

# **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

*Seminar report  
Berlin 28 - 30 sept. 1977*

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THE PROBLEM OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE LIGHT  
OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN

Contents		Page
I	<u>Introduction</u>	1
1.	Preparation of the Seminar	1
2.	Basic premises	2
II	<u>Main problems in the vocational training of women</u>	3
1.	Basic education and choice of occupation	3
a.	Outline of the problem	3
b.	Attitudes of the Seminar participants	4
2.	Vocational training	6
a.	Outline of the problem	6
b.	Attitudes of the participants	7
3.	Further training and promotion	10
a.	Outline of the problem	10
b.	A problem study subsidized from the Social Fund	10
c.	Attitudes of the participants	12
4.	Retraining and change of occupation	13
a.	Outline of the problem	13
b.	Attitudes of the participants	13
5.	Re-entry after an interval or belated initial entry into working life	15
a.	Outline of the problem	15
b.	Problem studies subsidized from the European Social Fund	16
c.	Attitudes of the participants	17
III	<u>Seminar results and demands</u>	19
1.	Courses of action recommended for the Commission	19
2.	Courses of action recommended for the two sides of industry	20
3.	Courses of action recommended for the Member States	21
4.	Courses of action recommended for CEDEFOP	23

# THE PROBLEM OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE LIGHT OF EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN

## I. Introduction

### 1. Preparation of the Seminar

The Management Board of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP), in common with many other institutions, has occupied itself with the universal question of women's rights since its inception. During the business year 1977 it appeared as a focal point in the Centre's working programme under the title "The Problem of Vocational Training in the Light of Equality of Opportunity for Women". These endeavours culminated - but did not by any means terminate - in a Seminar on this subject which was held in the Berlin Congress Hall from 28 - 30 September 1977.

Prior to the Seminar there was intensive contact with the competent bodies in the nine Member States, established initially by Frau Maria Pierret, who is responsible for matters concerning women at CEDEFOP. As a result of the initiative taken by the Centre, two working groups had been formed with, on the one hand, representatives of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and, on the other, representatives of the European Centre of Public Enterprises (CEEP), the European Training and Promotion Centre for Farming and Rural Life (CEPFAR) and the Union of Industries of the European Community (UNICE). Both groups contributed towards the preparation of the Seminar. The preparatory work also embraced the model schemes for the vocational integration of women subsidized from the resources of the European Social Fund and these were subsequently presented and elucidated at the Seminar in the form of a comparative summary. The participants' working papers also included Frau Pierret's report on her journeys, the concepts of the Centre itself on these subjects

and the viewpoints of the two sides of industry, an abridged version of the Report on the Educational Situation of Girls at Secondary Level II (commissioned by DG XII) and the final protocol of a UNESCO seminar on a similar theme.

Seventy people attended the Seminar, including representatives of the Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs, representatives of the governments of the Member States and representatives of both employers' and employees' organizations.

## 2. Basic premises

Some main questions had already emerged clearly from the viewpoints expressed and the reports received during the preparatory stage and these were then discussed in detail during the Seminar, in various working groups and in plenary session. They formed the basis for the recommendations and demands which the Seminar, as the outcome of its work, addressed to the EC Commission, the national governments, the two sides of industry and, last but not least, to CEDEFOP itself.

One can pick out five culminating points which, viewed chronologically, also mark the various phases in a woman's life - education, vocational training, an interval for rearing children, return to working life:

1. Basic education and choice of occupation
2. Vocational training
3. Further training and promotion
4. Retraining and change of occupation
5. Re-entry or belated initial entry into working life.

Discussion of the individual problem complexes was based on the premise, accepted by all the groups participating in the Seminar, that the problem of vocational training for women can be discussed only in the context of the employment situation as a whole. This emerges unequivocally from the preparatory papers and the viewpoints of the participants. This realisation has resulted in priority being given to the question of training in relation to employment.

## II MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF WOMEN

### 1. Basic education and choice of occupation

#### a. Outline of the problem

Although women can now be regarded as having equal status under the laws of the EC Member States, the concept of the traditional stereotype roles still persists to a large extent among the population. Despite numerous attempts to eliminate them, they are still perpetuated within the family, in pre-school education and during schooling. To mention only a few examples, children are still given either "boys' or girls' toys". Certain behavioural taboos still force children into the old sexual roles ( ... but a boy doesn't cry... ! ). Identification with adults occupying a central position in their lives, and who themselves often conform with this role pattern, means that this sex-specific behaviour is firmly established quite early in life. Even when women are in employment, domestic chores and the rearing of children are still regarded as being their responsibility; there is still far too little sharing of family tasks on a partnership basis.

