups at Level 2 of the Community structure, has been praised in a report by the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training, which particularly approved of the use of a pragmatic method based on the Community structure of training levels.¹⁷ The Commission also expressed the view in this context 'that the same basic principles and criteria, and the same tested methodology, should be capable of being applied at the other levels in the structure of levels of training, thus enabling comparability of qualifications to be established across a much broader field'.¹⁸ On the basis of the

results achieved by Cedefop's expert groups, the Commission submitted to the Council on 20 September 1983 a 'proposal for a Council decision on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community'.¹⁹ This mainly provides for: 'the adoption of a Community structure of levels of training; the endorsement of the basic methodology for establishing the comparability of vocational training qualifications for given occupations or groups of occupations; common action by the Member States to enable workers to use their vocational training qualifications for the purposes of access to related employment in another Member State; scope for the Member States to utilize existing structures and arrangements for the implementation of the provisions of this Decision; the establishment in each Member State of a national coordination office; the periodic review and updating of the agreed Community job descriptions and comparative tables relating to the comparability of vocational training qualifications; the submission of periodic national reports on the practical implementation of the arrangements and the results'.²⁰

After favourable opinions had been delivered by the Economic and Social Committee on 14 December 1983²¹ and by the European Parliament on 17 February 1984,²² the Commission submitted an amended and extended proposal,²³ which places particular emphasis on the importance of rapid progress towards the comparability of vocational training qualifications for all skilled workers and subsequently for other levels of training. The same view is taken in the report of the 'ad hoc Committee on a People's Europe',²⁴ which urges the Council to invite the Community institutions 'to intensify their efforts towards greater transparency of evidence of professional qualifications' and 'to consider the introduction of a European vocational training pass for craftsmen and workers with special qualifications'.²⁵

The above-mentioned documents resulted in the adoption of the 'Council decision of 16 July 1985 on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community'.²⁶ Although this decision, which is directed at the Member States and the Commission, largely follows the Commission's proposal, it also contains a number of modifications, relating primarily to the proposed adoption of the structure of levels of training. In the Council's view this structure

Europe

can only be regarded as a reference point, which was used in the work of establishing the comparability of vocational training qualifications, but 'does not reflect all the training systems being developed in the Member States'.²⁷ Article 2 accordingly reads: 'The work may use as a reference the structure of training levels . . . The text of the said structure is attached . . . for information purposes.' The Council too stresses the need for more rapid joint action by the Member States and the Commission in establishing the comparability of vocational qualifications. Although work in this respect should 'first and foremost concentrate on the occupational qualifications of skilled workers', the scope of the decision 'may subsequently be extended.' Article 3 describes the procedure to be adopted by the Commission in establishing the comparability of vocational training qualifications. This requires relevant occupations or groups of occupations to be selected 'on a proposal from the Member States or the competent employer or worker organizations at Community level.' The next steps relate to the 'drawing up of mutually agreed Community job descriptions', the matching of the vocational training qualifications recognized in the Member States with these job descriptions, and the establishment of tables incorporating the Sedoc and national occupational classification codes and information on the level of vocational training (Article 4 of the Community's proposal had read: 'level of vocational training according to the Community structure of levels of training') and on national occupational titles and corresponding vocational training qualifications. The tables are also to contain data on the organizations and institutions responsible for dispensing vocational training and the authorities and organizations issuing or validating vocational training qualifications. In addition, the 'mutually agreed Community job descriptions' and a model of a standard information sheet for each occupation or group of occupations are to be published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*, and information on the established comparabilities is to be disseminated to all appropriate bodies. Adequate dissemination of information is also to be ensured by national coordination bodies designated by the Member States

(Article 4). The Commission is also required (Article 4 (4)) to continue examining the possibility of introducing a European vocational training pass as suggested by the *ad hoc* Committee and regularly to review and update the mutually agreed job descriptions. As a departure from Article 7 of the Commission's proposal — which called for the submission of national reports every two years — Article 6 of the Council's decision requires each Member State to submit a report on the practical application of the procedures and the results obtained in the first instance two years after the adoption of the decision and every four years thereafter. The Commission is also invited to submit a report at appropriate intervals on its own work and the application of the Council's decision in the Member States.

