

PRESS RELEASE

7277/93 (Presse 101)

**1670th meeting of the Council
and the Ministers for Education
meeting within the Council**

Luxembourg, 11 June 1993

**President: Mr Ole VIG JENSEN,
Minister for Education
of the Kingdom of Denmark**

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Bernard GENTGES Minister for Education for the German-speaking Community

Mr Luc VAN DEN BOSSCHE Minister for Education and the Civil Service for the Flemish Community

Denmark:

Mr Ole VIG JENSEN Minister for Education

Germany:

Mr Norbert LAMMERT Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Education and Science

Mr Dieter BREITENBACH Minister for Science and Culture of the Saarland

Greece:

Mr Anastassios SPILIOPOULOS Secretary-General for Education

Spain:

Mr Elias FERERES State Secretary for Education

France:

Mr François FILLON Minister for Higher Education and Research

Ireland:

Mr Don THORNHILL Secretary of the Department of Education

Italy:

Mrs Rosa RUSSO JERVOLINO Minister for Education

Luxembourg:

Mr Marc FISCHBACH Minister for Education

Netherlands:

Mr Ate OOSTRA Deputy Permanent Representative

Portugal:

Mr António COUTO DOS SANTOS Minister for Education

United Kingdom:

Mr Timothy BOSWELL Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education

o

o o

Commission:

Mr Antonio RUBERTI Member

INVOLVING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE IN WORKING AND SOCIAL LIFE

On the basis of a note from the Presidency, the Council and the Ministers discussed the problem of young people, without qualifications, unable to find work, and risking social marginalization as a result.

The discussion established:

- the need for greater coherence between education, training and guidance provision for young people, in order to improve their employment prospects;
- the importance of combating failure at school at the earliest possible stage.

The Council and the Ministers also noted that the Commission intended to:

- submit to them shortly a study on failure at school, drawing on relevant experiments carried out in Member States;
- take account of comments made during discussion of future education and vocational training programmes.

The President announced that the Danish authorities would, with the Commission, be staging a conference in November on the problems involved in integrating all young people into working and social life.

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY ACTION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The Council held a general discussion on Community action in the field on education and vocational training, based on a Commission working paper.

The Commission considers that the various existing programmes in these areas require streamlining and rationalizing. It therefore proposes regrouping them in two programmes corresponding to the scope of Articles 126 and 127 of the Treaty on European Union, i.e. one programme for activities relating to universities and higher education, and schools, and the other for those relating to vocational training and qualifications. The Commission also announced a Green Paper on a Community scheme for schools.

The discussion gave the Commission the opportunity to note Ministers' comments for its future proposals.

o

o o

The Commission presented orally the summary of discussions which had taken place in the Member States on its memoranda on higher education and vocational training. The summary will be issued as a report in writing.

FURTHERING AN OPEN EUROPEAN SPACE FOR CO-OPERATION WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

The Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, adopted the conclusions in Annex I.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE 1990s

The Council adopted the Resolution in Annex II.

EUROPEAN SCHOOLS

When the new Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools was finalized in November 1992, the Council and the Ministers for Education set up a Subcommittee to look into ways of simplifying and improving the pedagogical, financial and administrative management of the Schools in the long term.

The Subcommittee submitted a first report to the Council and the Ministers containing suggestions put forward by the Presidency and a number of delegations.

The Council and the Ministers

- noted the first report;

- extended the Subcommittee's terms of reference for one year, by the end of which it is to submit a final report providing answers to the questions on the present system and specifying the advantages and disadvantages of alternative systems.

OTHER QUESTIONS

The Council heard oral reports by the Commission on:

- quality assessment of higher education (proceedings of the Working Party);

- Community/United States co-operation in the field of education and training;

- European scientific culture week.

ANNEX I

**Draft
Conclusions
of the Council and of the Ministers of Education
meeting within the Council
on furthering an open European space for co-operation
within higher education**

After the establishment of the internal market and in view of the present difficult employment and growth prospects in Europe, the Council and the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council, reaffirm the need for dialogue and co-operation between the Member States on how to achieve a Europe with employment and quality education and training for all, based on democratic values. The memoranda on vocational training in the 1990's, on open and distance learning, and on higher education, which the Commission has submitted for debate in the Member States, constitute a valuable contribution to this dialogue.

With the establishment of the internal market from 1 January 1993, the barriers to the free movement of goods, services, capital and persons between the countries in the Community have largely been removed. The labour markets will in the years to come be subject to constant changes and more closely linked.

