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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment

on linking work and training for young persons in the Community

Rapporteur: Mr D. PRAG

By letter of 18 December 1979 the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment requested authorization to draw up a report on communication from the Commission to the Council on linking work and training for young people in the Community¹.

By letter of 5 February 1980 the President of the European Parliament authorized the committee to draw up a report on this topic. The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport was asked for its opinion.

On 18 December 1979 the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment appointed Mr Prag rapporteur.

After an initial exchange of views at the meeting of 2 April 1980 the committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 29 May 1980 and 30 September 1980 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement with one abstention on 30 September 1980.

Present: Mr van der Gun, chairman; Mr Prag, rapporteur; Mrs Baduel Glorioso, Mrs Brookes, Mr Calvez, Mr McCartin, Mr Dalsass (deputizing for Mr Estgen), Mr Ghergo (deputizing for Mr Nordlohne), Mrs Tove Nielsen and Mr Spencer.

The opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport is attached.

¹COM(79) 578 final

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A

The Committee on Social Affairs, Employment and Education hereby submits to the European Parliament the following draft motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on linking work and training for young persons in the Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission's communication and draft resolution on linked work and training for young people¹, and to the Council's resolution of 18 December 1979 on the same subject²,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and the opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport (Doc. 1-460/80),

1. Recognizes the urgent need, in a period of low growth, high youth unemployment and rapid technological change, to provide much better training and hence better employment prospects for young people;

2. Notes also the difficulties experienced by employers in filling many of the vacancies for skilled labour at a time when there are substantial reserves of unsuitable labour (the so-called mismatch);

3. Points out the wide differences between the Member States in the number of young people who undertake vocational training, and in the suitability and effectiveness of that training;

4. Commends the Commission for its initiative to develop linked work and training (alternance) in the Member States with Community support and within Community guidelines, with minimum standards, and co-ordinated programmes, as a means both of improving and extending vocational training and of reducing unemployment among young people;

5. Welcomes the flexibility of the Commission's draft resolution of 29 October 1979 - particularly with regard to the systems of alternance to be used;

6. Deplores the way in which the Council's resolution waters down or ignores important parts of the Commission's proposals particularly those relating to:

¹COM (79) 578

²Official Journal, C1 of 3.1.1980

- the specific inclusion of alternance in the Guidelines of the Social Fund,
 - the question of financial support for those on linked work and training schemes,
 - the need for special attention to be paid to increasing the number of apprenticeships in the services sector;
7. Deplores also that the only part of the Council's decision to entail definite Community action is its request to the Commission 'to examine the conditions under which the European Social Fund might be associated with action by the Member States by means of small-scale experimental projects', thus virtually ignoring both the magnitude and the urgency of the problem;
 8. Draws attention to the fact that, as now drafted and adopted, the Council resolution is little more than an exhortation to the Member States, so that progress will continue to depend upon national circumstances, and harmonized development will be more difficult to achieve;
 9. Regrets that the Council's request to the Commission to afford Member States 'all possible technical support' in promoting harmonized development in this field should not be accompanied by the provision of at least some staff for this purpose;
 10. Regards the Council's decision as an indication that a majority of the Member States reject the need for Community action to adapt vocational training to the technological needs of an advanced industrial society, and to the rapid change of the micro-electronic era; and that they are insufficiently aware of the advantages to be gained from exchange of information and experience and from joint efforts in this field;
 11. Sees the Council's failure in this respect as part and parcel of its failure of will to formulate a Community policy for effective action in the field of industrial re-structuring, at a time when this is more necessary than ever if a high-wage economy such as that of Western Europe is to prosper in face of competition from the growing number of rapidly industrializing developing countries;
 12. Regrets that the Commission did not insist on using its right of proposal accordingly to withdraw its proposals after the Council had adopted amendments which were clearly intended to void them of all substance;
 13. Urges the Commission to attempt to win general support for the working-out and application in a Community framework of a number of 'polyvalent' packages of linked work-and-training courses, covering the fields of apprenticeships, blocks and day release, and work/training contracts, which shall be:

- (a) additional to existing national vocational training programmes;
- (b) planned to give special attention to those Member States where the proportion of young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who receive no education or training appears far higher than in the Community generally¹;
- (c) aimed at giving young people the general preparation they will need for a career in which they may have to change the nature of their job, and accordingly their qualifications, several times;
- (d) specially formulated to prepare young people for the wide variety of work requirements of an age of increasingly advanced technologies;
- (e) intended to enable workers to avoid their qualifications becoming specific to their company or to their current job with the result that (a) they become effectively tied to that company or at best to that specific type of job, and (b) they find re-employment difficult in the event of necessary restructuring involving their redundancy;

and shall contain provisions for exchanges of young workers between Member States.

- 14. Draws attention to the need for any effective Community initiative also to produce solutions to the question of payment and incentives for those on linked work and training schemes;
- 15. Draws attention to the particular needs of girls and of migrant workers' children, who are often the groups least likely to take up specialized vocational training in present circumstances;
- 16. Places on record its wish that the Community should undertake a far more ambitious programme to increase linked work and training schemes as soon as possible, and its determination to spur those concerned to see that this takes place;
- 17. Urges the Council to show imagination, vision and Community spirit in facing up to the problem of training young people for a difficult period of rapid technological change and cyclical economic difficulties, which will produce a frightening level of unemployment in the coming years unless resolute action is taken;
- 18. Requests its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council of Ministers.

¹Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom (see Table 1 in the Commission document COM(79) 578 final). In these countries the proportion of young people between the ages of 16 and 18 who receive no education or training is approximately 50% higher than the Community average.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Many solutions are advocated for the problem of youth unemployment, which has already reached major proportions in the European Community, and which is likely to increase throughout the first half of the 1980s. Many of them, such as those which come under the general head of work-sharing are the object of intense political controversy. Others, such as early retirement, have social implications that are by no means universally accepted, and also major financial consequences, both for public expenditure and for employers' pensions schemes.

About the need for effective vocational training, however, there can be little controversy. The great virtue of alternance is that it combines the manifest need, at the beginning of the micro-electronics era, for a major drive, indeed a fundamental re-orientation, in vocational training, with the need to reduce the number of unemployed young persons. Alternance does the latter by cutting the supply of young people available for jobs. For the young people involved, it combines a paid activity with training and work experience. For the European economy, it will raise competitiveness at a time when our high-wage economy faces increasing difficulties from competition by low-wage developing countries. Indeed, only by remaining competitive can we avoid increasing pressure for protectionism against the products of the Third World.

2. The Community has been addressing itself to the problem of youth unemployment for some time. The most important developments have been the 1975 decision to create the Social Fund area of intervention specifically for the training of young people¹, and the further decision of 1978 which enabled the European Social Fund to subsidize job creation schemes for young people². There has also been the Commission recommendation of 1977 on the vocational training of young people who are unemployed or threatened with unemployment³. In the sphere of education policy, there has existed since 1976 the action programme which includes a series of pilot studies on transition from school to work⁴.

¹Official Journal L 199

²Official Journal L 361, p.3

³Official Journal I 180

⁴Supplement 12/76, Bulletin of the EC

3. The Commission's proposals on linked work and training therefore represent the coming-together of the Community's existing approaches to the youth unemployment problem. The rationale behind the proposals is that an advanced industrial society cannot expect its industries to prosper, its unemployment rate to diminish or the majority of its citizens to be interested in their work if large numbers of its young people - and in some member countries a substantial majority of school leavers - are given no organized on-the-job training, no training or further education away from the work-place, and no training schemes to prepare them for work. The Commission's proposals combine three aims:

- i) To improve the employability of young people by giving them more and better opportunities to obtain useful training and qualifications;
- ii) To reduce the current high levels of youth unemployment by offering useful alternatives;
- iii) To provide Community support for the reform and modernization of training, and for a better integration of work and training.