Following early childhood, this kind of adoption of roles develops still further at school. In text-books, for instance, various occupations and activities are still linked to the sexes ( the mother cooks, the father reads the newspaper; the doctor is male, his assistant female). Certain disciplines, such as handicrafts and needlework, are far from being obligatory for both sexes everywhere.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the part played by the mass media (especially television), which continue to present the traditional pictures of man and woman.

There are a large number of studies, to which reference was made at the Seminar, which show how this sex-specific upbringing affects the choice of occupation. Women are generally regarded

- not least by themselves - as possessing only those capabilities which predestine them for subordinate, less qualified activities and thus women also frequently underestimate the contribution they could make to the family budget.

Young girls very often aim at a short period of training, leading to a lower-qualified occupation, because they believe that the wages for such work would always be sufficient "additional income". It is significant that, to date, neither the schools nor the vocational guidance services give really comprehensive information, providing positive motivation, about occupational fields which are open to girls. The statistics of the Land Berlin Employment Office show that male would-be apprentices have twice as many skilled occupations to choose from as their female counterparts. Where the work is not manifestly more suitable for females, firms give preference to male apprentices, even if the girl applicants can produce better school-leaving certificates.

b. Attitudes of the Seminar participants

The Berlin researcher Helga Thomas, in the report which she prepared for the Directorate-General for Research, Science and Education on the education of girls at Secondary Level II, is of the opinion that scholastic education is steadily losing its importance as the source of inequality and discrimination against women in vocational training and working life. This view is not shared by all researchers in this field. CEDEFOP tends towards the assumption that the attitude formed in early childhood is the main reason for the subsequent discrimination against women which still prevails and which will persist in the future unless drastic changes are made. This is why the Centre also concerns itself with changing the attitudes and modes of behaviour which have hitherto stood in the way of true equality of status for women. It is emphasised that it is the duty of the EC and its Member States to take the initiative in this direction now, during the economic recession, because at such times - marked as they are by high unemployment - there is a



tendency to take away from women some of the rights granted them when economic prosperity was at peak.

The employers' side, too, was highly vocal on the connection between sex-specific education and upbringing and choice of occupation. Schools divided according to sex are an obstacle to the personal and vocational emancipation of all their pupils. The employers also made particular reference to the sex-specific orientation of curricula in coeducational schools, which influenced the "proper-to-role" occupational choice (draughtsmanship, handicrafts and metal work for boys, needlework and domestic science for girls). Specialisation should be according to ability, aptitude and inclination, and not according to sex. Before children reached the specialisation stage at school, both they and their parents should be offered better vocational guidance and the latter encouraged to concern themselves more with their children's education. They, the schools, the national training organizations, the vocational guidance services and the employers would have to work together in order to be able to provide information while the youngsters are still at school, so that the deficiencies in this field can be remedied - deficiencies which affect the girls far more than the boys.

The committee of women trade union officials of ETUC repeatedly emphasised, both in its preparatory paper and during the Seminar that it was not inclined towards any further analyses and demanded that, first and foremost, the existing guidelines and recommendations on this problem be fully utilized and implemented at long last. To make this quite clear, the ETUC statement repeatedly refers to such sources as the UNESCO recommendations, the recommendations and agreements of the International Labour Organization, the resolutions and recommendations of the Committee of Ministers of the European Council and the resolutions of ETUC on the employment of women in Europe. With regard to "Basic education

and choice of occupation" these unanimously demand equality of opportunity in securing admission to all levels of education and training, with the same vocational guidance for boys and girls.

## 2. Vocational training

### a. Outline of the problem

A particularly critical phase in the development of every young person is the transition from school to the world of work and for girls this period is beset with special difficulties. Because so many occupations are sex-related they have nothing like the entire spectrum of the labour market to choose from when deciding upon their future occupation. Very often their vocational aspirations are strongly influenced by the "woman's role" concept, as is indicated both by the choice of occupation and their behaviour while undergoing training.