The citizens of Europe will thus be living and working in labour markets characterized by specific and distinct cultures but with much more mobility between them than today. This will make more and heavier demands on educational policy than ever before.

A way of facing these challenges to the national educational policies could be to develop an open European space for co-operation within higher education. In this open space citizens should as a long-term aim have the opportunity to choose a place of study in any of the Member States; the necessary European dimension in education should be combined with a respect for the richness and diversity of the national and regional education and training systems.

The Member States and the Community should therefore continue to work with determination in order to remove the remaining barriers to this open space, taking special account of the value of European cultural and linguistic diversity and of the financial problems experienced by individual Member States in relation to imbalances in student flows. Attention should be paid to strengthening higher education systems in less developed regions and contributing in this way to social and economic cohesion.

These conclusions concern three specific areas which are important for furthering an open European space for co-operation within higher education.

Access

1. From a European perspective, the objective is that through co-operation between national systems and institutions of higher education, young people should be able to pursue part or all of their studies in the higher educational institutions of other Member States in ways which best match their needs.
2. The Commission is invited to institute, together with the Member States in accordance with their respective competences, a review of obstacles to the attainment of this objective, in particular concerning:
 - different forms of admission regulations and requirements, as well as any remaining problems of nationality;
 - arrangements for financing higher education within individual Member States, which may inhibit balanced student flows.

The review could be undertaken in co-operation with relevant organizations representing educational institutions and using the knowledge already available in the Commission as well as that gathered by international organizations which are working on the same issues.

3. The Member States could - subject to and in accordance with national education policies and priorities - work to apply the principle that young people enrolled in higher education should be able to take with them for studies in another Member State national student grants or loans intended for living expenses.
4. The Commission is further invited to investigate ways of establishing measures concerning access and financing which will improve the opportunities for students disadvantaged by personal or regional circumstances to undertake study periods in another Member State.

Quality

5. The Member States and the Commission could continue to support the establishment and/or expansion of networks between higher education institutions. Such co-operation could build on the principles and experience which have been established within the ERASMUS, LINGUA and COMETT programmes, for instance beginning with a few fields of study at the postgraduate level.

The aim should be to develop top quality in the networks through co-operation and division of responsibility. The networks could operate a variety of model projects, e.g. experiments with a joint intake of students. Experiments could also be made with new forms of financing co-operation between institutions in the network.

6. The Commission is invited to examine the possibilities of increasing long-term, as well as short-term mobility of staff as well as information exchange between educational institutions in the Community; with a view to strengthening the European dimension and improving quality in higher education; in accordance with the Ministerial conclusions of 27 November 1992.
7. The Commission is invited to present as quickly as possible the report of the working party established by virtue of the conclusions on quality assessment of 25 November 1991. In the light of this report, and following Council consideration thereof, it could initiate pilot projects on quality assessment including elements of both internal and external evaluation, in co-operation with interested Member States and after consultation with relevant organizations active in the field.

Such pilot projects should reflect the increasing importance attached in the Member States to the transparency of arrangements to secure and maintain quality.

8. The Commission is invited to present as soon as possible the report on the extension of credit transfer possibilities between study programmes in the Member States; as requested in the conclusions of the Council and Ministers of 25 November 1991 and 27 November 1992.

Relevance of studies

9. The Member States - and the institutions within them - may need to further diversify their educational instruments and the content of higher education in order to meet in a balanced way the widening educational needs of students, the labour market and society as such.

The Member States and the Commission could support and promote this activity by furthering exchanges of valuable experience and know-how from countries with a wide range of options in higher education to countries with more restricted options for the citizens.

10. The Council and the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council, agree to study during their forthcoming meetings the reports and studies on the abovementioned points; they moreover take note of the Commission general guidelines for Community action in the field of education and training, and its plans for the extension of European co-operation in higher education, taking into account the experiences gained in the higher education programmes ERASMUS, LINGUA and COMETT as well as the results of their evaluation and the discussions in the Member States concerning the memorandum on "Higher Education in the European Community".