The Commission has outlined the time frame for further efforts to establish the comparability of vocational training between the Member States in its white paper to the Council²⁸: 'In practical terms, this objective should be achieved by 1988 so that the second phase can be launched before 1990. This second phase would involve the introduction of a European "vocational training card", serving as proof that the holder has been awarded a specific qualification'.²⁹ To this end, the Commission is to submit to the Council in 1985 a draft framework directive on a general system of recognition, the main elements of which will be: 'the principle of mutual trust between the Member States; the principle of the comparability of university studies between the Member States; the mutual recognition of degrees and diplomas without prior harmonization of the conditions for access to and the exercise of professions; and the extension of the general system to salary earners. Lastly, any difference, notably as regards training, between the Member States would be compensated by professional experience'.³⁰

Notes

- ¹ See COM(81) 186 final of 29 April 1981 and the Working Documents of the European Parliament of 13 February 1984, Document 1-1354/83 (PE 80077 fin.), pp. 6 and 15.
- ² European Communities, Treaties establishing the European Communities, Luxembourg 1978, pp. 261 – 273 and 311 – 315.

- ³ For the directives adopted by the Council see *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 10, 1983, pp. 106 – 109. In the meantime, other directives (on architects, for example) have been adopted.
- ⁴ For comments on the fact that Article 57 of the EEC Treaty is restricted to the recognition of diplomas for the liberal professions and the activities of the self-employed and makes no reference to wage-earners see the article by Paola Gaiotti de Biase in Cedefop (ed.), *Vocational Training*, No 10/82, pp. 3 and 4.
- ⁵ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No 63, 20. 4. 1963; the decision has also been published separately.
- ⁶ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 81, 12. 8. 1971.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ⁸ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 98/1, 10. 8. 1974.
- ⁹ COM(83) 482 final, point 17.
- ¹⁰ FRAGNIÈRE, GABRIEL and SELLIN, BURKART, *Die Annäherung der Ausbildungsniveaus im Rahmen der Harmonisierung der Berufsbildung in der Europäischen Gemeinschaft*, Brussels (Institute for University Studies in the European Community) 1973; the 1974 supplement to the study was published under reference No V/1608/74.
- ¹¹ The structure of levels of training is reproduced in Cedefop, *Vocational Training*, No 10/82, p. 43.
- ¹² FRAGNIÈRE, GABRIEL and SELLIN, BURKART, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
- ¹³ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No L 39/2, 13. 2. 1975.
- ¹⁴ Expert Group 'Electro', *Opinion concerning the proposed procedure for approximating training levels at skilled worker level (Level 2)*, Cedefop, Berlin 1979, p. 5.
- ¹⁵ A 'by-product' of the work was the realization that the Sedoc system needs updating; see Expert Group 'Electro', *op. cit.*, p. 33.
- ¹⁶ SELLIN, BURKART, *Comparability of vocational training certificates in the Member States of the European Community*, in: Cedefop (ed.), *Vocational Training*, No 18/1985.
- ¹⁷ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 264, 4. 10. 1983, pp. 10 and 11.
- ¹⁸ COM(83) 482 final, point 23; for the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study see COM(81) 186 final.
- ¹⁹ COM(83) 482 final; *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 264, 4. 10. 1983, pp. 5 – 11.
- ²⁰ COM(83) 482 final, point 26.
- ²¹ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 35, 9. 2. 1984, p. 12.
- ²² *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No C 77, 19. 3. 1984, p. 137.
- ²³ COM(84) 406 final, 12. 7. 1984.
- ²⁴ *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 3, 1985, pp. 111 – 117.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 21, p. 133.
- ²⁶ *Official Journal of the European Communities*, No L 199, 31. 7. 1985, pp. 56 – 59.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 56 (preamble).
- ²⁸ Commission of the European Communities, *Completing the internal market*, White paper from the Commission to the European Council, Luxembourg 1985.
- ²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 25.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*