In rural areas parents are far less ready than their town-dwelling counterparts to consider allowing their daughters to make lengthy journeys or go to another district in order to undergo vocational training. In general, girls are regarded as being less able than boys to cope with the stresses this would entail.

In addition, vocational training for girls is often regarded as being too costly: it is contended that money is invested in training a person who, sooner or later, will withdraw from working life in order to marry and assume the role of housewife and mother.

In the documents, the papers giving the various points of view and the discussions an attempt was made to define the elements of adequate vocational training for girls and women.

b. Attitudes of the participants

The concepts and wishes that exist in the countries of the EC today with regard to vocational training for girls were also expressed at the Seminar. According to these, the separate training establishments should disappear and instruction be given, without exception, in mixed classes. As is already the case in Denmark, domestic science courses should also be obligatory for boys everywhere. Training for girls should offer more variety and greater versatility so that, in due course, they too would be able to change their occupation, undergo retraining and participate in further training. A more realistic approach is also demanded, with closer links between training and the world of work. This extremely important point is also underlined by both sides of industry, as is the need to revalue certain occupational fields. Training and work of a technical and manual nature particularly - i. e. blue collar work generally - should no longer be regarded as inferior. In order to put this across to those directly affected as well, appropriate pedagogic methods should be applied in training - as in all areas of vocational training - which will mobilise all their personal powers, reveal their capabilities, make them more venturesome and increase their sense of responsibility and ability to make decisions. Furthermore, it was emphasised that basic vocational training should naturally be available for girls everywhere in adequate measure and where this is not the case aid would have to be made available in individual instances and special measures prepared.

All the countries expect CEDEFOP to promote such reform in vocational training through appropriate public relations work also. In order that a European approach may be developed for improving the situation the Centre should, for instance, prepare a comparative analysis of European educational systems, examine this with regard to the admission chances for girls and establish whether the available funds are being put to optimal use. Finally, no survey

has been made of the so-called new fields of work open to women and the courses of training provided in them.

The paper describing CEDEFOP's standpoint refers specifically to the work of the Zandvoort Conference (December 1976), to which frequent reference was also made during the Seminar. There the main topics had been youth unemployment and the transition from school to the world of work. The outcome of this conference was a list of urgent measures in the field of vocational training which are to help combat unemployment, of studies to clarify the reasons for lack of motivation for vocational training, work and further training, of measures to bridge the gap between training and work and others to bring about a closer connection between scholastic education and vocational training.

The employers' representatives acknowledge their obligation to engage workers without regard to their sex and to permit no discrimination in vocational training, because optimal use of an employee's services essentially implies giving that worker optimal training. But the comment was made that while it is the duty of the employer to provide training at the place of work and make provision for further training, the final responsibility and initiative must rest with the women themselves. Impediments of a practical, organizational nature ("doing two jobs", attitude of husband and colleagues) would have to be examined and tackled through carefully directed measures. It was stated that the employers accepted their partial responsibility to promote such changes but, at the same time, stressed that without participation by the trade unions and the employees concerned at their place of work nothing could be achieved. In the opinion of the employers particular importance must be attached to supporting measures such as the provision of child care facilities and so on. Nevertheless, the latter are not regarded as being the employers' responsibility.

The women trade union officials base their point of view on the premise that women workers in the countries of the Community make a substantial contribution to the economy and that the vast majority of them, due to the kind of vocational training they receive, are poorly prepared for working life. Despite numerous studies of the background and causes of this state of affairs, no substantial improvements have come about as yet. As the trade unions see it, more detailed discussions between the two sides of industry could contribute towards the removal of the label "Labour market wide open for men, access difficult for women". The subjects could be: Difficulties facing women wishing to enter certain fields of employment, such as the traditionally masculine occupations, and appropriate measures for eliminating such difficulties.

At the plenary sessions, trade union representatives repeatedly brought up the fact that equal opportunity in training at the place of work can be achieved only if all the day-to-day household tasks are fully shared by the two partners. When women carry the entire burden of housework and child-rearing they are prevented from taking full advantage of the vocational opportunities which are open to them.

Some contributions to the discussion referred to the problem of the inadequate training given to women working in family undertakings in trade and agriculture. They, too, should be offered the opportunity to acquire qualifications and participate in further training, as is already being done in model schemes in Ireland.

