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EDUCATION
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION Task Force: Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth
Rue Belliard 5-7, 1040 Brussels. Telephone +(32) 2 299.11.11. Fax +(32) 2 295.01.38

Contact Points:

PETRA/YOUTH

Place du Luxembourg 2-3
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 511.15.10
Fax 511.19.60

LINGUA

Rue du Commerce 10
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 511.42.18
Fax 511.43.76

ERASMUS

Rue Montoyer 70
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 233.01.11
Fax 233.01.50

COMETT

Rue Montoyer 14
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 513.89.59
Fax 513.93.46

TEMPUS

Avenue des Arts 19h
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 212.04.11
Fax 212.04.00

EUROTECNET

Rue des Deux Eglises 38
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 230.53.78
Fax 230.02.54

FORCE

Rue du Nord 34
1000 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 209.13.11
Fax 209.13.20

IRIS

Rue de la Tourelle 21
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 230.51.58
Fax 230.62.30

EURYDICE

Rue d'Arlon 15
1040 Brussels
Tel +(32) 2 238.30.11
Fax 230.65.62

CEDEFOP

Jean Monnet House
Bundesallee 22
1000 Berlin 15
Telephone +(030) 81.41.20

Editorial director **Thomas O'Dwyer**
Design **Ludden Taylor Design, London**

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New programmes, new structure, new address

Following this year's European Parliament elections and the establishment of a new EU institution, the Committee of the Regions, 1995 will see the new Commission President and his team taking office and a further enlargement of the Union, with Austria and Finland first in the line of new Member States.

In parallel with these and other high-profile developments, the Commission has been carrying out an internal reorganization aimed at deploying its own 'human resources' as efficiently as possible to meet its new responsibilities against the background of rapid evolution in EU affairs.

All Commission services are concerned. At the same time, our Task Force has introduced its own reorganization plan, in line with the rationalization of European action in education, training and youth and the launch of the new programmes in this area. In future, for instance, there will be no need to maintain separate technical assistance offices for each of the first-generation initiatives once these have been replaced by the Socrates and Leonardo programmes.

Despite a considerable increase in the range and volume of the Commission's work, increases in its staffing levels have effectively been on hold for some years. An internal audit has pointed to the consequent imbalance between established European civil servants and the growing number of temporarily seconded officials or other short-term staff brought in to help with particular tasks, whose assistance has been highly appreciated. This tendency has been particularly marked in areas where the work has expanded rapidly since the 1986 Single European Act, including the fields now covered by the Task Force.

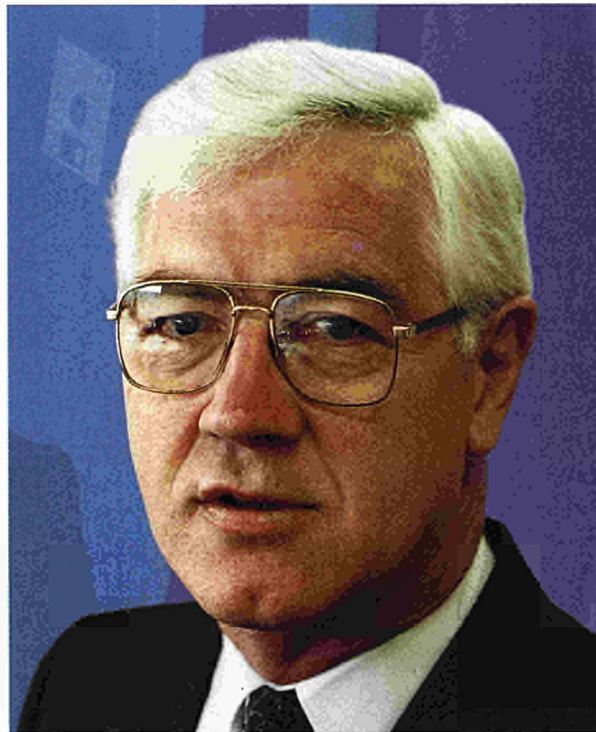
The Task Force has therefore had to make do without reinforcements to its few dozen staff in taking on new duties, such as opening up the education and training programmes to EFTA participants, developing cooperation with East and Central Europe and former Soviet Union countries, and generally implementing the relevant new provisions of the (Maastricht) Treaty on European Union.

The increasingly central role of human resources and the Task Force in EU policy-making is nonetheless recognized and this, too, has prompted the present reorganization. Instead of six previous administrative units there are now two directorates, under the responsibility of a director-general. The aim is to ensure an efficient, streamlined structure with clear responsibilities.

The question of external staff nonetheless remains an important issue for the Commission overall. As the European public service, it is legitimately concerned to take full responsibility for the duties and powers with which it is entrusted in the European Union. To be fully answerable for these responsibilities, the Commission needs autonomy. It requires its own professional staff. If external assistance is sometimes required to provide additional expertise in highly specialized areas, its role remains strictly technical.

Since 1992, the Commission has therefore been gradually reclaiming resources ('credits') earmarked for external assistance and reallocating them (as 'emplois') to strengthen its internal staffing, with the support of the EU's budgetary authorities. In the case of the Task Force, this policy calls for the progressive reduction of staff in the technical assistance offices, known as BATs (bureaux d'assistance technique), which have helped to implement the various programmes - Erasmus, Comett, Lingua, Force, Petra/Youth, Eurotecnet, Tempus. This reduction will be matched by an increase in internal Task Force staff.

Much of the work in which the technical assistance offices participated will correspondingly come under the Task Force's roof, particularly as regards negotiation and representation, information and overall control. In future,



Task Force Director-General Thomas O'Dwyer

“The reorganization to some degree marks a mission accomplished, as is borne out at the highest institutional level with the inclusion of education and training in the Maastricht provisions.”

the BATs will be responsible for assisting the Task Force in such tasks as preparing calls for project proposals under the new programmes, providing technical expertise to support the Commission's selection procedure for the projects and for assisting with the administrative and financial management of the resulting contracts.

The rationalization seen in the new programmes, Socrates, Leonardo and Youth for Europe III, is therefore being followed by the rationalization of the accompanying technical assistance, which will be mainly organized on the basis of only two BATs from next year. The present technical offices will gradually wind down their work with the Task Force in 1995, as the current programmes come to an end.

The BATs have done an excellent job. Working with the Task Force, they have helped make a success of the various programmes on a scale which could not have been predicted with any real confidence when they began a few

years ago. The reorganization to some degree marks a mission accomplished, as is borne out at the highest institutional level with the inclusion of education and training in the Maastricht provisions and the emphasis on human resource development in the White Paper.

The Eurydice European unit will continue, along lines closer to its original configuration. The future Socrates BAT will be responsible for technical assistance in promoting the European dimension of education and in intercultural education, while the Eurydice unit will both coordinate the Eurydice network and monitor educational developments in the Member States. The Leonardo BAT will provide technical assistance as outlined above across the range of vocational training initiatives.

For both the new BATs and the new Eurydice unit, a call for tenders was published in the Official Journal of the European Communities at the beginning of September.

These considerable organizational changes are being completed by the establishment of the European Training Foundation, which has been moving ahead fast since the European Council finally decided last year that it should be based in Turin. Its job is to help with the modernization of vocational training systems in East and Central Europe and former Soviet Union countries, while also handling the university cooperation activities of the Phare and Tacis programmes.

The technical assistance carried out until now by the Tempus office will therefore be taken over by the European Training Foundation, from 1 January. Its recently appointed director, Peter de Rooij, who previously ran the higher vocational education service in the Dutch education and science ministry, is well aware that this is a tight deadline. Continuity needs to be ensured not only as regards the hand-over from Tempus but also in launching the new foundation's principal role, which is to look into the whole issue of training needs in the countries concerned, as well as designing initiatives to develop their training systems.

While establishing the locations of various such agencies in October 1993, the European Council also decided that Cedefop should move from Berlin to Thessalonika. Since being set up in 1975, Cedefop has been working on concertation measures to encourage an overall approach to vocational training issues, carrying out research, information and promotional activities using a network of national correspondents.

The move inevitably causes some problems, not least for Cedefop staff and their families. The Council and the Commission are looking into the contractual arrangements and ways of reducing these relocation difficulties, but they cannot be solved overnight. This is a delicate operation, further complicated by the time taken to sort out all the practical details concerning Cedefop's new headquarters building.

The Task Force, too, has recently moved. We had been working in cramped conditions for some time and the arrival of more staff inevitably required a bigger building. Our new address is 5, rue Belliard, 1040-Brussels, nearer to the European Parliament offices.

We hope this will enable us to maintain even better contacts in future and look forward to welcoming you in the new premises. Information for visitors is freely available, within the limits of our resources, from the documentation and library service newly established on the ground floor. The dust from our 48-hour removals should have settled by the time this issue of *Le Magazine* appears, and as the signs say in airports: we apologize for any inconvenience caused during these improvements. □

T. O'Dwyer

Educational Research

The successive European Framework Programmes for research and technology development are now entering a new phase, including for the first time a 'socio-economic' programme which will cover research into education and training. Commissioner Antonio Ruberti describes some of the considerations underlying the move into educational research.



The White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment devotes two large chapters to research and education, i.e. to those processes which produce new knowledge and skills respectively. That is because the revival of growth and the resolution, or at least the reduction, of employment problems go hand in hand with a greater commitment to research and training. The White Paper offers a substantially optimistic message: Europe is not condemned to decline, the process of growth can be rekindled.

Even if it is not possible to foresee the scenarios of the future, one invariable in all these scenarios is the development of the information society. The word information is generic in nature: an Italian sociologist, Martinotti, distinguishes between three levels: information, knowledge and knowhow – knowing how to use information and knowledge. The future seems to point increasingly to a growth in the production and in the dissemination of knowledge, and hence of the processes of research and training. Taking this, in very approximative and synthetic terms, as a point of reference, Europe needs to commit itself more consistently to both research and training.

To translate this into action, we need to examine the scenario in which we are called to operate. There is broad agreement that this scenario features major changes, certain of which are already evident, but which will continue to confirm themselves in the coming years.