COUNCIL DECISION

of 16 July 1985

on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the Member States of the European Community

(85/368/EEC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 128 thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision 63/266/EEC of 2 April 1963 laying down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy⁽¹⁾, and in particular the eighth principle thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission, as amended on 17 July 1984,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament⁽²⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee⁽³⁾,

Whereas the eighth principle of Decision 63/266/EEC is to make it possible to achieve the mutual recognition of certificates and other documents confirming completion of vocational training;

Whereas the Council resolution of 6 June 1974⁽⁴⁾ on the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications requires lists of such qualifications recognized as being equivalent to be drawn up;

Whereas the absence of the said mutual recognition is a factor inhibiting freedom of movement for workers within the Community, insofar as it restricts the possibility for workers seeking employment in one Member State to rely on vocational qualifications which they have obtained in another Member State;

Whereas there is a very substantial degree of diversity in the vocational training systems in the Community; whereas these systems are constantly requiring adaptation to the new situations brought about by the impact of technological change on employment and job content;

Whereas the Council resolution of 11 July 1983 concerning vocational training policies in the Euro-

pean Community in the 1980s⁽⁵⁾ affirmed the need for a convergence of policies in the vocational training field, whilst recognizing the diversity of training systems in the Member States, and the need for Community action to be flexible;

Whereas it has been possible for the Commission to establish as a reference point, with the help of the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training, a structure of levels of training which represents a first step towards the achievement of the aims laid down in the eighth principle of Decision 63/266/EEC, but whereas this structure does not reflect all the training systems being developed in the Member States;

Whereas for the skilled-worker level within this structure, and for selected priority groups of occupations, it has been possible to arrive at practical job descriptions and to identify the corresponding vocational training qualifications in the various Member States;

Whereas consultation with the vocational sectors concerned has provided evidence that these results can provide firms, workers and public authorities with valuable information concerning the comparability of vocational training qualifications;

Whereas the same basic methodology could be applied to other occupations or groups of occupations on advice from the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training and with the collaboration of employers, workers and the public authorities in the vocational sectors concerned;

Whereas it is therefore essential to make rapid progress towards the comparability of vocational training qualifications for all skilled workers, and to extend the work to other levels of training as quickly as possible;

Whereas it is advisable to have all the necessary opinions, in particular that of the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training, and the technical assistance of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, and to enable the Member States and the Commission to act in accordance with existing procedures;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 63, 20. 4. 1963, p. 1338/63.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 77, 19. 3. 1984, p. 11.

⁽³⁾ OJ No C 35, 9. 2. 1984, p. 12.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 98, 20. 8. 1974, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ No C 193, 20. 7. 1983, p. 2.

Whereas the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training delivered an opinion at its meeting on 18 and 19 January 1983;

Whereas paragraph 21 of the report of the Committee on a People's Europe of 29 and 30 March 1985 should be taken into account,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The aim of enabling workers to make better use of their qualifications, in particular for the purposes of obtaining suitable employment in another Member State, shall require, for features of job descriptions mutually agreed by the Member States on behalf of workers, within the meaning of Article 128 of the Treaty, expedited common action by the Member States and the Commission to establish the comparability of vocational training qualifications in the Community and improved information on the subject.

Article 2

1. The Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, shall undertake work to fulfil the aims set out in Article 1 on the comparability of vocational training qualifications between the various Member States, in respect of specific occupations or groups of occupations.

2. The work may use as a reference the structure of training levels drawn up by the Commission with the help of the Advisory Committee for Vocational Training.

The text of the said structure is attached to this Decision for information purposes.

3. The work referred to in paragraph 2 shall first and foremost concentrate on the occupational qualifications of skilled workers in mutually agreed occupations or groups of occupations.

4. The scope of this Decision may subsequently be extended to permit work to be undertaken, on a proposal from the Commission, at other levels of training.