4. The proposals are extremely timely. Unemployment in the Community remains at over 6 million and the forecasts are that it will continue to rise throughout the first half of the 1980s. The proportion of young people (under 25) among the total unemployed has been rising steadily: in 1974 it was 33.3%, by October 1979 it had reached 41.5%. Within this figure women fare markedly worse than men, accounting for 49% as against 34% of the total¹. The incidence of unemployment is particularly marked in the unskilled occupations, and studies show that those young people who do not acquire vocational qualifications are likely to find themselves unemployed more frequently during their working life than those who do.

5. The approach of the Member States to the question of vocational training differs in scale and emphasis. Germany is the outstanding example of a Member State which places a high value upon the organization of training, notably through the apprenticeship system, and in 1978 Germany increased its apprenticeship intake by 20% on the 1976 figure. In Germany more than 400 separate activities have apprenticeship schemes, including activities in the services sector, and these apprenticeships include a measure of non-vocational further education². In other Member States apprenticeships are far fewer and tend to be concentrated in traditional areas such as the building, engineering and printing industries.

¹ Eurostat May 1980 'Unemployment in the European Community 1974-9'

² Youth Unemployment and the bridge from school to work, ed. J. Grimond, (Anglo German Foundation, London 1980)

6. All Member States also encourage training for young people via day-release and block-release schemes at training colleges and colleges of further education. The problems here are mainly concerned with securing attendance and ensuring that young people feel that such off-the-job training is really worthwhile. An apprenticeship scheme will give them a qualification to aim at: day or block releases may not do so. Some Member States have also introduced short-term training schemes for the young unemployed to give them some foundation qualification to aid them in their search for future employment.

7. The rapid acceleration of technical change in the last three decades, entailing substantial changes in work requirements, has far outpaced the development of apprenticeships, day and block release, and training-employment contracts. Even in Germany, whose highly developed system of 2 and 3 year industrial apprenticeships provides roughly 60% of the workforce with skilled worker status, the speed of change in work requirements has outpaced the adaptation of apprenticeship schemes to these requirements. In countries like the UK and Ireland, where the number of young people covered by training programmes is particularly inadequate, recent reports indicate a growing gap between changing work requirements and vocational training programmes of all trades. A determined effort at adaptation is necessary.

8. The Community should be able to contribute to this effort, both through financial assistance, and through cross-fertilization as a result of exchanges of experience, and Community-wide adoption in special Community training programmes, of the best practices in each Member State. Since workers can now expect to have to change the nature of their job, and accordingly their basic qualifications, several times during their working career, it is no longer sensible to provide a specific set of qualifications suited for one kind of job only. 'It will become less and less useful to plan and organize apprenticeship training according to traditional occupational patterns'¹. That is why we have recommended the development of a number of 'polyvalent qualification packages'² providing a general preparation for a range of jobs as well as more specific training. Where the need for change is so great, the wider the experience drawn on, the better.

¹F. Christopher Hayes and David E. Wheatley: Trends in Apprenticeship in the European Community: July 1979

²The term comes from 'Relationships between Education and Employment and their impact on education and labour market policies' - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Berlin 1979

9. The Commission's aim in bringing forward its proposals was to introduce some system into the Member States' haphazard and disparate approach to the needs of young workers, the young unemployed and the school leaver. The Council has, however, dealt severely with the Commission's proposals. A comparison between the Commission's draft resolution and that adopted by the Council shows that:

- the Council has struck out the Commission's assertion that alternance training should take place in phases of at least six months;
- the Council has omitted the Commission's reference to the need for special attention to be paid to increasing the number of apprenticeships in the services sector;
- the Council has not embodied the Commission's specific reference that a minimum period of one-fifth of the overall training should take place outside the work place;
- in Part II 'Guidelines for the Community', the Council has altered the Commission's draft of what it wanted to be asked to do so that: the rewriting of the guidelines of the European Social Fund will not now include a specific reference to alternance, but will, it is hoped, mean that the ESF can be used to finance 'experimental projects' to develop linked work and training. Such projects are bigger than 'pilot projects', but the Commission's services are apparently working on the hypothesis of 5 maa for 1981 to finance up to 30 projects, with a smaller amount being available in 1980.