The first change is the growth in demand for education and training and in particular for continuing training, for life-long training. This creates a problem in that some Member States already have a substantial base of experience and programmes, whilst in others this area is far from having been adequately confronted. In every case this domain has never before taken on the dimensions which it is taking in today's more dynamic and mobile labour market, which reflects the greater dynamism and mobility of the industrial system and, more generally, of the productive system and of society as a whole. The growing complexity of demand and, in particular, the increased need for continuing training are posing new problems for traditional systems. The Commission,

along with various Member States, cultural institutions, universities, trade unions and industrial organizations, has organized analyses and studies, meetings and congresses, and recently decided to dedicate 1996 to the problem of education and of continuing training.

The second change relates to the technological context in which the education and training processes are taking place. This is an evolving context and one which will evolve even further. Suffice it to think of the projects for international information networks which the European Union is working on, the US information highways, or the Japanese project to provide each house with an optical fibre hook-up. What is going to travel down these networks, on these highways? Education and training programmes will also travel. It is an epoch-making transformation which is upon us. It will be gradual like all transformations, but it is set to profoundly influence the processes of education and training.

This confronts us with two major changes: one relates to contents (complexity and continuity), the other to methods (the use of technology and in particular of networks for distance teaching and training). This is leading to changes in the products being called for, and in the processes by which they will be developed and offered. These changes will in turn bring with them modifications in the institutional systems of education and training.

With regard to products, apart from the extension of demand to the entire lifespan, there are many other changes, and hence questions to be confronted. What balance, for example, should be struck between

training in arts subjects and training in science and technology? How many engineers, how many scientists do we need in the technological society? Japan has twice as many engineers and technicians as the Union. Should this be so, or not? What balance should we aim for?

Or again we can look at the training of tomorrow's researchers. This was discussed recently at an informal Council meeting between ministers of education and research held at the initiative of the German presidency at Schwerin. It was the first meeting of its kind, possibly also prompted by the fact that for the first time the Commission has a single member responsible for both research and education. What clearly emerged was the importance which the training of researchers has taken on, not only for universities and public research institutions but also for research centres and laboratories in manufacturing and in the productive system more generally. This need relates not only to free and fundamental research, but also to targeted and applied research. Existing programmes are concerned only to a limited extent with training researchers and for doctoral studies. It has become decisively important to study this problem, and to examine what facilities exist for training researchers and where intervention is useful and necessary.

Another important issue concerns the reduced attractiveness of vocational training systems and the correlated questions of the boundaries between education and training systems. Should we maintain these boundaries or should we render them less rigid? In other words, what balance

should we aim for between training systems and educational systems?

Moving on to the processes, the most important changes are those related to the possibilities offered by the new communication technologies. These in turn raise a host of questions. What role will electronic publishing play? What balance will be arrived at between traditional teaching and distance teaching, the latter overcoming the limitation of distance and, via recording, that of time? What will be the role of the "distance universities" and hence of the specialist institutions which have developed in recent decades, and of the traditional system which contains the accumulated discipline of knowledge and of skills? Is it not now time for the traditional system to measure up to the new technological environment of the training process?

The institutional systems, too, are destined to change. For instance universities, which are an important part of the training system – albeit with a specific aspect of their own, that of the interweaving of research and teaching – have undergone a "loss of monopoly" in both research and in training. For research there are also public research institutes and industrial research laboratories; for training there are vocational training centres, offering parallel courses to those offered by the universities. Something analogous may well repeat itself when it comes to the relative relationship between general education on the one hand and training systems on the other, between general preparation and specialist preparation. More and more people are asking how solid the basic core of each initial preparation needs to be in order to enable people to confront the successive stages of education and training throughout a lifetime. Certainly initial vocational training is moving in this direction. Boundaries are becoming flexible, the whole system is evolving.

In conclusion, we are clearly facing a phase of profound mutation. This is true in every country. In Europe we have a further problem, a specific problem. We wish to construct a union and, even if the levels of determination and the orientations differ, we have been moving in this direction for a number of decades now. Besides the directive on the free movement of labour there are many elements tending to give the labour market a de facto European dimension.



The education and training system cannot ignore these developments. This presents a major cultural challenge. We need to create a single area in which people can move freely in terms of professional activities, and at the same time it is important to respect the varieties of cultural and linguistic traditions. The challenge lies in striking a balance between unity and diversity, a theme chosen as the principal topic of a meeting devoted to the future of universities to be held in Pisa in November.

So education and training are destined to play a central role in overcoming the crisis of unemployment and loss of competitiveness. Products, processes and institutional systems in the sector are in a phase of major change. And in Europe there is a specific requirement to create an open space of European dimension whilst respecting the existing diversity of cultures. What are we doing to meet this challenge and these problems?

In particular we need to be well aware that confronting and resolving these problems calls for converging initiatives by Member States and the Union. The Maastricht treaty is very clear on this point. Precisely because education and training, and in particular education, are essential elements of the identity and culture of every country, Community-level action must be of a subsidiary and complementary nature, and needs to respect Member States' responsibility towards their own educational and training systems. Hence, the Union can and must undertake only initiatives which are subsidiary to those of the Member States.

We have decided to act in two directions. In particular we have restructured and broadened the experimental laboratory which has been developed over the past seven years in the field with programmes such as Erasmus, Lingua, Comett, Force and Petra. Then we have made provision to include the education and training sector also in the research Framework Programme. The two initiatives are linked: it is not enough to have a laboratory in order to say that one is carrying out research, even if concrete experimentation in the field is essential. We need to include research within its narrow meaning of critical examination and creative work.

With regard to the laboratory, the fundamental choice which has been made is to

develop those actions which contribute to the European dimension of educational and training systems. We have adopted the approach which underpins the existing mechanisms. Why are the Community's educational and training programmes spontaneously accepted by all political groups and all Member States, even in these days in which we are seeing not a few signs of Euro-pessimism? It seems to me that the response could be found in the fact that the approach is bottom-up. The programmes do not impose, they do not constrain. Rather they support and accompany voluntary processes of cooperation and innovation. And this is the spirit in which we have built the new programmes. With two objectives: improving quality, as the treaty states, via reciprocal knowledge and fertilization, and reinforcing the capacity to innovate, by supporting experimentation with contents and methods.

With what instruments? First of all through young people, who act as genuine ambassadors of innovation. A young person travelling to a different country not only enriches himself personally in terms of cultural preparation and professional training, but also objectively stimulates the transfer of experience. Secondly by promoting cooperation between institutions from different countries. The Council, after consulting the European Parliament, adopted a common position in June on the Socrates and Leonardo programmes. I believe that in December we will have final approval. Our ambition is to properly interlink the use of the laboratory with the research programme. It would be very valuable if practical experimentation and research were to go hand in hand, at least on certain topics.

Moving on to the research programme, the fundamental choice we have made is to promote cooperation between institutions and centres in various Member States, the birth of cooperation networks, and the development of projects with a European dimension. We have done this using the resources provided for in the specific socio-economic programme. But we must also bear in mind that in the specific programme in telematics we have also made provision to support research into the development and use of the new technologies. In the final analysis, the resources made available for this sector, if we look at the three chapters of experimental labora-

tory, research into education and training, and technological research, can contribute to consolidating and developing a tissue of links between universities and research and training centres. The network is the physical instrument of the European programmes, as it is for all research sectors. However, the network is also a result. Once it has been constructed, it can be used to permit ideas and researchers to travel.

With regard to content, three themes can provide input for the development of the work programme. First and foremost the challenge of striking a balance between unity and diversity, of finding ways in which growth in the European dimension can cohabit with respect for diversity, avoiding standardization as a means of flight from fragmentation and isolation. This challenge also forces us to confront the topic of European cultural identity.

Then there is the theme of quality and innovation. Competition is growing, giving rise to problems of quality and the evaluation of quality. This in turn brings up a very delicate problem: self-evaluation or evaluation by others? To quote a malicious quip: self-evaluation quickly becomes self-admiration! Can we establish at least certain common criteria in the Union, whilst leaving the application to individual countries so as to respect their autonomy? Innovation ought, as emerges from all the considerations developed so far, to relate to contents and methods, produces and processes.

Finally, the theme of needs and policies. One cannot avoid the impression that the choices which have to be made in response to the current changes are, in many cases, prevalently empirical, dictated by contingency and emergency, if not by protest. The time has perhaps come to take account of the fact that, just as in each sector of major importance, those undertaking research in this area need support at European level. This is the remit of our initiative: making it easier for researchers from individual countries to work together. □

Striking a balance between traditional education/training systems and the new technological environment

Keeping the balance

The Committee of the Regions is the latest EU institution, set up by the Treaty on European Union. It marks an important stage in the process, affirmed in the preamble to the treaty, of "creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity."

The new institution plays a leading role in implementing and guaranteeing the application of the subsidiarity principle. It contributes to the creation of a 'citizen's Europe' by ensuring the participation in EU affairs of the entities closest to the general public, local and regional government.

The Committee of the Regions has 189 members, including a number of leading European local politicians such as local government chairman and big city mayors. They all have considerable experience of the everyday realities of urban and regional affairs and can therefore be looked at, in a way, as the natural guardians of subsidiarity.

The Treaty on European Union requires consultation with the Committee of the Regions by the Council or the Commission in a number of areas: education (dealt with by our Commission 6, chaired by Mrs Josie Farrington); youth; culture; public health; trans-European transport, telecommuni-

cations and energy networks; and economic and social 'cohesion.'

The Committee's real authority derives from the experience and the influence of its members, whose responsibilities more broadly concern economic and social policies, with all their implications at local or regional level.

After less than a year in existence, our assembly seems to me to have three main characteristics. First there is the political maturity of its members, who make their contributions to debate on the main European issues with calm, wisdom and a great deal of conviction. Secondly, I am struck by their shared concern to respect the balance in geographical, territorial and political terms. This should allow us to mark out a new approach to reconciling natural political affiliations with the different kinds of local and regional territorial definitions. Thirdly, we have a very open attitude and are constantly in touch with local public opinion.

What we particularly want to do is contribute to the effective democratic machinery of the European Union, by proposing forms of partnership and complementary action to its various institutions.

Good cooperation between all the institutions will be extremely important in debating the economic and social issues which

so concern us all. From this autumn on, the Committee of the Regions intends to take part in the debate on the White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment. And we intend to set up a special committee to work on our contribution to the institutional reform of the EU and the inter-governmental conference in 1996.

I am looking for active participation by the Committee of the Regions in the debates which will take place in the coming months. My hope is that it will manage to overcome the natural oppositions between regions and communes and develop a strong line, both as regards its own institutional development and on the basis of proposals concerning the overall European institutional balance, because it is from this balance that new hope should come, and with it a deep sense of commitment to the European Union.