A particularly sharp controversy arose over the question of quotas. The outcome was that neither employers nor employees regard quotas as a suitable instrument for bringing about equality of opportunity for men and women in the working world. Nevertheless, it became apparent that, in trade union circles, quotas are not excluded as a last resort. Financial incentives for firms could also be increased in order that sufficient numbers of women would be employed, without bringing about any regimentation.

### 3. Further training and promotion

#### a. Outline of the problem

Statistics show that women in paid employment have fewer opportunities for promotion than men and that they take less advantage of the further training facilities offered to them than do their male colleagues. This even applies when the women can produce the same vocational qualifications. At the decision-making level, be it in the Administration and the public service, in handicrafts or in industry, women are very thin on the ground.

In many fields where women work, the level at which they are employed is so low that further vocational training is neither justified nor demanded. Because of the concept so many women have of themselves and their assessment of their own subordinate role, there is also little motivation to participate in further training. In addition, they are often prevented from doing so by technical and organizational difficulties which are only dimly outlined by the catchphrase "Double burden of job and family".

#### b. A problem study subsidized from the Social Fund

A particularly good outline of the problem was provided for the Seminar by a study carried out by Manchester University of women in management, taking the example of the textile industry. Financed from the Social Fund, the research group endeavoured to elucidate the situation, the selection criteria for promotion and the attitudes of the women concerned. The numerical distribution confirmed the trend revealed in other studies, whereby women occupy only subordinate positions in the upper administrative echelons. The number of female craftsmen was somewhat higher in those occupations where women form the majority of the work force.

Opinions about the qualities needed at the higher levels differed, not only among the men and women but, even more, among the various age groups. The researchers felt that there were opportunities here for a more democratic and human approach by management. But still the men considered that they alone were capable of holding managerial posts and it is significant that women in leading positions are even more pessimistic about the abilities of their own sex than are their male colleagues. In the selection and promotion process they do not have a more positive attitude towards women. On the whole, the researchers found that while people admitted there was a prejudice against women in working life they maintained that they themselves had none. Here the contradiction between the official policy of equal opportunity and the reality of discrimination becomes apparent and the group found the same phenomenon in the attitude of the trade unions.

Another aspect which must be considered is the fact that promotion within a particular firm is often dominated by the idea of replacing the predecessor and since this is usually a man this fact, again, influences the decision. One third of the women questioned at management level were striving for promotion and this motivation could be further increased if primary training were geared towards it. The women themselves feel that their occupation-specific training is not adequate for climbing the promotion ladder, thus the need for optimal initial training and permanent further training is clear.

c. Attitudes of the participants

In this connection the contributions to the discussion at the Seminar described how certain facts and their interpretation came up again and again; despite variations in the nine countries, these were to be found everywhere. For one thing, it was said, further training was a sheer luxury in certain situations, because the basic pre-requisites like appropriate wages and good working conditions would not be achieved. Then there was the fact that in industry and politics, indeed in society as a whole, there was virtually no awareness of this problem. For the most part it was the men represented there who maintained that women's problems do not exist, that they have equal status in law anyway, or that we are faced with so many more serious problems at present that the problems of women in this field can only be of a secondary nature.

Since further training facilities have hitherto benefited men almost exclusively, the Seminar participants felt it must be considered whether, in order to remedy this deficiency, there should now be positive discrimination in favour of women, with special initiatives to correct the situation. Since, in the past, programmes were entirely oriented to male participation, the content, methods and organization of these new ones would have to be adjusted to the needs of women. Particular attention would have to be paid to the most disadvantaged groups of women, the migrant workers, women in rural areas and those in sectors experiencing economic decline.

The employers' representatives also spoke in favour of "positive discrimination". They considered that employers, who have a duty towards all employees as regards vocational promotion, must assume a special obligation towards women in view of the need to remedy these deficiencies. The main inhibiting factors were inadequate initial training ( or none at all ) and the child-rearing interval.



The women trade union officials, who were presenting the views of the European Trade Union Confederation at the Seminar, demanded equal opportunity for advancement for both sexes. An important proposal concerned the introduction of promotion opportunities in occupations where they do not exist at all at present, and here women would be very much affected. Revaluation of jobs in the so-called feminized sectors would also be a step in this direction.