10. The Council's resolution is also disappointing on the question of payment for those taking part in alternance schemes. The Commission went into this in some detail (paragraph 14 of COM (79) 578 final); the Council have left the matter vague. It is important to resolve the point: low wage rates could act as a disincentive to young people to take up training places and apprenticeships. On the other hand, we know from the experience of Germany (and Austria and Switzerland), that a well-planned efficiently run apprenticeship system with appropriate content can thrive where apprentices receive no more than subsistence and pocket money: indeed, where this is the case it may be possible to provide many more places.

The remuneration for linked work and training, whether through apprenticeships, day-release and block-release schemes, or training/employment contracts, should be fixed at a level which best draws together the following requirements (some of which conflict with each other);

- i) the need to attract young people who might be tempted by unskilled work with no future, but at relatively high wage;

- ii) the need to make employers feel that a conscientious effort to encourage training is worth while and does not involve them in disproportionate expense;
- iii) the highest possible quality of instruction (which will absorb funds otherwise available for remuneration).

The cost of training can be a serious disincentive to employers to encourage it, and provision of modern high-quality training may be both difficult and costly. For this reason, government involvement in financing is widespread and in our view entirely justified.

Vocational training cannot appropriately be regarded as part of the general education system since its main purpose is fundamentally different - to prepare for work rather than for life in general. Traditionally, much of its cost, and in particular the cost of apprenticeships, has been borne by employers. But apprentices' wages may now be costly and rise steeply over the apprenticeship period. The well-trained apprentice often no longer retains the same loyalty to the firm which trained him, and may move soon after completion of his training.

Moreover, the transition from school (general education) to work is now an area of major public interest. The case for substantial public financing is very strong, and is accepted by most member states in varying degrees. In Germany major sums of public money are allotted for public-service apprenticeships and inter-company training centres, as well as for the basic vocational training year and full-time vocational schools. Large numbers of school-leavers in Germany receive entirely free vocational preparedness courses. In France the 'relance de l'apprentissage' involved the State taking over the employers' contributions for social security and certain other charges. It is estimated to have brought a 20 per cent increase in recruitment in 1978 over 1977. Britain's "Training for Skills - A Programme for Action" (December 1977) "falls a long way short of the objectives of the West German authorities"¹ i.e. to provide systematic apprenticeship training for about 97 per cent of school leavers by 1981 and part-time education for all to age 18.

There is no doubt that the role of the State in financing vocational training has, in the countries most advanced and successful in this field, passed well beyond the initial scope of merely financing instruction classes. It now frequently includes:

¹F. Christopher Hayes and David E. Wheatley op.cit.

- measures to help employers, particularly in small firms, to provide training;
- the cost of improving the quality of training;
- the means of increasing the total number of training places;
- special training for adults and the disabled.

In Denmark and Germany, the public authorities meet the full cost of the full-time basic vocational-training year.

The fixing of remuneration for all forms of alternance at the optimum level is certainly one of the major determinants of its success.

11. The main point which we consider valid in the draft Opinion of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport is its stress on the need for school curricula to provide education which will enable pupils subsequently to acquire vocational training and qualifications and to master the various aspects of their work. It is essential that school-leavers should be equipped, technically and psychologically, to benefit from vocational training courses and to contribute to a spirit of enterprise. However, while the strengthening of the link between school and work is of fundamental importance, the Committee cannot agree with the merging of the concepts of education (preparation for life) and vocational training (preparation for work) on which the Opinion appears to be based.

The suggestion has been accepted that alternance proposals should contain provisions for exchanges of workers between member states, but it was not regarded as practical, in present circumstances, to complicate these proposals with possibly desirable but certainly non-essential features which would make them less acceptable to the Council of Ministers.