ANNEX II**Council Resolution
on Vocational Education and Training
in the 1990s**

The Council of the European Community,

Having regard to the Treaties establishing the European Communities,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union signed at Maastricht on 7 February 1992, which sets out a framework for co-operation on education and training,

Considering that the fundamental objectives of a common vocational training policy set forth in the second principle of Decision 63/266/EEC refer in particular to the need to promote basic and advanced vocational training and, whereas appropriate, retraining; suitable for the various stages of working life; considering that the tenth principle of Decision 63/266/EEC states that special measures may be taken in respect of special problems concerning special sectors of activity or specific categories of persons;

Considering that the priorities set in the Resolution adopted by the Council on 11 July 1983 on the policies of vocational education and training in the European Community in the 1980s should be revised, in order to allow for the conditions and the new challenges in the 1990s;

Referring to the new challenges and perspectives described in the memorandum of the Commission on vocational education and training in the European Community in the 1990s;

Considering that the Community can make a significant contribution to co-operation between the Member States; by developing a global and coherent approach towards education and training which supports and supplements the policies of the Member States, and by consolidating the achievements of the Community education and training programmes; in particular COMETT, ERASMUS, LINGUA, EUROTECNET, PETRA and FORCE;

Referring to Resolutions or conclusions on:

- sandwich-type training courses for young people (18 December 1979)
- continuing vocational training (5 June 1989)
- technical and vocational education and initial training (14 December 1989)

- the comparability of vocational training qualifications (18 December 1990)
- the transparency of qualifications (3 December 1992)
- the need to take action with regard to the serious unemployment situation in the Community (21 December 1992);

Considering that the "Community Charter of the fundamental social rights of workers", adopted at the European Council in Strasbourg on 9 December 1989 by the Heads of State and of Government of eleven Member States, stated in point 15 that:

"Every worker of the European Community must be able to have access to vocational training and to benefit therefrom throughout his working life. In the conditions governing access to such training; there may be no discrimination on grounds of nationality.

The competent public authorities, undertakings or the two sides of industry; each within their own sphere of competence; should set up continuing and permanent training systems enabling every person to undergo retraining more especially through leave for training purposes; to improve his skills or to acquire new skills; particularly in the light of technical developments;"

Considering that employers and unions in the Social Dialogue have pointed out in joint statements of 19 June 1990, 6 November 1990 and 20 December 1991 that an improvement of European vocational education and training is crucial to a strengthening of the competitiveness of European business enterprises, and that intensified efforts in this area play a central role in the development of regional policies and development of industry and trade;

Considering that the European Parliament; in its Resolution adopted on 15 May 1992, asks Member States to ensure that training programmes lead to high-level qualifications and recommends analyses of the sandwich-type education programmes for the purposes of placing greater emphasis on vocational education and training;

Referring to the Resolution of the European Parliament of 21 April 1993 on vocational training policy in the 1990s;

Considering that vocational, technological and demographic developments call for improved possibilities of continued training within the framework of cohesive policies in the fields of labour market conditions and vocational education and training;

Whereas co-operation in the field of vocational training should also be based on existing provisions in force in the Member States, taking into account the respective responsibilities of the competent public authorities, undertakings and social partners; while respecting the diversity of national legal systems and practices, the powers under national law of the parties concerned and contractual autonomy; whereas the initiatives taken at national level by the Member States and the two sides of industry are many and varied, and taking into account the transnational dimension of the action; they should be supported at Community level; whereas, finally, it is essential to encourage a synergy of resources and promote partnership between the public and private sectors,

Hereby adopts this Resolution:

1. The Council considers that the quality of vocational education and training in the Member States should be strengthened in order to encourage continuing opportunities for individuals to develop their knowledge and skills and thus contribute to increased economic and social cohesion as well as to competitiveness of the European economies.

It stresses that with the establishment of the internal market from 1 January 1993, labour markets will in the years to come be subject to constant changes and more closely linked and that this will intensify the demands on educational and training policy.

In accordance with their own systems and traditions, Member States should make particular endeavours to:

- (a) improve the development possibilities of the individual through enhanced education and training, as an essential element in working life;
- (b) offer all young people recognized broad vocational education and training, to make them better qualified for the labour market and to motivate and commit them to undertake further training courses;
- (c) ensure that the vocational education and training system is attractive to young people;
- (d) use relevant vocational education and training as an important instrument to support employment, and enable unemployed people to gain access to jobs in order to avoid social exclusion;
- (e) take account of the needs of the economy and the competitiveness of enterprises.

2. The Council stresses that special account should be taken of trends becoming increasingly important in the 1990s, in particular:
- (a) the crucial importance of vocational education and training in the context of developing new technologies, changed forms of decentralized work organization and new working methods; in this connection, educational strategies which integrate general learning and practical training, should be encouraged;
 - (b) the links between the broad-based, basic vocational training provision and vocational in-service training and further training provision designed to give employees the opportunity of training throughout their working career;
 - (c) the reduction of barriers to mobility and the maintenance of flexibility among the workforce, by means of a broad-based effort regarding supplementary and further vocational training;
 - (d) the introduction of new technologies, giving rise to the need for Member States to encourage the development of new qualifications and expanded training programmes dealing with technological transfer and adaptation to industrial change;
 - (e) the promotion of a greater emphasis on training as an important part of companies' corporate strategies.