**Jacques Blanc,
President of the Committee
of the Regions**



INTERVIEW
Josie Farrington

Josie Farrington chairs the working group on education and training, Commission 6, of the Committee of the Regions.

A Lancashire county councillor, she has been named UK Woman of Europe for 1994 and recently became a life Peer in the House of Lords.

She has worked extensively for the Council of Europe and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, participating in Council of Europe missions to observe the first free local elections in Central and Eastern Europe.

She has also supported the European development of local TV and radio (Radio Riyeka in Croatia), besides being involved in many educational projects to encourage collaboration between groups of European local authorities to develop educational provision at local level, promote school twinning and exchanges across the wider Europe, and foster the European dimension in the teaching of history and geography.

The Maastricht Treaty has strengthened the European dimension both in terms of regional policy and in the area of education, training and youth. Is there an inherent link between the two?

The fact that education is one of the areas in which the Committee of the Regions has to be consulted clearly demonstrates this link and gives recognition to the significant responsibilities of local and regional authorities in this field, creating a firm connection between the concerns and aspirations of local communities and the European dimension in education. But more broadly, in terms of the integration of Europe and the creation of a citizens' Europe in which education has a key role to play, the creation of the Committee of the Regions marks a significant step towards building a Europe which is of relevance to all and where decisions are taken as closely as possible to the citizen, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Both the setting up of the Committee of the Regions and cooperation to encourage educational exchanges, mobility of teachers and pupils, and promote the European dimension in school and college curricula should foster solidarity and greater under-



Jacques Blanc was a GP and working with handicapped children as a neuropsychiatrist when he became mayor of La Canourgue, in the French department of Lozère, in 1971.

He is still the local mayor, but his career has since included many responsibilities at regional, national and European level. He was Secretary of State for Agriculture in 1977-78, secretary-general of the Republican Party and vice-president of the Union for French Democracy (UDF) from 1978-82, and vice-president of the National Assembly in 1985-86.

In local and regional government, M.Blanc has been presiding over the Lozère association of mayors and local elected officials since 1976. He has chaired the Regional Council of Languedoc-Roussillon since 1986 and served as president of the national association of regional elected officials from 1986 to 1992.

From 1988-93 he chaired the regional section of the Consultative Council of Regional and Local Authorities, an advisory body to the European Commission, and became vice-president of the Assembly of the Regions of Europe in 1992.

Jacques Blanc was elected the first president of the Committee of the Regions in March this year.



standing between the countries of Europe.

But of course it is not only the setting up of the CoR which provides the link between regional policy and education and training. Local and regional authorities have a strategic role in facilitating the economic development of their locality and are actively involved in the partnership arrangements under the Structural Funds for achieving economic and social cohesion. Human resource development is an essential part of this.

Clearly both education and training policies play a vital role in creating a more just and participatory civil society, a point which is of great concern to me. Access to education and training not only enables individuals to be more informed and thus involved in the decision-making process but also promotes respect and understanding towards cultural, racial and sexual differences as well as respect for the environment. This is particularly relevant to the wider Europe and the support the EU has given to the emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Education can be used as a crucial tool here to uphold the development of democratic values and preserve peace.

It is my personal ambition, particularly because of my work with the Council of Europe, that the Committee of the Regions will work closely with the Congress of Local Authorities of the Council of Europe. Human rights, democratic values and respect for cultural and religious diversity are at the heart of the Council of Europe. Together our two European organizations can develop pan-European education exchanges such as the Council of Europe's project for history in the primary school. I hope that one feature of the forthcoming European Year of Education in 1996 will be joint Council of Europe/European Union education projects to develop mutual respect and understanding in a positive way. We are all against racism, xenophobia, unemployment, etc. We must link together in a positive way to attack these scourges of modern Europe.

One point I would like to make clear, though, is that whilst the Maastricht Treaty has clearly established the link between education and the Committee of the Regions, training has not been included as one of the areas on which the Committee and therefore our commission is obliged to be consulted. Bearing in mind that education and training should be seen as a continuum, this is rather an anomalous situation and one which may need to be redressed in future. Nevertheless, we wish to be involved in voluntary consultation.

Education and training are amongst the areas on which the Committee of the Regions should be asked to comment. Will you limit yourself to formal opinions or do you hope that the CoR will develop a more active role in these areas?

Our commission has as its priority to underline the important role of local and regional authorities in the development of

human resources and to make known its views to the other EC institutions by drawing up opinions on specific proposals. In this way it can make a positive contribution towards the EU decision-making process. This does not mean, of course, that the commission and the CoR will only respond to proposals referred to it. It was pleased, for example, to be able to make a contribution to an 'own-initiative opinion' on the Delors White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment presented by the regional policy commission of the Committee of the Regions chaired by Mr Ermisch. Our commission looked closely at the education and training implications of the White Paper with a report prepared by one of our Greek members, Mr Efstathiadis.

But the commission also has a wider role to play, particularly in view of the proposed European Year of Education 1996 which it is debating at present, where it has an important opportunity to use its most valuable asset – its direct relationship with the citizens it represents – by actively encouraging their participation in the projects, programmes and events which will take place over the year and working in partnership with the other European Institutions to promote the importance of education and life-long learning, but also more generally to raise public awareness of important European issues.

A further key element of the work of our commission will be to look more long-term at the development of education as a competence of the European Union in line with the principle of subsidiarity in future, and particularly in view of the inter-governmental conference in 1996 to review the treaties.

In most Member States local and regional authorities have a fundamental role to play in education. How do you see the development of inter-regional cooperation in this area ?

The Task Force obviously has much experience in encouraging cooperation and exchanges across Member States in training and higher education, and local and regional authorities have been keen supporters and participants in many of the programmes. Many communities also have long experience through twinning links of educational exchanges and cooperation on joint projects. In its opinion on the proposed Socrates programme, the CoR has supported exchanges through student placements, cooperation between schools and has particularly stressed the importance of twinning links with educational institutions in Central and Eastern Europe.

I am personally very committed to the need to build on projects such as the Albanian Twinning Project. Existing school twinning projects are excellent, but these need to be developed to include regions and countries of the European Union. All children and young people are citizens of Europe, however remote the locality or country.

Our supplementary opinion on the White Paper stresses the need to develop more cooperation networks which bring together regional and local authorities in a particular area with the other relevant economic, social and educational groups, rather than networks of individual sectors, to provide closer links between training and combatting unemployment, training and industry, etc. Such cooperation networks could provide the basis for inter-regional cooperation. We should also be building on a whole range of direct practical experience in inter-regional cooperation through such programmes as the Article 10 Exchange of Experience, ECOS and Ouverture.

Training, however, sometimes comes under central authority, sometimes regional. In France, for example, competence for vocational training policy is now being devolved to regional level. What could the Committee of the Regions contribute here?

As I have said, it is somewhat paradoxical that the Committee should have specific responsibilities in relation to commenting on education measures but not training. It is not only a question of local and regional authorities' direct responsibility for training policy and provision (which differs from Member State to Member State) but also the role of training within the local economy, and the integration of individuals not only into working life but the community as a whole. These issues are all inter-related and, in representing the voice of regions and local communities, our commission will wish to highlight ways in which local and regional authorities can assist in tackling the challenges and major changes facing the whole of Europe in which training has a key role to play, such as unemployment and technological change.

Having said that I, and I am sure the other members of our commission, am keenly aware of the different approaches taken in different parts of the European Community to training and we would wish to emphasize the need to respect diversity and to learn from it.

Raising the awareness of young people really needs to be done in their immediate environment. Regional and local authorities have a key role to play in this area. In your opinion, what improvements could be envisaged in the training of young people within the wider European framework?

We are faced in Europe today with the fact that unqualified school-leavers make up a large proportion of the long-term unemployed. This is totally unacceptable and makes a mockery of our efforts to achieve a citizens' Europe. The Committee of the Regions could contribute towards redressing this situation by endorsing the White Paper's proposal to create a Union-wide guarantee so that no young person can be unemployed under the age of 18 and should be guaranteed a place in the education and training system, or in a linked work and

training placement. Local and regional authorities will also be keen to play an active part in the Youthstart initiative which was first proposed in the Delors White Paper.

Above all it is through transnational training projects and exchange of experience that policy-makers, trainers, teachers and the young people concerned can learn new solutions and share their ideas. I would like to take this opportunity to make a general point about the importance of calling on the expertise of those directly involved in both education and training. Good practice is only developed in partnership with politicians listening to the professional expertise of teachers. We must never waste time reinventing wheels. Sometimes a politician's job is to understand and build on the existing and diverse projects which teachers have developed themselves.

The Committee of the Regions is a political assembly. Education, training and youth are politically sensitive areas which are based on the co-decision procedure within the European decision-making process. How do you see the Committee of the Regions in this context?

Whilst the Committee of the Regions has only recently been established, it is already looking towards developing close working relationships with the other European institutions. Our commission intends to work in close partnership with the European Parliament, which has a special place within the decision-making process as the only institution with a direct democratic mandate. We are already working closely with the Task Force and other Commission officials, who have been very supportive in providing information to us in our work.

The Committee of the Regions will no doubt wish to actively support open decision-making at the European level and within the context of our commission's specific areas of interest I would stress that education is essentially a partnership between national, and increasingly European, policies and programmes and locally-rooted institutions and providers. The new treaty powers must therefore be used to stimulate and complement local and regional input, and not supplant it. □

Threading through the maze of education and training

The White Paper adopted by EU government leaders last December stressed that human resources, and therefore education and training, are a fundamental factor in economic growth, competitiveness and employment. Europe not only needs a well-qualified workforce to cope successfully with technological developments and the wider changes they induce; without a massive effort in education and training, there is a serious risk of deepening social division.

The far-reaching changes in the structure of the labour market and the increasing use of information and communications technology confirm the need to adapt education and training systems to meet the 21st century challenges highlighted in the White Paper. This needs an overall strategy rather than short-term initiatives.

The Commission has therefore set up a 'tableau de bord', a management chart, to track the follow-up measures taken by the Member States with reference to the White Paper.

Adapting education and training systems is less a matter of overall structural reforms than of numerous local or sectoral changes, which may look anything but coordinated. Nonetheless, the national authorities and the professionals concerned are aware of the scale of the overhaul required and are increasingly involved in setting general objectives and defining longer-term strategies.