#### 4. Retraining and change of occupation

##### a. Outline of the problem

As a result of rationalisation, technical progress and restructuring in agriculture and industry, many jobs traditionally done by women are disappearing. Examples, attributable to various causes, are areas of industrial decline and sectors in which automation is particularly rapid. Here the need for retraining and change of occupation is particularly great. The measures so far taken to deal with this problem are disquietingly few. Some which are subsidized from the European Social Fund are in the experimental stage.

##### b. Attitudes of the participants

In the course of the discussions at the Seminar it became apparent that every Member State would like to see greater liquidity of the Social Fund for the initiation and support of such retraining programmes and, in addition, careful examination of the selection criteria for deciding which measures are worth promoting - measures which must be directed towards sectors where there are definite prospects of employment. And here the labour markets would have to be examined even more closely. At the same time an analysis of the existing training courses should be undertaken in order to establish whether they correspond to the requirements of the labour market.

In this connection it also becomes very clear that it is absolutely essential for women generally to be better informed about the labour market and what it has to offer, since many women and girls still choose occupations in which there is simply no future any longer. According to many Seminar participants, the long-term solution to this problem can lie only in a high standard of training aimed at versatility.

To bring this about, women would have to be given time off from work, fully paid, for further training and periods during which they had no work used for this purpose. For CEDEFOP it was emphasised, without going into the problems of "horizontal mobility" in detail, that the Centre is prepared to examine the general problem of structural changes.

Attention was drawn by the employers' representatives to the planning aspect, which assumes special importance when changes are taking place in the labour market, whether due to recession or upswing in certain sectors or to the rapid development of new techniques. It was pointed out that redundancy resulting from rationalisation did not always merely mean hardship for those affected - often their retraining brought valuable experience and an opportunity for further development, both personally and professionally.

Here, too, the women trade union officials refer to the resolutions and recommendations that already exist and which demand, within the framework of continuous further training, specifically directed further training courses, retraining courses and shortened vocational training courses. These should be accessible to both sexes and also take into account subjects of a general educational nature. ETUC considers that in implementing such measures preference could be given in certain sectors to exclusively female groups, but the aim must be the integration of women, not their isolation within the labour market.

New branches to which the retrained women could be transferred are the construction industry, furniture making and responsible positions in management.

5. Re-entry after an interval or belated initial entry into working life

a. Outline of the problem

A further problem area in the vocational training of women has emerged in the age group which wants to return to work after a long interval, or take up employment for the first time at a mature age.

This need has become apparent in all the EC countries, even in Ireland and Italy, where the traditional concept of the woman's role prevails most of all. The need for such training permeates every level of society. The reasons for wishing to take up employment can lie in the need for self-expression and personal development as well as in financial necessity. At present there are many model schemes, in all the nine countries, for offering the women vocational training and ensuring that the necessary supporting measures are taken. Some are financed, up to 50% of the total cost, from the European Social Fund, others by the national governments and both public and private educational/training institutions. In nearly every case they are being scientifically studied and evaluated.

All these initiatives acknowledge the fact that, in many instances, the actual training measures have to be preceded by a general educational or compensatory phase, in which the establishment of a group where experiences can be discussed and exchange processes developed among the women is of great importance.

The accompanying measures, which must run parallel with the preliminary phase, vocational training and the initial period at work, should include socio-pedagogic care of these women, also organizational support such as child-minding and so on.

b. Problem studies subsidized from the Social Fund

A precise insight into the situation of these women, their motivation and their successes as a result of measures taken, is provided by the synopsis of model schemes prepared for the Seminar and the preparatory investigations of the European Social Fund.

All the schemes were concerned with the re-integration or belated entry of women into working life. The comparative analysis revealed some aspects which could be regarded as indispensable in similar projects. For instance a preparatory phase, which would serve to give psychological stability as well as the opportunity to acquire or reactivate occupational skills and basic knowledge. Particular importance must also be attached to vocational guidance for women, which should come into action even at this early stage. Personnel engaged in such work would have to undergo further training in order to be able to break down preconceived sex-specific notions on occupational choice here also. The socio-pedagogic care and organizational support (child-minding etc.) which accompanied practical on-the-job training and theoretical instruction contributed substantially to the success of these model schemes. Very important here, too, are the efforts to provide variable part-time work demanding qualifications, because for many women with extensive family commitments, such as very young children, this offers the only possibility of taking up employment.

c. Attitudes of the participants

The differing need structures were reflected in the contributions made by the Seminar participants to the discussion: freshening up of mental powers and information, psychological recreation and acquisition of confidence, re-introduction to work, catching up with technical progress, familiarization with a new occupation. CEDEFOP could play an important part in dealing with these problems if, through appropriate studies, it could provide the stimulus for a European discussion about sectors in which there is a demand for labour and the prospects they offer for women, about the content and methods of the training required here and the supporting measures which could eventually lead to concrete results, and here the concepts should be so explicit that CEDEFOP can submit them to the Commission as a basis for discussion.