3. The Council emphasizes that the links between training, delivery of high-quality, updated qualifications and the combating of unemployment should be strengthened.

Measures should be taken in favour of those disadvantaged on the labour market, taking special account of individuals who have not had the opportunity to acquire adequate qualifications; they should be helped to develop their qualifications so as to allow them better access to the labour market.

4. The Council believes that training measures have an important role to play in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Particular attention should be paid to encouraging smaller enterprises to gain access to attractive and appropriate opportunities for the training of their employees at all levels.

5. The Council deems it important that the aims and contents of training programmes are decided in partnership with relevant bodies, which may include the social partners, in accordance with national systems and traditions.

6. The Council emphasizes the importance of vocational education and training policies along the lines indicated above and agrees that Member States' policies should include the following aims, in line with national systems and traditions:
- (a) promoting investment in vocational education and training which will specifically lead to relevant, recognized or validated qualifications;
 - (b) developing close links between school-based and enterprise-based vocational training, as coherent vocational education and training programmes in schools and enterprises are well calculated to ensure relevant training and qualifications;
 - (c) providing better opportunities for disadvantaged young people and adults, where appropriate, to take advantage of recognized up-to-date practical vocational training, which will improve their chances of joining the labour market;
 - (d) developing co-operation between the national and local authorities, employers and unions, enterprises and others, in accordance with national practice, on the overall updating of qualifications and specifically on initiatives designed to increase further training offers;
 - (e) including broad-based general subjects in the vocationally-oriented training system, for the purpose of fulfilling the broader qualification requirements of the future and strengthening the mobility of the workforce;
 - (f) improving the quality of vocational education and training, especially by improving training of trainers;
 - (g) strengthening vocational education systems through improved guidance services, with a view to enhancing the awareness and motivation of individuals;
 - (h) strengthening innovation and applied research, with a view to supporting modernization, adaptability and quality in vocational education and training;
 - (i) strengthening the European dimension in initial and continuing training, in order to facilitate the mobility of young people and adults within the single market.

7. In accordance with the Treaties the Community supports and supplements the Member States' policies set out in paragraph 6 above.

More specifically, the Council invites the Commission:

- (a) to work towards greater coherence at Community level between vocational education and training programmes and other policies which support Member States' efforts in this field;
- (b) to promote the development of European co-operation on qualifications, in line with the Council Resolution of 3 December 1992 on transparency of qualifications;
- (c) to strengthen transnational co-operation by reviewing the possibilities for students and trainees to undertake recognized training courses, or part of them, in another Member State, where this is relevant to their training goals, as well as increasing exchange opportunities for educators and planners in the vocational training system;
- (d) to intensify transnational initiatives designed to promote information exchanges and the level of knowledge in the field of vocational education and training, with a view to enhancing the transparency of qualifications and facilitating the mobility of the workforce within the Community;
- (e) to promote the transfer of innovation and the development of applied research with a view to supporting modernization, adaptability and quality in vocational education and training;
- (f) to take account of this Resolution in its proposals for reviewing and co-ordinating Community education and training programmes, alongside the responses of the Member States to its memorandum on vocational training in the 1990s, and the Council discussion on the Commission guidelines for education and vocational training.

Bruxelles, le 10 juin 1993

NOTE BIO(93) 154 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

433

Préparation du Conseil Education du 11 juin 1993 - Luxembourg

Le Conseil se réunira à partir de 10h à Luxembourg sous la présidence du Ministre danois de l'Education, M. Ole Vig JENSEN. La Commission sera représentée par M. Antonio RUBERTI, Commissaire en charge des Politiques de la Recherche, de l'Education et de la Formation.

A son ordre du jour figurent les points suivants :

1. Lignes directrices de l'action communautaire dans les domaines de l'éducation et de la formation (voir note P 16 du 5 mai 1993) :

Le Conseil aura pour la première fois sur sa table le document de travail de la Commission, adopté le 5 mai dernier à l'initiative du Commissaire Antonio RUBERTI, et destiné à ouvrir dans la Communauté un large débat sur l'avenir des programmes communautaires d'éducation et de formation après 1994, date de leur expiration, et de façon plus générale sur l'action future de la Communauté dans ces domaines.