Annex

Table 1: Activities of the 16 - 18 Age Group (1978)

Country		No. of young people (1000s)	Percentage receiving full-time general education or vocational training	Percentage receiving part-time general education or vocational training	Percentage receiving neither full- time nor part- time general education or vocational training
B	16-17	160	78	3	19
	17-18	160	64	6	30
DK	16-17	75	48	20	32
	17-18	75	29	13	58
D	16-17	1,000	50	35	15
	17-18	970	33	46	21
F	16-17	855	75	10	15
	17-18	845	54	6	40
IRL	16-17	60	60	9	31
	17-18	60	29	4	67
I	16-17	880	55	11	34
	17-18	880	40	9	51
L	16-17	5	50	29	21
	17-18	5	37	19	44
NL	16-17	245	84	6	10
	17-18	240	64	13	23
UK	16-17	900	60	7	33
	17-18	875	32	12	56
EUR 9	16-17	4,180	61	15	24
	17-18	4,110	41	18	41

Source: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training(1979)

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, CULTURE,
EDUCATION, INFORMATION AND SPORT

Draftsman: Mrs Paola GAIOTTI DE BIASE

On 23 April 1980 the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport appointed Mrs P. Gaiotti de Biase draftsman of the opinion.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 29/30 May and 9 July 1980 and adopted it unanimously at its meeting of 9 July 1980.

Present: Mr Pedini, chairman; Mr Hahn, vice-chairman; Mrs Gaiotti de Biase, draftsman of the opinion; Mr Arfe', Mr Del Duca, Mr Henckens, Mr Papapietro, Mr Price, Mr Schall, Mr Schwenke, Mr Viehoff and Mr Welsh.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport has been instructed to draw up an opinion for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment on the communication from the Commission to the Council entitled: 'Linking work and training for young persons in the Community'.

This document is concerned with the introduction of 'alternating education' which, at the Summit held in Paris in March 1979, the Heads of State and Government defined as 'a phase in the process of training associating the exercise of a vocational activity at the place of work with theoretical training obtained in a training service, organization or establishment'.

Before giving its opinion on the specific problem referred to it, the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport feels that it must make a few preliminary observations.

II. 'ALTERNATING EDUCATION' FROM THE EDUCATIONAL VIEWPOINT

In the first place, it must be said that to refer the **resolution** to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport for its opinion only seems both to belittle the committee's role and to detract from the innovatory importance attaching to the resolution¹. Indeed, 'alternating education' cannot be regarded solely as an instrument for solving a temporary social problem facing young people, for it represents one of the more important and complex challenges to educationalists concerned with the future of educational policies. Although it is not our intention here to cite the extensive literature on the subject (we would merely call attention to the most authoritative public document in the field, which is the UNESCO report 'Apprendre à être'), there can be no doubt that all the problems connected with a new philosophy of education (continuing education, diversification and flexibility of teaching methods, correlation between academic training and training in manual skills, relaxation of the rigid distinctions between different types of teaching, criticism of the so-called advantages of indefinitely **prolonging** formal education) hinge on the need to eliminate the barrier separating education from work. Thus, the problem can only be properly tackled by giving priority to the educational challenge it embodies and to the attendant pressing need for a general reform of educational structures.

Put this way, the problem obviously comes first and foremost within the sphere of competence of the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport. Moreover, the very fact that this committee was set up reflects the conviction within Parliament that it is becoming

¹ OJ No. C 1, 3.1.1980, p.1

increasingly urgent for the Community to launch a common education policy. This is made all the more necessary by the fact that the problems with which the resolution under consideration is concerned affect all our societies. Essentially, these problems are of two kinds.

In the first place, even though the symptoms and the effects may be different, all our societies are witnessing a crisis in the traditional pattern of schooling, which either removes the vocational element from education or relegates it to 'second-rate' schools. This results from a fragmentary approach to vocational training and from the fact that it is accorded only secondary importance. What, in a word, appears to be missing from the various school curricula is education for mastery of the scientific, social and personal aspects of the individual's work experience.

Secondly, in all our societies young people are showing a declining interest in attending educational institutions and completing courses of study. A major reason for this is no doubt the virtual impossibility of finding work after completing a course. Another reason is the feeling of disorientation within our society experienced by young people. Following a period of unemployment, many of them ultimately become disinterested in finding work.

Even if they do not reject work outright, it is easy to see that what they care about most are leisure activities, or political activism, voluntary social work, the religious community, etc; in other words, generally those areas of experience in which they are able to relate what they do (and, obviously, this varies considerably, from rock music and drug-taking to helping the handicapped) to some notion of self-discovery. The disinclination to work will not be overcome without a systematic effort to promote the possibilities for self-discovery through work. In this connection an effort must be made to create more jobs for young people (especially for young women), for instance by transforming work done by volunteers into paid jobs.