It is also conceivable that the Centre will make suggestions to the Member States for improvements in the industrial, commercial and administrative sectors, where integration programmes for women could be provided.

The employers, too, state in their paper that special attention must be paid to those women who re-enter working life after an interval, whether it be long or short. Explaining the problem, they list the sectors which women consider when they want to resume work. First and foremost, there are the accepted "feminine" jobs, for which many of them were probably trained originally. Then comes office work, followed by unskilled employment in factories and trade and, finally, jobs in which they can make use of the skills acquired as housewives and mothers, such as the catering trade or the care of children and old people.

The employers' representatives consider that the reasons why women hardly ever express any interest in other sectors of the labour market are lack of self-confidence as well as the absence of vocational training. It was emphasised that the burden of

solving this particular problem could not be placed upon the employers, simply by expecting them to provide suitable jobs for women. However, by making regular and frequent surveys of the changing structures of the economy and operational analyses, they could help to provide information that would be of use in assessing the employment prospects of women as well.

The women trade union officials point out in their paper that ETUC, the Council of Europe, the ILO and UNESCO have already passed resolutions and made recommendations on these subjects too. All of them know exactly what special problems the training of this group of women presents and suggest remedial and other measures which, however, have not yet been translated into action.

In this connection the officials see it as their task to extend the role of women in the trade union movement and to organize and integrate many more women from this group into the unions - something which has been done all too rarely in the past.

### III RESULTS OF THE SEMINAR AND DEMANDS MADE

In accordance with the tripartite structure of the Centre, which was reflected in the composition of the Seminar, the results of the Seminar took the form of demands, to be translated into action by those to whom they are addressed. Four working groups drew up lists of recommended courses of action - for the EC Commission, for the two sides of industry, for the national governments and for CEDEFOP. The list of suggestions is long and in some instances the reasons for the recommendations are set out in detail. Only a summary can be given here, with priority being given to concrete proposals which could be implemented forthwith.

#### 1. Courses of action recommended for the Commission

The courses of action recommended to the Commission are based on the view that it is precisely in times of economic crisis the Commission should be concerned with giving priority to the integration or reintegration of women in the labour market.

The working group demands that the Commission should display initiative at three levels: at the level of the firms themselves, at that of the education and training carriers and at the level of public opinion.

In particular, the resources of the enlarged European Social Fund should be utilized for this specific purpose. The facilities for giving aid to firms participating in model schemes for the training of women should be extended even further by offering incentives to employers. In making allocations from the total budget of the Fund the priorities already mentioned should be taken into account. Support measures and studies which serve to diminish the existing sex-specific partitioning of the labour market should be given support and, where necessary, promoted. Such projects could

be described and discussed at a further seminar and the reasons for their success or failure analysed.

Another focal point in the work of the Commission should be the public relations field. In a varied, wide-approach campaign throughout all nine EC countries the sharing of roles by men and women in family life, in society, in politics and in the world of work should be propagated; here the education and training carriers would have a special part to play and the mass media would have to give their support. Individual steps to be taken in this direction would include the production and showing of appropriate films, checking text-books to ensure that the contents conformed with this aim and the further training of the instructors themselves.

## 2. Courses of action recommended for the two sides of industry

The working group which drew up the list of demands to be presented to the two sides of industry bases its proposals on the premise that women entering or re-entering working life have considerable leeway to make up. If they are to be given equality of opportunity then the jobs which have hitherto been traditionally male preserves must be opened up to them. It is recommended that both employers' and employees' organizations should cooperate with CEDEFOP in order to ensure that the pilot schemes already implemented shall have a multiplier effect.