A la lumière des réflexions qu'aura suscité ce document, la Commission fera avant la fin de l'année des propositions formelles assurant la nécessaire continuité des programmes communautaires dans ces domaines au-delà de 1995.

A l'occasion du débat que les Douze auront sur ce point, M. RUBERTI présentera une synthèse des discussions qui ont eu lieu jusqu'à ce jour dans les Etats membres concernant les memoranda sur l'enseignement supérieur après 1992 (note P(91)79) et la formation professionnelle pour les années 1990 (note P(91)90) présentés par la Commission respectivement en novembre et décembre 1991.

2. Initiatives dans le domaine de l'éducation en vue de favoriser l'insertion des jeunes dans la vie professionnelle et sociale

A l'initiative de la Présidence et sur base d'une note de celle-ci, le Conseil aura également une discussion approfondie sur ce thème.

A l'issue de cette discussion, la Présidence envisage de tirer des conclusions par lesquelles la Commission pourrait être invitée à prendre des actions dans certains domaines.

Le débat devrait s'articuler autour des trois questions suivantes :

- comment assurer une meilleure cohérence entre l'orientation, l'enseignement, la formation professionnelle et les possibilités d'emploi ?

- comment mettre en place au plus tôt un enseignement correctif et comment réduire les abandons scolaires ?
- peut-on compenser la réduction des emplois due aux nouvelles technologies et l'automatisation par la création de nouveaux domaines d'activité tels que la protection de l'environnement, les activités culturelles, les soins pour personnes âgées ?

3. Promotion d'un espace européen ouvert pour la coopération dans le domaine de l'enseignement supérieur

Ce point est en fait une suite de la réunion informelle des Ministres de l'Education qui s'est tenue à Copenhague le 9 février dernier.

Dans les années à venir, le marché de l'emploi européen sera caractérisé par une plus grande mobilité des travailleurs. Cette évolution fait peser de nouvelles exigences sur la politique d'éducation.

Il convient estime le Conseil, de prendre les mesures nécessaires afin d'assurer au citoyen européen la possibilité d'avoir accès à une éducation et une formation de qualité qui lui permettent de réaliser son épanouissement personnel et d'être compétitif sur le marché de l'emploi.

Pour les Ministres, une manière de relever ce défi consisterait à créer un espace européen ouvert pour la coopération dans le domaine de l'enseignement supérieur.

Dans ses conclusions, le Conseil devrait inviter la Commission à prendre des initiatives, en liaison avec les Etats membres, dans trois domaines spécifiques particulièrement importants pour la promotion d'un tel espace, et visant :

- à favoriser l'accès des jeunes étudiants aux établissements d'enseignement supérieur des autres Etats membres et par là la possibilité de choisir le lieu de leurs études dans l'un ou l'autre Etat membre (examens des problèmes liés aux différences dans les règles et conditions d'admission, utilisation des bourses, etc.);
- à améliorer la qualité et renforcer la dimension européenne de l'enseignement supérieur (examen des possibilités d'accroître la mobilité et le développement de réseaux entre établissements);
- à encourager la diversification des méthodes pédagogiques et du contenu des études afin de répondre aux besoins de plus en plus variés des étudiants et de la société elle-même (favoriser les échanges d'expérience et de savoir-faire).

4. Formation professionnelle dans les années 1990

La résolution que les Douze devraient adopter sur ce thème visera à mettre à jour les priorités définies en 1983 en matière de formation professionnelle afin de tenir compte des conditions et des nouveaux défis des années 1990 et de faire suite au memorandum de la Commission sur ce thème.

Par cette résolution, le Conseil inviterait la Commission à oeuvrer en vue d'améliorer la cohésion au niveau communautaire entre la formation professionnelle des jeunes et les autres politiques qui appuient les efforts des Etats membres dans ce domaine, promouvoir la coopération en matière de qualifications, renforcer les initiatives transnationales visant à promouvoir les échanges de personnel, d'information et les transferts d'innovation, etc.

5. Ecoles européennes

Le Conseil sera appelé à prendre acte du rapport du sous-comité du Comité de l'Education "Ecoles européennes".

Ce sous-comité avait été institué pour examiner les possibilités de simplification et d'optimisation de la gestion pédagogique, financière et administrative des Ecoles européennes. Le sous-comité propose que son mandat soit prorogé de manière à ce qu'il puisse présenter lors d'une prochaine réunion du Conseil un rapport fondé sur une analyse approfondie des faits, exposant les avantages et les désavantages du système actuel et des options futures.

Amitiés,



Bruno Dethomas