It is against this background that we must consider our industrial society's special requirements as regards a new form of technological education, improved economic information and a basic training that will encourage greater mobility of labour.

Moreover, educational policies should not be confined to efforts to combat unemployment simply by producing the new skills that the system requires: they should also be considered as independent and flexible instruments for stimulating the inventiveness, the initiative and the personal and collective spirit of enterprise which they can inject into the system. Consequently - even taking a narrower view of the Community's responsibilities as consisting solely in ensuring the optimum efficiency of an integrated economic area - the education policies as a whole form a part of overall economic policy, along with the industrial, agricultural, regional, energy and environmental policies in addition, of course, to the social policy.

III. 'ALTERNATING EDUCATION' FROM THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC VIEWPOINT

It goes without saying that immense importance attaches to those sectors of the draft Council resolution that relate to the measures necessary to reduce the present level of unemployment among young people and adults and to the various problems associated with the special social security benefits to which workers participating in 'alternating education' schemes should be entitled. In our view, these are problems that fall within the terms of reference of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment.

Moreover, since the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport is required only to deliver an opinion, it considers it sufficient to endorse the explanatory memoranda contained in the communications from the Commission to the Council (COM (79) 578 final and COM (80) 177 final).

IV. EXPERIENCE OF 'ALTERNATING EDUCATION' IN PRACTICE

Without making any claims to completeness, we consider that reference should be made to some of the more noteworthy developments in the field of 'alternating education'.

1. In Germany, for all young people aged between 15 and 18 who are not attending a full-time school alternative education under the 'dual system' is compulsory. This then covers most of the appropriate age-groups. The system has been in existence for more than 50 years and radical reforms in the last 10 years have brought it into line with modern requirements.

Normally a young person has 10 hours theoretical training a week at a vocational school, the remaining time being spent in practical training at his place of work. Companies must satisfy the criteria set

by government, industry and the unions before qualifying as training companies. There are also legal provisions governing works instructors' qualifications. Apprentices' wages are fixed by collective agreement.

The dual system is successful because it is in the interests of both industry and trainees: industry obtains qualified workers and the young person not only learns a trade but also receives a general education at the vocational school and settles into the company, which usually continues to employ him. The training is divided into a broad basic level of study in one of the 17 trades (eg metals) and the specialist level with specific training for individual trades.

The criticism expressed occasionally by the trade unions that, particularly in craft enterprises, apprentices are being exploited has died down since the introduction of legislation and in view of industry's achievements in bringing down youth unemployment.

2. In France in particular, and to some extent in Italy too, 'alternating education' has become considerably more widespread over the past few decades through the development of the 'maisons rurales familiales' system. Agriculture has proved to be one of the sectors most suited to the type of training that consists of periods of teaching in the classroom alternating with periods of practical experience on the farm. According to the experts, the introduction and the success of this type of training were made possible by the strong spirit of cooperation and the deep-rooted tradition of solidarity among the rural working classes.

3. As far as past experience in the tertiary sector is concerned, probably the commonest and most systematically applied form of 'alternating education' is that represented by the schools and boarding-schools for nurses attached to the large hospitals. Even these schools have been criticized in recent years in some countries because the burden was unevenly spread between work and training.

4. More recently, the problems of the relationship between education and work have been tackled in a wide variety of ways, either by increasing the amount of theoretical teaching (the programme of traineeships in firms and the creation of the IUT in France, the industrial project of the Schools Council and the sandwich system in the U.K., the 'lurplaatsne-project' in the Netherlands etc, the new law on vocational training and the new, experimental, two-year courses of study in Italy), or, to a lesser extent, by introducing more schemes of a practical, 'mixed' nature (the Spitaels Plan in Belgium, the 'formation professionnelle continue' system

in France, the 1969 supplementary regulations on the dual system operated in Germany, the law on trainee employment contracts for unemployed young people in Italy). It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that the provision of training opportunities coupled with genuine work experience is still mainly due to the enlightened self-interest of a number of individual employers, faced with a shortage of specialized labour.