5. The SEDOC register, used in connection with the European system for the international clearing of vacancies and applications for employment, shall, whenever possible, be used as the common frame of reference for vocational classifications.

Article 3

The following working procedure shall be employed by the Commission in establishing the comparability of vocational training qualifications in close coopera-

tion with the Member States and the organizations of workers and employers at Community level:

- selection of the relevant occupations or groups of occupations on a proposal from the Member States or the competent employer or worker organizations at Community level;
- drawing up mutually agreed Community job descriptions for the occupations or groups of occupations referred to in the first indent;
- matching the vocational training qualifications recognized in the various Member States with the job descriptions referred to in the second indent;
- establishing tables incorporating information on:
 - (a) the SEDOC and national classification codes;
 - (b) the level of vocational training;
 - (c) for each Member State, the vocational title and corresponding vocational training qualifications;
 - (d) the organizations and institutions responsible for dispensing vocational training;
 - (e) the authorities and organizations competent to issue or to validate diplomas, certificates, or other documents certifying that vocational training has been acquired;
- publication of the mutually agreed Community job descriptions and the comparative tables in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*;
- establishment, within the meaning of Article 4 (3), of a standard information sheet for each occupation or group of occupations, to be published in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*;
- dissemination of information on the established comparabilities to all appropriate bodies at national, regional and local levels, as well as throughout the occupational sectors concerned.

This action could be supported by the creation of a Community-wide data base, if experience shows the need for such a base.

Article 4

1. Each Member State shall designate a coordination body, based wherever possible on existing structures, which shall be responsible for ensuring — in close collaboration with the social partners and the occupational sectors concerned — the proper dissemination of information to all interested bodies. The Member States shall also designate the body responsible for contacts with the coordination bodies in other Member States and with the Commission.

2. The coordination bodies of the Member States shall be competent to establish appropriate arrangements with regard to vocational training information for their competent national, regional or local bodies as well as for their own nationals wishing to work in other Member States and for workers who are nationals of other Member States, on established cases of comparable vocational qualifications.

3. The bodies referred to in paragraph 2 may supply on request in all Member States an information sheet drawn up in accordance with the model provided for in the sixth indent of Article 3, which the worker may present to the employer together with his national certificate.

4. The Commission is to continue studying the introduction of the European vocational training pass advocated by the Committee for a People's Europe in paragraph 21 of its report of 29 and 30 March 1985.

5. The Commission shall give the bodies referred to in paragraph 2, on request, all necessary assistance and advice concerning the preparation and setting up of the arrangements provided for in paragraph 2, including the adaptation and checking of the relevant technical documents.

Article 5

The Commission shall, in close liaison with the national coordination bodies designated by the Member States,

- review and update at appropriate, regular intervals, in close cooperation with the Member States and the organizations of workers and employers at Community level, the mutually agreed Community

job descriptions and the comparative tables relating to the comparability of vocational training qualifications,

- where necessary, formulate proposals for a more efficient operation of the system including other measures likely to improve the situation as regards the comparability of vocational qualification certificates,
- where necessary, assist in the case of technical difficulties encountered by the national authorities or specialized bodies concerned.

Article 6

Each Member State shall submit to the Commission, for the first time two years after adoption of this Decision, and therefore every four years, a national report on the implementation of this Decision and the results obtained.

The Commission shall, at appropriate intervals, submit a report on its own work and on the application of this Decision in the Member States.

Article 7

This Decision is addressed to the Member States and the Commission.

Done at Brussels, 16 July 1985.

For the Council

The President

M. FISCHBACH

Open forum

We are happy to reprint press notices sent to us by our readers.

Cendis Annonce

Cendis has announced that its new IDEF service – Information and Documentation on Employment and Vocational Training – started up in January 1985.

IDEF systematically sifts through about a hundred Belgian journals and those published in French by international bodies and offers a unique source of information in Belgium that will be found invaluable by anyone concerned with the problems of employment and training.