It is difficult to coordinate initiatives based on relatively short-term objectives, such as helping young first-time job-seekers, getting the unemployed back to work after long lay-offs or retraining workforces threatened by cuts. And it will take very considerable resources to carry out a progressive in-depth adaptation of education and training systems. Hence the proliferation of successive (and sometimes contradictory) adaptations at local level.

Moreover, education and training systems involve a vast range of people at increasingly different levels, with obvious implications for decision-making. In most Member States, education and training are the responsibility of separate and sometimes competing administrative structures. This complicates the development of a joint approach. A certain amount of inertia is inevitably the result.

Such a context hardly allows for one-off measures or decisions directly linked to the White Paper: the necessary changes to education and training systems need to be seen over time, in terms of underlying trends. It is nonetheless clearly recognized in the Member States that the quality of training systems needs to be improved and that action is needed as regards two fundamental points outlined in the White Paper: improving initial education and training

for young people and the widespread extension of continued training for adults.

Basic education and training have moved high up the political agenda because of recent levels of youth unemployment. There are two main approaches in the EU countries:

- counter-measures to reduce the number of drop-outs from initial education and training;
- diverse initiatives to help the transition from school to work for young people with the greatest difficulties, notably 'guaranteed' access to training schemes (D, UK, F), which seem to be spreading to cover most school-leavers, including those who do obtain some sort of qualification (F).

One constant preoccupation, the subject of numerous initiatives in several Member States (D, B, IRL, UK, F), is with raising the perceived status of the vocational path in education. Particular attention is being given to apprenticeships and closer school-industry interaction as part of a general effort to establish academic/vocational 'parity of esteem' and several Member States are concerned about the imbalance, particularly in higher education, in view of the employment situation.

This is also reflected in the greater attention apparently being given to career guidance. Besides supporting the usual counselling and information activities, some Member States (F, UK, L) are now aiming for a better response to individual aspirations and intend to move progressively towards an à la carte approach enabling students to compose their own learning approach to a chosen career. However, if the idea has now become more familiar, the practical possibilities it affords are still fairly limited.

What is taught, rather than the structure of education and training systems, naturally remains the most important point. Work in the White Paper context only allows a partial assessment of course and curriculum contents, but it should be noted that some changes are being introduced to improve 'core' and 'transversal' skills, especially in northern EU countries (DK, B, D, L), and this trend could develop into a radical change of approach to basic education and the kind of abilities young people are expected to acquire by school-leaving age. Similarly, there is a widespread move towards teaching at least the basics of science and technology from an early age.

In parallel with new approaches at school or college, Member States are focusing on continuing training and the development of access to training for employees throughout their working lives. Certainly, the range of such opportunities has widened. This is encouraging in the White Paper context but a number of difficulties remain:

- The idea of making training opportunities available to everyone seems largely accepted in principle and is backed up by provisions such as the legal right to take time out for training (B, F) and collective training agreements (NL, D, DK, P). But in practice the reality is very patchy, with marked differences between different categories of employees and companies. Even what is meant by continuing training goes under a variety of definitions, and it is premature to refer to "rights" of access to training, whether in the legal sense or not, in such a context.

- Despite recognition of the increasing rapidity of socio-economic change, there has been little to suggest a corresponding quickening of the pace as regards training opportunities in the year since the preparation of the White Paper. There is broad awareness in the Member States of the unavoidable need to upgrade and adapt the skills of workforces, especially under the threat of redundancy, to match the opportunities offered by sweeping technological and industrial developments; but effective practical solutions in the workplace are not being implemented widely enough or fast enough.

- Continuing training is characterized by the multiplicity of arrangements, people and methods involved. Progress needs to be made regarding the respective roles of public bodies, employers and workforce organizations, notably through cooperation processes and partnerships of various kinds covering issues of management, funding and objectives.

- And the strictly professional dimension of continuing training is still widely dominant; there is little attention to the overall dynamics of the education/training process, or consequently to broadening the curriculum (one reason for this being the schism between education and training at ministry level).

This maze of responsibilities reflects the broader situation in the Member States. Continuing training schemes can come under local or national government arrangements or collective bargaining; be funded directly by companies, via some kind of fiscal incentive or by the tax-payer; be carried out by private training suppliers or public sector agencies such as higher education establishments. It is a constant subject of discussion across the board, from national to regional level, from industrial sector to trade union branch level. In some Member States there are well-developed links between the social partners (particularly in D, DK, NL). There has also been a striking development in partnerships between the public and private sectors (F, P, UK).

One issue common to all the Member States is a concern with equal opportunities for men and women in the provision of

continuing training. Specific measures in this context tend to focus on people returning to work, on 're-entry', and schemes specifically designed to help women get qualifications remain limited; more also needs to be done to take account of arrangements such as temporary contracts and part-time employment which concern women more than men (see article on p. 10).

Three lines of approach are nonetheless emerging, along which some partial solutions, now under trial, could develop in the near future:

- Basing continuing education on a broad interpretation of further adult education, with the emphasis on abilities linked to the idea of citizenship, giving greater attention to the connection between technical and social skills and the organization of work.

- Finding new forms of funding, from vouchers and individual tax incentives for time off for lifelong learning (UK, F) and more direct contributions from participants who would be encouraged to take more responsibility themselves.

- Extending support schemes allowing individuals to choose the most appropriate career training and professional development paths, accumulating personal records of skills and qualifications (F). Open and distance learning (UK) is particularly relevant in this context.

Indeed, the idea of the 'information society' features strongly in the White Paper and there is a profusion of initiatives in the Member States based on new electronic learning technologies and methods (see following article). Yet multimedia distance learning is still not put forward as a priority area for development, and there is still a long way to go before the adaptation of existing systems converges with the new opportunities offered by these technologies.

On the basis of these preliminary observations, more detailed discussions will be held with the Member States and the social partners to develop approaches and methods and draw first conclusions.

The Leonardo programme should prove very useful here, since it will include a permanent follow-up process – called for by the European Council in Corfu this summer – set up in partnership between the Commission and Member States. In this way, the Community will have the means to monitor developments in education and training policies and check them against the other strategic areas, starting with trends in employment systems, highlighted by the White Paper. □

Preschool education is the topic of debates addressing both the issues of women's place in society and the role that preschool education can play in the fight against school failure. Public authorities in all countries of the European Union recognize the importance of these concerns, and the majority of Member States have adopted measures to develop education provision at this level. The Task Force has now carried out a study on preschool education. It offers a synthesis of scientific research on the beneficial impact of preschool education and the organizational characteristics of those institutions that have achieved the most positive results.

Young children's place in the education system

The 20th century will be remembered as a time when it was gradually recognized just how vital the first years of life are in a child's development. The work carried out in the field of child psychology throughout this century has profoundly altered traditional concepts of childhood. While children were previously considered above all as recipients of care, now the emphasis is on education.

This change is also reflected in the attention devoted to preschool institutions. The influence of such educationalists as F. Froebel, P. Kergomard, M. Montessori and O. Decroly has meant that there is really no common ground between the objectives of the first nursery schools, set up across Europe to care for young children at the beginning of the 19th century, and those objectives pursued by preschools today.

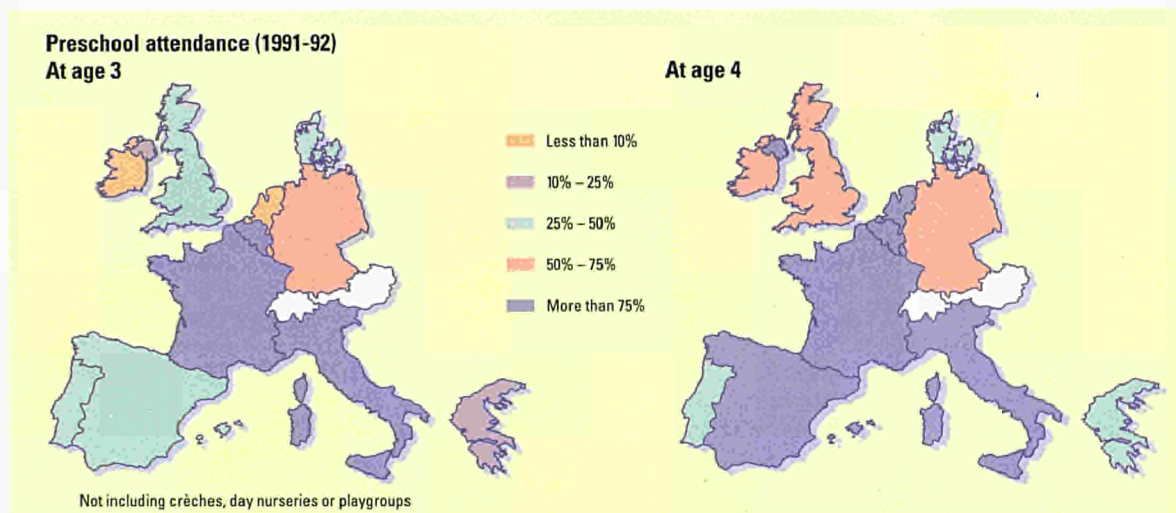
Nursery schools were originally seen as places providing shelter for children of working-class families, whereas the preschools organized today offer an ingenious mix of day care, socialization and education for all. All societies naturally have their own specific educational priorities, resulting from a complex heritage of local social and cultural traditions. In some countries, the main objective of preschool education is to develop the child's transition to school life.

Today, however, these differences are becoming less noticeable. Despite the different names and types of organization that exist – école maternelle, nursery school, kindergarten, nytiagogeia, education infantile – the most common model aims to provide an education that promotes the social, emotional and cognitive development of young children through games and exploratory activities.

Generally speaking, preschools in Europe are run by the education ministry and open to children aged three or four, except in Belgium, France and Spain where children under three also have access. By contrast, children in Denmark enter the nursery class at the Folkeskole only when they are six. Nursery schools, daycare centres and playgrounds run by the health and social affairs ministries or organized by the private sector are the most common structures available to children aged three to six who do not attend regular school. The Netherlands and Ireland only offer preschool education as a part of primary school, which begins at age four with a curriculum specifically adapted to children of this age group.

Promoting preschool education

Why and How?