5. It is against this background that a programme of pilot projects has been drawn up by the Community. While it is not our intention here to attempt a general preview of this programme, we are bound to stress its fundamental importance as a spur to the development of new schemes. Indeed, joint planning at Community level still seems essential if the cultural, social and legal difficulties that discourage the confident and widespread application of 'alternating education' schemes in the Member States are to be overcome.

V. ASSESSMENT OF THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Having regard to the communication from the Commission and in view of the urgency of the problems to be solved and the complexity of the task, the resolution is manifestly inadequate and too narrow in its approach:

- a. because it is not sufficiently binding on the Member States;
- b. because it does not go far enough in pledging the Commission to action;
- c. because it is too vague in defining the objectives and the importance of 'alternating education'.

In this connection, the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport must express its conviction that the problem under consideration cannot be tackled satisfactorily except on the basis of an exhaustive appraisal of the common objectives of educational policies adapted to modern requirements, as recommended by the more recent communication from the Commission on 'Perspectives for education policy in the context of employment policy with particular reference to the problems of the transition of young people from education to working life'¹.

An effective 'alternating education' policy requires, therefore, that a number of additional points should be made in the draft Council resolution. These points are contained in this opinion for the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment and may be summarized as follows:

¹ COM (80) 177 final

1. Agreement on a definition of 'alternating education' which is not restricted to young people (but includes adults as well) or to young people in difficulty (but also relates to the whole of secondary school education) and which involves all the educational policies and not simply the vocational training policy.
2. The introduction of more subjects in the 'alternating education' syllabus, giving sufficient weight to social and economic studies and to basic language and mathematical skills, etc.
3. The promotion of a wider range of measures, paying particular attention to the craft and agricultural industries and to the tertiary sector and laying special emphasis on integrated projects under the regional policy and on training through work in community service and in the context of the cooperation agreements with the ACP countries and, in general, through exchanges within the Community of young workers.
4. An invitation to the Commission and the Council to take all necessary steps to ensure the development of an 'alternating education' policy, and, in particular, to:
 - a. adapt the provisions of the Social Fund to the requirements of continuing education and guarantee that sufficient financial resources are made available;
 - b. re-examine the Regional Fund with a view to securing proper recognition of the educational aspects of regional development;
 - c. introduce binding directives to provide for a right to leave for educational purposes;
 - d. speed up educational cooperation between the Member States since, unless the educational objectives of the curricula and of the criteria for evaluating results can be better compared and coordinated, it will be impossible, not only to ensure the effective freedom of movement of holders of recognized diplomas, but also to cooperate on new ventures and to coordinate the necessary Community technical support.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport asks the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment to incorporate the following recitals and paragraphs in its motion for a resolution:

- considering that a high level of unemployment among young people is now a structural feature in the overall pattern of unemployment in the Community countries,

- considering that some Community countries are faced by both unfilled vacancies and a shortage of skilled labour,
 - considering that attitudes to work are changing among young people,
 - considering that while priority must be given to planned growth in areas where there is an excess of manpower, keeping in check the pressures to geographical mobility, forms of training must nevertheless be adapted to the wider prospects opened up by the links between modern societies and increasing economic integration,
 - considering that formal education and work should no longer be separated,
 - considering that this makes it essential, in addition to the general problems of economic retraining, to take a completely fresh look at Community policy on education,
 - having regard also to the Communication from the Commission to the Council on perspectives for education policy in the context of employment policy with particular reference to the problems of the transition of young people from education to working life¹,
 - considering that the very fact that the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport was set up in the European Parliament indicates the wish of Parliament to extend Community measures on common educational policies,
1. Considers that tackling the problems facing young people in the transition from school to work solely by aid to vocational training understood in the strict sense of the last stage of vocational specialization, practical training for specific tasks or post-school training represents too narrow an approach;
 2. Considers that measures on linking work and training should take account of the general needs of the employed and therefore not just of young people;
 3. Considers that in the approach to the question of linking work and training account should be taken not only of its validity from the socio-economic standpoint but in an awareness of its psychological and educational value (for example for acquiring confidence through self-knowledge and self-control, mastery of the environment, strengthening the ability to communicate with others through working together) and its cultural value (narrowing the gap between 'science' and 'the arts', putting theoretical knowledge into practice, providing a practical approach to the problems of social organization and the life of the community);