IDEF publishes a half-yearly bibliographical bulletin giving full references for each article listed, together with a comprehensive summary. Each bulletin also contains a detailed index of contents and particulars of the Belgian libraries where the journals are to be found.

Details on subscribing to the bulletin and other services is available from Cendis-IDEF, Avenue Jeanne 44, 1050 Brussels, telephone 02/649.20.28, extension 2432.

DESS Formation permanente

Paris University I (Sorbonne-Pantheon) is sponsoring a course in 1985-86 that is to be run by the Centre DESS Formation Permanente. The focus is on the job of the training manager (planning, setting up and administering training). The following particulars have been sent to us in a press release.

This is a 480-hour course on the theory and methodology of the work of training manager, leading to a national post-graduate diploma in specialist higher studies, the *Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisés* (DESS).

It is aimed at those already in charge of training (in business and industry, the civil service, service agencies, associations. Financial bodies, etc.) who wish to further their knowledge of the methodology of planning, starting up and administering training and hope to bring training more to the fore in socio-economic life.

The Course

The course consists of three parts:

- a set curriculum,
- optional sequences,
- personal research.

The curriculum

360 hours from September 1985 to June 1986, taking up one week a month. Six subjects are studied:

(1) *The law on training*

(Dominique Schälchli)

- institutions and how they work
- the law and its application,
- comparative law.

(2) *Organizational sociology*

(José Arocena)

- the tools for organizational analysis,
- the positioning and strategy of training.

(3) *An analysis of training needs*

(Alain Meignant)

- the concept of training needs,
- tools for the analysis of needs,
- the methodology of needs analysis

(4) *Objectives and evaluation*

(Janine Freiche)

- the concepts of objectives and evaluation,
- the choice of training objectives,
- methodology of evaluating the effects of training.

(5) *Teaching adults*

(Etienne Verne)

- the contribution of social science to the teaching of adults,
- an analysis of teaching methods,
- the adult in the learning situation.

(6) *Management and training: the place and role of training in socio-economic life*

(Pierre Caspar)

- the training manager's management tools:
 - the concept of training policy, the training plan, the purchase of training, training records, the training audit,
- the place and role of training in socio-economic life; economic strategies and training, training and employment, the training market, training and personnel management; the training apparatus, training as a development tool and as an instrument of change.

As part of their courses, the tutors bring in specialists (professionals, university teachers, the two sides of industry, etc.) to discuss specific points.

The tutors expect trainees to do a good deal of work of their own on each of the subjects covered, e.g. contribute information so that

work can be done on real-life situations, write up and talk abouts their experience, apply the methodology they are learning in real-life, prepare papers and read widely.

The University of Paris Centre d'Education Permanente has a documentation service available to students on the course.

For information and applications for the course, apply to:

Centre Pierre Mendes France,
Bureau C 13 02 (13th floor),
tel.: 586 85 78

Contact: University of Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne
Centre d'Education Permanente
Rue de Tolbiac 90, 75013 Paris
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Deutsches Museum

Material for the continuing training of in-company trainers

As part of a project that is being financially assisted by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science teaching materials used in the initial and continuing training of in-company trainers are being collected by the Deutsches Museum. The purpose of the project is to record developments in the history of technology and to depict them from didactic angles in such a way that account can be taken of them in in-company training. The history of technology is not intended to be an end in itself but an additional means of increasing trainees' interest in their specialized field and making the present situation more comprehensible to them through a description of past events. The project staff believe this is most likely to succeed if the various stages in the history of technology are portrayed against the background of general historical developments, thus revealing the interplay between technical advances and political, social and cultural history.

In late 1980 the Deutsches Museum and the Rowohlt publishing company signed a contract on the publication of a series of paperbacks with the collective title

Kulturgeschichte der Naturwissenschaften und der Technik

(Cultural history of the natural sciences and technology).

Contact: Museumsinsel 1, 8000 München 22 – Tel. (0 89) 2 17 91.

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