Families everywhere are calling for more educational opportunities for their young children. Although attendance in such activities before the age of five is still voluntary in most education systems, a general trend towards preschool attendance from the age of four can be seen across the European Union. By contrast, few countries have developed educational services for very young children, especially those under three, leaving it up to mothers to provide educative care themselves or to organize alternative care for their children at their own expense. Hiring a private childcare provider is still one of the most common solutions, except in Denmark where very young children are cared for in day nurseries.

A great many studies have shown that the problem of rivalry between the family and preschools must be addressed in terms of complementarity. The key is to determine how preschools can effectively complement and support the educative function of the family.

What research has shown

Without denying the importance for later development of stimulation received during early childhood, it is certainly misleading to assert that everything happens before the age of six, as some early childhood experts would have us believe. Intrigued by this idea, people had a tendency up until the end of the 1980s to view preschool education as some sort of vaccination that enabled children, once inoculated, to enjoy a highly successful school career. The whole issue is far more complex. American research, in particular, has shown that preschool education must be seen in a new light. Today, leading researchers favour an interactive approach, for which the model developed

by L. Schweinhart and D. Weikart (1985, 1993) is perhaps the most sophisticated example.

These researchers have demonstrated that, after attending preschool, children from ethnic minority backgrounds enter primary school with stronger cognitive skills than their peers, but that the impact of this compensational action on their IQ decreases rapidly. Nonetheless, these children's progress in school is markedly better, their drive for success is stronger and their attitude towards school life is more positive.

This phenomenon can be attributed to the following factors. Having initiated their school learning activities under the best of conditions, these children make a positive impression on their teachers who tend to develop more positive expectations of them. The children, in turn, focus their energy on meeting these expectations. Preschool education does indeed have a long-term impact to the extent that it indirectly influences the quality of children's interactions in their later schooling.

More importantly, the effect of preschool education on success at school depends to a large degree on the impact it has on children's families. This is reflected primarily in changes in the way parents view their child's potential, resulting in an increase in family expectations and support. The fact that parents alter the image they have of their children and their aspirations for them may be one of the most significant long-term effects of preschool education. When such conditions are fulfilled, the few long-term studies available indicate that the expected benefits extend far beyond mere success at school. Other aspects of social integration are positively affected. The decrease in delinquency rates, higher education attendance and

integration in professional life were among the key indicators studied.

Preschool achievement, related aspirations as well as social and family support are clearly the three factors necessary for ensuing a dynamic interaction in the education process. As expressed by N. Hayes (1992), it is a question of not only providing childcare services for all children but also ensuring that these services are attractive to families and that the experiences they offer are relevant and meaningful. It stands to reason that families are more likely to appreciate the importance of preschool education if it is based on quality service.

In this context, the studies carried out so far do not allow an answer to the question of whether or not the programmes to be adopted should have an academic orientation. The conditions and quality of the location of a programme appear to be more

important than the actual characteristics of its content. Among the factors to be noted are the amount and variety of materials available, group size, the quality of adult-child interactions and the organization of small group activities that are not always directed by an adult. Interactions between children, their ability to take initiative and their self-confidence are all enriched, which has a positive impact in the development of social and language skills.

Of course, the quality of organization, interactions and educational activities on offer all depend to a large extent on the adults in charge.

This once again underscores the importance of the qualification and training levels of the supporting staff. It would appear essential to invest more in research on the different types of their initial and continuing training. The stability of the education team also appears to promote children's social and cognitive development. This aspect probably serves as an indicator of staff working conditions. The higher the material and psychological constraints and the lower the remuneration, the more likelihood there is that staff changeovers will be frequent.

It is important to note that the impact of preschool education on children's future schooling is interconnected with the quality of all educational activities in the child's life. Initially, there is the type of daycare provided for the very young, later on it is a question of the experiences offered at primary school. The hopes placed in the promotion of preschool education will have every chance of success if this is fully recognized. □

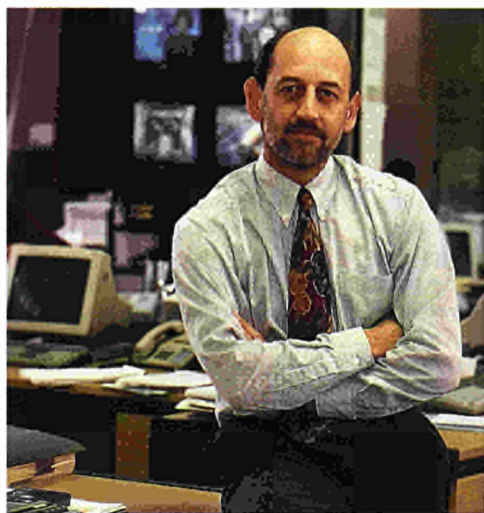
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New, True and Interesting

European cooperation in television techniques

EU television professionals are participating in a programme of training and support for newspaper, radio and TV journalists working in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Rick Thompson, responsible for coordinating international news coverage for BBC World Service radio and television, reports from Romania



Before this week I didn't really know what it meant to be a television journalist. Now I can see clearly what we must try to do." The 23-year-old reporter from Bulgaria spoke fervently at the end of the biggest multinational training seminar in television journalism ever conducted in East Europe. She held her certificate of merit with pride and some emotion.

The week-long seminar at the TV station in Iasi, eastern Romania, was organized by Circom Regional, Europe's rapidly expanding association of regional television stations, as part of its 1994 annual conference. Now the official regional arm of the European Broadcasting Union, Circom has doubled in size following the collapse of the former Soviet bloc and with the creation of scores of new public and commercial TV stations in the regions of Central and Eastern Europe.

Circom Regional now sees one of its main roles as a bridge between Western and Eastern European television in the regions of Europe. The Iasi seminar was a practical demonstration of support for the new broadcasters. Young reporters, news producers, cameramen and picture editors were sent to the seminar from regional stations in Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Slovenia and Ukraine. They were funded by their own stations, with financial support from the EU's Phare and Tacis programmes, and from the Council of Europe.

I was asked to assemble a team of experienced West European television practitioners, volunteers funded by their own organizations. There was no shortage of enthusiasm; many senior TV journalists see the vital importance of helping the new democracies develop independent and professional programmes through training on the spot. The Thompson Foundation provided their chief broadcasting officer (controller); Germany sent senior news editors and, vitally, a Beta 1/2" edit-pack (the seriously under-funded RTV Iasi had previously worked on semiprofessional VHS equipment). From the UK came a specialist news cameraman, one of the BBC's top picture editors and senior new editors from the BBC, Yorkshire TV and Central TV. RTE Dublin sent their current affairs editor and FR3 France supplied its top TV training managers.

There were three main purposes of the Iasi seminar: to discuss the theories of democratic journalism, to establish the best techniques for modern and professional news programmes, and to agree the best organizational methods for an efficient newsroom operation.

There was a nice irony in the fact that the first three days were to be spent in the amphitheatre in the TV station at Iasi. This had been the local training centre of Ceausescu's Ministry of Information. The large windowless lecture-theatre with its steep bank of seats retains its classic post-war communist decor and dim lighting. Soon the blank walls were echoing to the sound of debate and some laughter, and they were quickly plastered with huge sheets of paper covered in coloured felt-pen ideas as the seminar brainstormed into life.

Working in so many languages was a problem. Simultaneous translation in English, French, Romanian and Russian was provided for the plenary sessions. But listening to a scripted lecture through headphones is one thing;

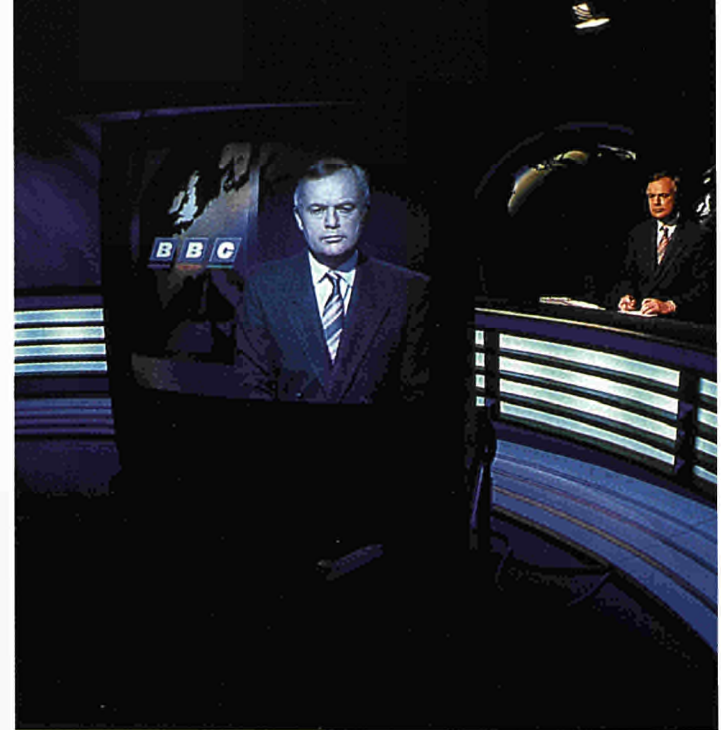
debating sophisticated concepts or technical details in a freewheeling format is another. The regular cigarette breaks (essential in East Europe) became important parts of the programme, where misunderstandings were ironed out and shy young journalists had the courage to express their doubts and opinions. "What do we say to a politician who will only be interviewed if we guarantee he will not be edited?" "We are proud of our country and don't want to show negative images." "Why should we allow someone on television if they have wrong views?"

It was soon clear that the language difficulties were tiny compared with the huge differences in tradition and culture. But the 42 young delegates were passionate for change. The same questions came back time and again. "What is news?" "Who decides and on what basis?" The western 'trainers' found that they too were reappraising their approach to their professions. Removed from the daily pressure of hurling news programmes onto the air, the exposure to fundamental questions was refreshing and disconcerting. A consensus emerged. News must be information that the viewers did not already know, it must be fair and accurate, and it must be interesting to watch: "New, true and interesting." Well, it was a start.

The importance of high-quality television journalism in the emerging East European states cannot be underestimated. The conventional view of a successful democratic system is of a three-legged structure composed of the elected parliament, which creates laws, an independent judiciary, which enacts those laws, and an independent executive, which conducts the administration of the state on behalf of the elected government. It was a British politician, Macaulay, who standing in the 'mother of all parliaments' at Westminster 150 years ago pointed to the press gallery and pronounced: "The gallery in which the reporters sit has become the fourth estate of the realm." How can the electorate be assured that democracy is functioning in their interest if the activities of the politicians, lawyers and civil servants are not reported back to them fairly and accurately? Independent journalism, the fourth estate, squares the circle.