¹ COM(80) 177 final

4. Agrees with the Commission's observations on the need to go beyond the usual type of action in order to experiment with more direct ways of speeding up implementation of the new methods through projects which would, by demonstration, prepare the way for the spread of these methods (Communication from the Commission to the Council of 29 October 1979, COM(79) 578 final);
5. Considers that projects for linking work and training will never become sufficiently well-established in the sense of gaining wide acceptance or applied in a discriminating fashion, as long as they are confined to short training courses for jobs considered inferior or just to manual work;
6. Deplores the fact that the Ministers of Education did not participate in the decisions on the resolution;
7. Considers that alternating training should be seen as a flexible instrument giving rise to a variety of experimental projects;
8. Supports the principle put forward by the Commission in a Communication to the Council that in no case shall time allocated for training be less than one-fifth of working time;
9. Suggests, on the contrary, that it could be agreed that training schemes in which up to a maximum of 4/5 of the time is allocated for training with 1/5 for work should be considered as alternating training;
10. Deplores the limitations and lack of compulsion in the linked work and training scheme adopted in the resolution and agrees with the comments made by the Permanent Commission of the Youth Forum¹;
11. Considers nevertheless that the wider view which should be taken of linked work and training should not prevent the adoption of more limited measures in the short term;
12. Stresses the inadequacy of a training base broad enough only 'to meet the demands of technical developments and of future changes in the work of the trainees';
13. Insists on the need for trainees to acquire an adequate awareness of social structures and of the processes of political and economic decision-making and the ways in which these are changing, so as to increase their opportunities for participation in policy-making, for exercising their rights as workers and for developing their

¹COM(79) 578 final

business abilities, and to remedy the present lack of motivation among young people;

14. Points out that it is impossible to respond to technological developments without an adequate knowledge of languages and general mathematics;
15. Calls upon the Member States and the two sides of industry to take steps immediately to agree on the general conditions, salaries and social security measures necessary to guarantee the dignity of labour in linked work and training and to ensure the flexibility necessary to make this possible;
16. Recommends that the Commission, within the framework of establishing the conditions set out in the first indent of Title II of the Council Resolution¹, should, when considering the Regional Fund, pay the greatest possible attention to those measures linking work and training which are in line with the objectives of Community regional policy, especially where they form part of integrated projects aimed at providing not only executive posts but new business opportunities for individuals or cooperatives;
17. Suggests developing Community projects for linking work and training to increase exchanges between young workers in the different Community countries;
18. Insists that linked work and training should not just be concentrated in the industrial sector, although this is a very important area, but that adequate provision should also be made for projects of this kind in the agricultural sector, in craft industries and in the service industries, in particular through closer coordination of the various Funds (EAGGF, ESF, ERDF);
19. Invites the Member States and the Commission to draw up properly and carefully drafted programmes for linking work and training for Community service volunteers both within the Community and as part of the cooperation programme with the ACP countries;
20. Insists strongly on the need for significant increases in Community appropriations for education and for the provisions of the Social Fund to be adapted to a policy on continuing (alternating) education instead of being concentrated solely on retraining of the unemployed;

¹ COM(79) 578 final

21. Suggests to the Commission that binding legislation should be introduced to provide for a 'right' to leave for educational purposes, paid for from public funds and not solely by employers, as an essential contribution to a policy for work-sharing and socio-economic development;
22. Points out that the development of new types of training, at the Community's initiative, is another factor which makes the need to recognize European professional qualifications and to determine common objectives for the various curricula more pressing;
23. Invites the Commission, in order to help overcome the difficulties which might prevent the genuine free movement of holders of qualifications and diplomas in Europe, to consider the possibility of measures to harmonize and coordinate the criteria for evaluating qualifications in the nine Community countries;
24. Invites the Commission to report to Parliament and, through it, to the Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport, on the progressive implementation of projects.