In order to eliminate those prejudices which exist among the women themselves and in their social surroundings, and which so often influence their occupational wishes and decisions, the two sides of industry would have to disseminate information about new occupations, vocational opportunities and long-term employment prospects, giving details of the jobs, the qualifications needed and the training courses available.



Contact between the two sides of industry and the schools is regarded as being of particular importance. Representatives of firms and trade unions should go to the schools in order to give the pupils a first-hand impression of positive examples of the sharing of roles and thus help to eliminate the fixed-role ideas which boys and girls have about their future occupations.

The group could not agree on the desirability of recommending quotas as an instrument for bringing about equality of opportunity in working life. Nevertheless, the advocates of quotas suggest that experience already gained in this direction be studied.

### 3. Courses of action recommended for the Member States

The working group which formulated these recommendations was aware that, because of the different situations in the individual Member States, not all of them can be implemented everywhere. The group considers that there are three levels at which the Member States should launch their efforts: vocational measures, legislative measures and public relations.

The group has the impression that the majority of the people engaged in vocational guidance work are not adequately qualified for giving women and girls advice about traditionally masculine jobs as well as the "usual" women's occupations. The governments should take steps to introduce standard qualifications for vocational guidance personnel, whose training should include an element specifically directed towards advising women.

The group thought it essential that vocational guidance should not be delayed until the end of the youngsters' time at school but begin some years earlier and be linked with the choice of

disciplines. Here it would be helpful to have teachers with practical experience of working life outside the schools, able to give pupils the benefit of their first-hand knowledge of the skilled trades or other occupations; this would help pupils to discover and develop their own inclination and ability with regard to future employment.

A further demand was that the retraining programmes for female participants be expanded in order to give them an opportunity to rectify any wrong vocational choices made for sex-specific reasons.

The group deliberately refrained from making any concrete proposals with regard to legislative measures as the members considered that such laws could encounter opposition and thus be counter-productive in the end. They had therefore confined themselves to a few suggestions. It should be considered, for instance, whether firms should be required to reserve a certain number of jobs for women. The application of a corresponding percentage in retraining, for instance, could also be of value. The vocational emancipation of women would have to be accompanied by the repeal of restrictive legal provisions ( workers' protection regulations ) which, in some countries, restrict women more than they protect them.

The group is of the opinion that all the vocational and legislative measures will not become fully effective until they are backed up by a major PR campaign. The first thing that springs to mind is a presentation of the problems during the advertising periods on television. Governmental plans would become particularly convincing if the state itself were to increase the proportion of women employed in state undertakings and in the public service, especially in higher positions.

#### 4. Courses of action recommended for CEDEFOP

The proposals correspond to the three aspects of the Centre's task: Information/documentation, research and stimulation/promotion.

By means of sustained, specifically-directed PR work, public awareness should be focused on the problem of exchangeability of functions at work and within the family. To this end the Centre should make use of its own publications, Bulletin and Newsletter, and aim at cooperation with the mass media. This proposal is already covered by the one submitted to the Commission.

The Centre should collate, analyse and make available the results of trial projects already carried out in the field of vocational training for women.

Furthermore, the Centre itself should propose such trial programmes in both the public and private sectors, to be accompanied by scientific study. The results of such research would then be presented to the experts concerned at seminars. Information about all these measures should be made available to a wider public via the media referred to earlier.

In addition to the working group's recommendations for CEDEFOP, suggestions regarding the function of the Centre also came from the plenum. It was ascribed an important role as the connecting link between the great international organizations, OECD, ILO, UNESCO and the individual countries of the Community.

Thus the Seminar ended with the formulation of future courses of action.

At the close of the Seminar, the Deputy Director of CEDEFOP, Robert Clemmett, who had conducted the plenary sessions, reiterated that the Centre in no way regarded the Seminar as a concluding event - indeed it looked upon it as a new point of departure. He assured the participants that everything would be done to bring about the best possible realization of the courses of action proposed. Preparations should be made for meetings with the EC Commission and the two sides of industry, and meetings with the national governments should also be planned, to be arranged through their representatives on the CEDEFOP Management Board. A follow-up group should be formed at once to give support to the Centre in carrying out the work resulting from the Seminar.

In his concluding remarks Franz Castin, employers' coordinator on the Management Board of CEDEFOP, congratulated the staff on a thoroughly prepared and well-organized Seminar, which had accordingly resulted in fruitful suggestions for the courses of action to be taken.

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