Research shows that newspapers have been overtaken by television as the main way most people discover what is happening. The fragile democracies in Central and East Europe will not retain the trust of their electorates if the nightly television news programmes are not believed and respected. And they must be competitive. The satellite TV age has arrived. The standards of local news must compare favourably with BBC World Service Television, CNN and Sky News.

During the Iasi seminar, the viewing of regional news programmes from all the countries represented became a fascinating portrait of Europe in the mid-1990s. Most former communist countries are developing their broadcast journalism at a breathtaking pace. Some programmes are impressive, with assured presentation and authoritative journalism. Others are much less competent, with endless shots of men in suits at meetings, shaky camerawork and boring scripts which do not match the pictures. The reporters were encouraged to make their stories come alive by the use of real examples to illustrate and humanize the issues. For example, a meeting of doctors complaining about poor hospital resources would become



more understandable and relevant if the viewer could see one of the doctors at work, and hear him telling a patient why she could not be treated this year. The patient should be allowed to give her reaction. And to balance the argument, the Health Authority spokesperson must be allowed to explain the shortage of resources. This approach in turn led to the need for careful planning of stories.

Throughout the week, the word training was avoided. For western producers to 'parachute' into Romania, tell them to copy British, German or French programmes, and then leave, would be patronising and wrong. Of course the young journalists wanted to learn from those with a much longer tradition of independent news programmes; but nothing was imposed. This was a working seminar, not a series of lectures. Everyone learned from each other. All the journalists had to decide for themselves what would be acceptable to their own audiences, and which techniques to adopt.

But certain standards were thought to be universal. The pictures should be taken in a way which would allow the video editor to cut flowing sequences to illustrate the narrative. Tripods should be used as a matter of routine to avoid shaky shots, which are distracting and amateurish. The story should be clearly established by the studio presenter in simple and natural language.

After three days in the amphitheatre training room, the delegates were divided into eight multinational teams, each under the guidance of a western team leader. Each team had to find a real story then film and edit a three-minute news feature, putting into practice the ideas that had been discussed in the plenary sessions. These practical exercises became the most valuable part of the course,

with the teams of five or six young journalists able to argue about television news techniques in fine detail and to see for themselves that teamwork is the key to efficient and successful TV journalism.

The eight films which emerged after long sessions in the editing room, some lasting through the night, were extraordinarily impressive. Issues of real importance to the local audience in eastern Romania came to life. Subjects included the industrial pollution which had killed all the fish in a beautiful lake; rising unemployment and its psychological effects on schoolchildren; a return to the Romanian orphanages to see the progress made with the help of Western aid; the revival of the church after the Ceausescu regime; the lack of funds required to re-establish Romania's rich cultural tradition; and the story of the local teachers who were technically on strike over pay and facilities, but who continued to work. All the films were beautifully constructed and illustrated, and were narrated confidently and accurately by young Romanian reporters.

These films were all shown to the Circom Regional Conference at a special session in the Palace of Culture in the centre of Iasi. The conference delegates, senior TV executives from 30 European countries, stood and applauded. The films have all been shown twice on national Romanian television and one was selected for an edition of *Alice*, the monthly European magazine which is shown in 12 countries.

More important was the response from the young trainees themselves. They departed with renewed determination to establish truly impartial and professional reporting in their own work. One Romanian reporter said,

"We are the deprived generation. We must learn quickly so that our children will watch the television news, knowing it is fair and right, knowing what is really happening."

The Iasi seminar was just a part of a huge programme of training and support for newspaper, radio and television journalists working in the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe. Substantial funding has been made available by the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, national governments and individual broadcasting organizations across Western Europe. BBC World Service makes one of the biggest commitments, with help from the British government's "Knowhow Fund." In the past five years, hundreds of editors and journalists have visited BBC radio and TV centres in the United Kingdom and practical training sessions are being currently conducted in 10 different countries.

It takes time for viewers and listeners to come to trust their radio and TV news programmes. Journalists must earn that trust through absolute determination to be strictly impartial, fair and accountable to the audiences they seek to serve. Throughout the world, politicians seek to influence their television stations, some more blatantly than others. It is vitally important to the progress of democratic reform for journalist to resist the pressures, and work solely on behalf of their viewers and listeners. Standards of TV journalism in many countries are improving dramatically. It is to be hoped that all elected politicians will learn to value and respect the "fourth estate" as their electorates watch their own country's news programmes with growing trust and affection. □

Changing attitudes towards equal opportunities

To develop its international competitiveness, Europe must have a skilled workforce. As stated very clearly in the White Paper on competitiveness, growth and employment, skill shortages are already emerging which limit the extent to which the European Union can develop its economic and social policies. These shortages are not evenly distributed either by sector or by region.

Throughout the EU, among the employed, unemployed and the economically inactive, it is women in particular who suffer most from underdeveloped skills. Gender segregation persists in all the EU countries and jobs for women tend to be concentrated in a few economic sectors, adding to labour market rigidity. Furthermore, there is growing concern that existing training systems are failing to respond adequately to women's training needs and, as a consequence, are actually contributing to the problem of skill shortages. This applies both to the type of training provided and the ability of women to access such training.

Equal access does not mean equal outcome

It is generally assumed that if neutral criteria for training were set, fair results would naturally emerge. An analysis carried out on the existing Task Force training programmes, however, has shown that equal treatment does not yield equal outcome. And although equal opportunities are a stated objective of all Community action programmes, they have not yet yielded the desired results. This is true of training in the European Union as a whole. A more pro-active stance needs to be taken to raise awareness of the issue and encourage the measures necessary to counteract this trend.

As the author of the report, Teresa Rees¹, points out, equal training opportunities that allow women to join in without being specifically designed to attract them or meet their needs are inevitably more successful with men. Unless measures are taken to cater for women's requirements, the take-up of training courses will merely continue to reflect the status quo; a laissez-faire approach to equal opportunities will be of limited effectiveness.

The Social Partners, working at European level within the framework of the Social Dialogue, endorsed this view in their Joint Opinion on Women and Training² in which they acknowledge that, in practice, women do not participate equally with men in vocational training. They go on to say that "Women's participation and position on the labour market are not determined solely by economic factors but are also influenced by cultural attitudes. Therefore, the Social Partners consider that there is a need to promote cultural and social change to ensure a positive and progressive environment." They take responsibility for their own role "in promoting open-mindedness and positive attitudes in behaviour towards women on the labour market and in society."

Alpha: raising awareness

All these factors combined to encourage the Task Force to take the decision at the end of 1993, using funding earmarked for the IRIS network, to promote and develop an awareness-raising module to encourage changes in attitudes towards equal opportunities amongst all those involved in the training process. If the current picture is to be changed, project promoters must take into account the equal opportunities issue when putting together projects for Community funding, either through the new Leonardo programme, or in the context of the Community Initiatives, Structural Funds or research and development programmes.

A flexible one-day course, entitled the Alpha project, has therefore been designed, developed and tested for this purpose. At time when Europe is looking for new ways forward Alpha is intended as a change model, which may be adapted to national and cultural diversity and to other top-



**When the wind
of change blows, some
build walls,
others build windmills**

CHINESE PROVERB

ics and circumstances, such as environmental issues and SMEs. With this in mind, Alpha aimed to achieve a very high level of innovation in course design and to develop a model which should be delivered in the nine Community languages and throughout all EU Member States and EFTA countries.

Course design

To this end, nine trainers, particularly experienced in the management of change and equal opportunities issues, came together in March to pool ideas in a two-day session to produce the core material for the one-day experimental workshop which they would deliver in their own countries. From the beginning of the project, the emphasis was on innovation, using different ways of introducing new ideas and policies into the workplace at a time when changes in work organization and methods call increasingly for the interpersonal skills normally attributed to women.

Particular emphasis was also placed on cultural diversity. There was general consensus among trainers that the equal opportunities message should be presented in different ways if it was to appeal to audiences from differing cultural backgrounds with varying levels of awareness and sensitivity to equal opportunities. Whereas some audiences were more open to arguments concerning the economic benefits and increased productivity induced by respect for equal opportunities, others set more store by issues of social justice and individual empowerment. Workshop leaders were thus encouraged to give full rein to their imagination and their knowledge of attitudes and potential prejudice in their own countries.

After careful consideration, the Comett university-enterprise training partnerships (UETPs) were selected as a test-bed for the initiative. From the Commission's point of view, they constitute an easily identifiable and contactable network and work in an area in which women are particularly under-represented.

Workshops in 10 countries

Using this approach, 202 UETPs throughout the EU and EFTA countries were invited to workshops in Dublin, London, Sheffield, Berlin, Lisbon, Paris, Lyon, Bologna, Vejle, Eindhoven, Barcelona, Madrid and Thessaloniki. Held in May and June, the workshops attracted some 180 participants from Comett projects and UETPs. Many participants admitted that they had not really thought about the equal opportunities issue before, let alone taken specific steps to promote women's training. Some had even hesitated to attend. At the outset they saw no particular necessity to focus on women's needs when putting together projects. By the end of the course they had become more conscious of, and in many cases enthusiastic about, the role that they themselves could play in changing the reality by drawing attention wherever possible to the need for some sort of positive action to encourage both women themselves and those involved in training issues to take a broader, more holistic view of the future.

Methodologies

Many different approaches were used in the course of the workshops to achieve this increased awareness. These included brainstorming sessions on personal constructs of the world around us, vision setting, discussion of statements such as "the future is feminine" and more traditional presentations of statistics, legislation, examples and models of good practice. There was, throughout all the workshops, an emphasis on maintaining the highest possible level of participation, commitment and enthusiasm and many of the trainers reported that the experience had generally been considered not only valuable but good fun.

Evaluation

In mid-July workshop leaders met again in Brussels to exchange experience and discuss ways in which Alpha might be applied. The final package will consist of a range of core material to be selected and combined by individual trainers to suit the needs of different audiences. Discussion at this meeting highlighted again the importance of respecting cultural differences in attitude on this very sensitive issue and of developing the widest possible range of tools and models of good practice to assist in this exercise. Participants welcomed the announcement that as part of the follow-up to their joint opinion, the Social Partners are currently working on a compendium of good practice on women and training. This should be available for dissemination by the end of the year and will be reported on in the next issue of *Le Magazine*.

It was strongly felt that as many people as possible should benefit from a well-packaged Alpha model, and that it should be given the widest possible dissemination and publicity. Awareness needs to be raised both within the Commission, amongst those working on training programmes, and beyond the Commission, amongst Community training programmes and initiatives. Only in this way will the equal opportunities issue cease to be seen as a separate, add-on issue and become an integral part of the new European development model advocated in the White Paper. □

¹ **Women and the EC Training Programmes**

Teresa Rees (1993)

School for Advanced Urban Studies, University of Bristol, UK

² **Joint Opinion on Women and Training**

Social Dialogue (1993) – SEC(93)1977 of 3 December 1993

Commission of the European Communities

Requests for these reports may be made to the Task Force, c/o Frances Smith.

Out in the cold

European education, training and youth initiatives to meet the challenge of social and economic exclusion

If 'settling down in a nice steady job' increasingly seems a comforting idea from the past, the intensifying debate on tomorrow's employment has so far produced few equally comforting ideas for the future. Meanwhile, tension grows between the haves and the have-nots in European countries trying to reconcile the imperatives of international competitiveness with various social safety-net traditions. This dossier looks at the have-nots, the excluded, and at the hopes invested in cooperative education, training or youth initiatives to help equip them in the medium term for the changing world of work. It is far from exhaustive. For all the studies or statistics there can be little confidence in extrapolations of cause and effect in an area conditioned by so many socio-economic factors, from the recent rise in world raw materials prices to the tendency for better-educated couples to take two jobs while the less-educated have none.

The questionnaire issued in the first issue of Le Magazine showed that respondents are mostly interested in points of view. The following articles essentially present viewpoints. If some of them have become commonplaces, such as calls for comprehensive partnerships at local level, they are nonetheless topical. Readers' opinions and reactions are welcome in return.



A time-bomb is ticking away in Europe. Its ingredients are an explosive mixture of disadvantage and exclusion affecting a large part of the population. Millions of people are effectively shut out from a decent life.

Unemployment: At the beginning of 1994, EU employment offices registered around 18 million job seekers, 5 million of them aged under 25. Youth unemployment is twice that of the overall rate and the rate for women is 30% higher than for men. Nearly half the jobless have been out of work for over a year.

Poor living conditions: 52 million people live at or below subsistence level and 3 million are homeless.

Inadequate education and training: 15 million young people, aged between 15 and 25, have no further educational or training qualifications after compulsory education. Compulsory schooling was not even successfully completed by 5 million of them.

Research has shown that social disadvantage is often handed down from one generation to the next. Throughout the EU, there are regions – or social groups – in which family unemployment and poverty dramatically restrict the opportunities of the younger generation. In many cases a lack of qualifications, unemployment, dependence on social security, accommodation difficulties and health problems combine to create a situation in which various types and causes of disadvantage are mutually reinforcing. Problems in finding employment often stem from a lack of qualifications. But in economically weak regions even qualified people have few job opportunities. Young foreign nationals have special difficulty in securing vocational training, principally because of language or cultural problems. And, as with other groups, inadequate guidance, a shortage of training vacancies and a lack of preparation at school also play a part. The vocational development of many young women suffers because they are unable to combine the roles of wage-earner and parent, and often face narrow traditional ideas and prejudice.

Redressing this situation will be a race against the clock. Besides often irreparably damaging individual prospects in social and working life, disadvantage of this kind on this scale makes a mockery of EU social commitment. Recent discussion about the advantages of the single European market and the well-founded hopes which it raised must now seem like empty promises to those excluded from the world of work.

Shutting out whole sections of the younger generation is also a risk factor for the medium-term economic development of the European Union. Several Member State forecasts already point to a marked shortage of qualified workers in the years ahead. As outgoing European Commission President Jacques Delors has put it: "It is the continued existence of our European model of society which is at stake." In economic terms, the productivity and development of the Union turn largely on whether disadvantage and exclusion can be halted. Jacques Delors again: "The tensions which the job crisis has revealed show that maintaining social cohesion – and hence the battle against exclusion – is one precondition for productivity and competitiveness."

A further highly charged political

Prevention, reintegration and European cooperation



dimension is the dangerous vacuum produced where the transition from school to working life fails to provide any concrete perspectives. This vacuum is easily exploited by would-be agitators preaching racism and hatred of foreigners. Lasting exclusion of so many young people also stands to threaten the implicit contract between the generations, on which so much social welfare provision is based.

Mounting concern

In the face of looming crisis, however, a groundswell of concern has been gathering throughout Europe. Exclusion and underprivilege have been near the top of the agenda at all European Council (government leaders) summit conferences since 1993. In Copenhagen (June 1993), the Council called for targeted action to bring down unacceptably high levels of unemployment, in particular among young people, the long-term unemployed and the most socially disadvantaged. In Brussels (December 1993), the Council further spelt out the social explosiveness of the problem: "Today's level of unemployment, with all its direct and indirect effects, is endangering our society's cohesion." On the basis of the Commission's White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment, it decided on an action plan to fight unemployment with a general framework for the Member State policies and specific Community accompanying measures. They include special measures for young people who leave school without appropriate qualifications, and a comprehensive prevention and reintegration policy to stem social exclusion.

The plan was discussed in more detail at the Corfu summit this June. The Council again stressed that economic growth and job creation need action taking special

account of the weakest in society. With reference to young people, the Council concluded "that additional emphasis should be given to those ... facing the greatest difficulties. It attaches high importance to ensuring as far as possible that young people can move from education into work." There was a forthright welcome for the Commission's new Employment-Youthstart action and basic agreement on

**Disadvantage
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commitment**

Socrates and Leonardo, the two new programmes for education and vocational training respectively (see box on p.13). Similarly, the widespread plight of many young people has lent fresh weight to the central aim of the EU Petra programme, now consolidated in the Leonardo proposals. This is to give all young people access to vocational training lasting at least a year, but preferably longer, for a recognized qualification. The same aim also implies the need for improved vocational guidance and preventive measures to counter school failure and drop-out.

Key requirements

Providing access for the disadvantaged to training, employment and active participation in society requires a whole package of differentiated measures, because the types and causes of disadvantage are as varied as the groups affected. In the case of young people, for example, the emphasis must be on open access to vocational training and on regularly creating the motivation to use it. Alternative paths to vocational qualification must be opened up within the training system, and special support provided in parallel. Teachers, trainers and counsellors need better preparation for these tasks, and making vocational training more attractive for young people is an urgent priority. At the same time, school

and training provision for disadvantaged young people must be incorporated into mainstream education and training wherever possible to prevent stigmatization of those targeted. And youth services and policy measures can make a vital complementary contribution in reaching those who have rejected the mainstream.

Further support for these views came from a European conference of experts held in Denmark, at the initiative of the Danish government, last November. The participants were high-ranking ministerial officials and representatives from the fields of education, training and research, as well as both sides of industry. One possible EU measure proposed was the pooling of programme resources at the level of local or regional districts, and better coordinated innovative action. The conference concluded that schools, training establishments, firms, guidance services, teachers and trainers could combine forces to reduce school failure and bring vocational qualifications within reach of far more disadvantaged young people. The creation of "innovation districts" could have EU-wide demonstration value by highlighting the results of positive interaction between the different programmes and promoting the use of models of good practice (see p.17). By networking these districts, and encouraging transnational cooperation between them, a clear European dimension could be introduced into their activities, leading to a more rapid spread of innovative and successful working methods.

The European drive to act is reflected in further action and discussion within the Member States, as illustrated in several contributions to this dossier. In many countries, existing measures for disadvantaged young people are being intensified, revised or expanded. The debate about a training or employment 'guarantee' for young people is also broadening. Local or regional initiatives are starting to bring together schools, training units, firms, career advice agencies, employment offices, youth work establishments and the authorities in a new form of partnership-based cooperation. It is now also becoming easier to help the disadvantaged help themselves through youth initiative projects, self-help groups or new teaching approaches and projects in education and training. In particular, much can be achieved where a spectrum of agencies, broader than the formally responsible public bodies, and including the private sector, can be mobilized to share this responsibility in partnership.

"Nobody is excluded once and for all – everyone is recoverable" in the view of a prominent French industrialist, whose company is running a project supported by the education ministry to provide 3,500 jobless young people with theoretical and practical training with a view to later employment. "If the 100 biggest companies in France did this," he reckons, "we would enable 350,000 young people to be integrated into the economic system. I believe that all businesses should be involved."

European action

The new EU programmes and initiatives offer a solid infrastructure for taking such action forward. Themselves coherently inter-coordinated, the Leonardo and Socrates proposals are also linked to the relevant Community initiatives within the structural policy and the 4th Framework Programme for research and technology development. In Leonardo, a series of special action areas are to complement the measures for vocational training under the

Structural Funds. Similarly, the proposal for the third phase of Youth for Europe also explicitly refers to the compatibility and complementary nature of the programme as regards other EU and Member State measures aimed at young people.

In turn, the new Community Initiative for Employment and Development of Human Resources, with its three interconnected strands, Now, Horizon and Youthstart, is to mobilize the experience of past or parallel Community programmes and coordinate systematically with current programme measures in their respective fields of action – both at EU level and with the individual Member State projects. Particularly important for Youthstart is the experience already gained in Petra.

A groundswell of concern has been gathering throughout Europe

Meanwhile, the Commission is considering what can be done still further. In its White Paper *European Social Policy – a Way Forward for the Union*, published in July, it envisages “further proposals during 1995, within the framework of Article 127 (of the Maastricht treaty) and taking account of the recent decisions on Leonardo and Socrates, linked to the overall plan of action for employment.” These proposals would seek the following:

- A Union-wide guarantee that no young people are to be unemployed under the age of 18 but, instead, guaranteed a place in the education and training system or in a linked work and training placement. The initial EU contribution would be to underpin this with the Youthstart initiative.
- Progressive targets up to the year 2000 for the elimination of illiteracy and the promotion of basic skills among school-leavers.
- An enhanced status for initial vocational education and training and the development of entrepreneurial skills among young people, as well as a capacity to exploit the new technologies through appropriate work experience.
- Increased scope and diversity in existing apprenticeship schemes, or other forms of linked work and training, in active cooperation with all partners involved in collective bargaining.
- Better coordinated provision of guidance and placement services, in particular at local level, to provide systematic advice to young people on career and job opportunities.

All the EU programmes and initiatives reflect the importance of transnational networking in exchanging experience, transferring well-tested models of good practice and promoting European cooperation, particularly between the Member States and the Commission. Properly harnessed, this cooperation can help bring people back in from the cold.

EU PROGRAMMES A helping hand for those in need

In June, the Council of the EU adopted its common position on the three proposed new education, training and youth programmes: Socrates for higher education and school education, Leonardo for initial and continuing vocational training, and the third phase of Youth for Europe. Subject to further negotiation, the Council will adopt all three programmes definitively before the end of the year. Each includes specific objectives on behalf of the disadvantaged.

SOCRATES

Chapter 2, concerned with school education, comprises three actions, each including measures for support to young people facing particular difficulties:

• Action 1 – Partnerships between schools

Within multilateral partnerships, priority will go to projects including the following subjects of European interest: promoting equality of opportunity in education between boys and girls; improving the level of achievement of all pupils; and meeting the needs of children with specific educational needs and capacities.

• Action 2 – Education of the children of migrant workers, children of occupational travellers, travellers and gypsies

Transnational projects to promote equal opportunities and maximum participation in school activities for these children, improve the quality of their schooling and education, meet their specific educational needs and capacities, and promote intercultural education for all school children.

• Action 3 – Updating and improving the skills of educational staff

Transnational projects intended to promote the updating and improvement of the skills of educational staff more particularly engaged in activities aimed at raising levels of school achievement, and at rapidly ensuring maximum participation in school activities of children with specific educational needs and capacities.

In addition, Chapter III (horizontal measures), action 3 (exchange of information and experience) also provides for studies and comparative analyses, organization of colloquia and the exchange of experts on problems encountered by children and young people leaving the educational system without adequate preparation.

LEONARDO

The common framework of objectives includes several specific references to action in favour of disadvantaged groups:

- Giving young people in the Community the chance to receive one or, if possible, two or more years of initial vocational training on completion of full-time compulsory education. This training should lead to a vocational qualification recognized by the competent authorities in the Member State in which it is obtained.
- Encouraging specific vocational training measures for adults without adequate vocational qualifications, in particular adults without adequate education;
- Encouraging specific vocational training measures for disadvantaged young people lacking adequate training and, in particular, those who have left the education system without such training.
- Supporting vocational training policies in such a way that all workers in the Community, without discrimination, have access to continuing vocational training throughout their working life.
- Promoting equality of opportunity as regards access for men and women to vocational training and their effective participation within it. The aim is to open up new areas of work to them, and to encourage a return to work after any break from professional activity.
- Promoting equal opportunity as regards access of migrant workers, their children and for the handicapped to vocational training and their effective participation within it.

Under its strand I, Leonardo will contribute to the improvement of vocational training systems and arrangements in the Member States, by providing support for:

- The design and implementation of transnational pilot projects involving cooperation to improve initial vocational training and the transition of young people to working life, the continuing vocational training arrangements of the Member States, vocational information and guidance, equality of opportunities for men and women in vocational training and vocational training arrangements for persons disadvantaged on the labour market owing to a lack of qualifications or qualifications which are inadequate.
- Transnational placement and exchange programmes for young people undergoing initial vocational training, young workers and instructors.

Priority should go to measures aimed at improving specific meth-

ods and content for groups disadvantaged on the labour market, in particular young people lacking qualifications or adequate qualifications. The Commission and the Member States are to ensure that the actions implemented supplement structural measures in the field of vocational training. To this end, they will encourage greater consistency with policies which promote employment and which support equal opportunities for access to initial and continuing vocational training for men, women and disadvantaged groups.

YOUTH FOR EUROPE

Special attention will be paid to ensuring that disadvantaged young people have access to activities run under this programme, in particular those who experience the greatest difficulty in being included in the existing action programmes, whether at Community level or national, regional and local levels.

The five main actions cover projects conducted outside education and vocational training structures. They include:

• **Action A – intra-Community (including the EFTA/EEA countries) activities directly involving young people:** bilateral and multilateral exchanges, within the Community, of groups of young people aged 15-25, youth initiative projects with a Community dimension and periods of voluntary service in another Member State.

• **Action B – activities targeted at socio-educational instructors directly responsible for youth activities and at those responsible for their training:** support is intended here for both action A and for European cooperation on training youth workers.

• **Action C – cooperation between the structures of Member States** including study visits, seminars and in-service training.

• **Action D – exchanges with non-Member States (including the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the North-South dialogue):** there are to be youth exchanges involving at least two Member States; and activities for youth workers, those responsible for youth structures and the youth information field, in order to improve the quality of such exchanges.

• **Action E – information for young people and youth research.**

The Commission and the Member States are to ensure that at least one-third of the appropriations for action A are for the benefit of disadvantaged young people and that there will be efforts to achieve a similar commitment within the other actions.

Based on these actions, the programme is aimed *inter alia* at encouraging young people to take an active part in society, making them aware that it is important to ensure equal opportunities between men and women in all sectors of society, and promoting an awareness of the dangers relating to exclusion, including racism and xenophobia.

Youth for Europe III is aimed above all at encouraging young people to take an active part in society, making them more sensitive to the need for equal opportunities for all men and women, and promoting an awareness of the dangers of exclusion, including racism and other forms of hostile discrimination.

Employment and Development of Human Resources

At its meeting on 15 June, the Commission decided to introduce a framework initiative on “Employment and Development of Human Resources,” with three inter-related strands:

• **Employment – Now:** to promote equal employment opportunities for women, in particular with regard to training measures, access to future-oriented occupations and management positions.

• **Employment – Horizon:** to improve the employment prospects of the disabled and other disadvantaged groups.

• **Employment – Youthstart:** to promote labour market integration of young people, in particular those without basic qualifications or training.

The framework initiative is a direct follow-up to the Commission's White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment. Under all three strands, it will support transnational pilot projects for Community-wide innovation, transfer of expertise and the dissemination of good practice between the Member States. It will be run in conjunction with other Member State actions, especially those implemented under the Community support frameworks with financial help from the European Social Fund. In partnership with the Member States, the Commission will aim to ensure that measures assisted under this initiative and those supported under the fund and the newly proposed Community programmes, particularly Leonardo, are appropriately coordinated to complement each other.



The breakthrough into work

One in three labour market newcomers may be without a basic vocational qualification in four to five years' time

This September, some 42.5 million 12 year-olds in the EU entered the compulsory (lower) stage of secondary schooling. According to current forecasts, 10% will leave this stage without any qualification. Of all young people who, in the same month, entered post-compulsory education or training programmes, it is estimated that 20% will not successfully finish their courses. This situation in itself points to as many as one in three labour market newcomers without a basic vocational qualification in four to five years' time. But the increase in labour market demand for qualified staff means that the employment prospects of unqualified school leavers are likely to deteriorate still further. Both the Member States and the EU are well aware of this potentially grim waste of human potential.

The Member State response

In recent years, all EU countries have launched initiatives to improve compulsory schooling success rates and ensure that those without a minimum post-compulsory vocational qualification get a second chance to acquire one. These youth training and work 'guarantees', as they are often known, amount to a commitment by training or employment authorities to provide initial training, work or a combination of both to specific groups of disadvantaged

young people. Examples of those eligible might be all unemployed 16 and 17 year-olds who have left full-time education or training; those without a basic vocational qualification; or those unemployed for over six months. The following are some examples of the kinds of measures introduced:

- **Preventive intervention:** also known as a "comprehensive pathway approach," under which Member States are increasingly seeking to head off dropping out and the problems faced by unqualified school-leavers before they arise – almost certainly the best strategy.

In the Netherlands, for example, regional centres are being set up to identify young people at risk still in the compulsory stage of schooling. They are then offered all kinds of support including pilot participation in in-company placement schemes. When young people leave school or training, with or without a diploma, the regional employment office is responsible for helping them to find work. After six months, they are offered a youth work guarantee place, of a maximum 32 hours a week. While active, invariably as public service auxiliary staff, they receive guidance and six or more hours of training a week. Meanwhile, every effort is made to find them a permanent job, preferably with apprenticeship training.

- **Guided transition:** here the transition from education to training to working life is seen as a hazardous route along which several national authorities have begun to guide school-leavers.

The basic vocational training course introduced in Denmark in 1993 for those who leave the compulsory stage early, or with minimal qualifications, involves an "education plan" negotiated between a counsellor and the young people concerned. It consists of guidance activities, education and training periods and a series of three-month placements in firms or public services. Outcomes of the planning process are formalized in a contract between the municipality and the participant. Similarly, the Youthreach model in Ireland, a combined initiative of the departments of employment and education, is targeted at those leaving compulsory education with only minimal basic qualifications. The aim is to (re)integrate them into mainstream education, training or work in the course of a two-year integrated programme. In the first year, the emphasis is on overcoming learning difficulties, offering remedial teaching and guidance and the acquisition of communicative, literacy and numeracy skills. In the second, participants are meant to be able either to find employment (with training) or to enrol in a mainstream education or training programme.

• **A career plan:** as part of the guidance activities referred to above, so-called "production schools" in Denmark help young people develop a plan for their future. By combining practical work and theoretical education, they are given the opportunity to try out different trades. Part of the programme activity is the production of goods or services good enough to be put on the local market. Once they have decided on their plan – be it in work, education or training – they leave the school.

• **Job sampling:** besides including in-company placements for job sampling purposes, these initiatives aim to develop social and job application skills. In France, unqualified young people aged between 16 and 23 are offered a *contrat d'orientation* ("guidance contract") as part of which they have a three- to six-month company placement. Guidance and training activities are part of the programme.

• **Remedial courses:** in some autonomous regions in Spain, the Social Guarantee takes the form of a one-year course providing a combination of general education, guidance and pre-vocational training for young people without the compulsory stage leaving certificate. It gives them a second chance to obtain one, thus broadening their potential for access to the labour market.

• **Support alongside mainstream training:** since 1982, young people in mainstream apprenticeship courses in Germany have had access to special remedial instruction and support for three to eight hours a week if they seem unlikely to complete their course successfully. One of the aims of this measure is to encourage firms to take on young people who do not fully comply with the formal entry requirements.

• **Alternative recognized training:** in Greece, there have been moves to establish a system of open and distance training in an attempt to overcome problems of access caused by geographical isolation. The system is intended to combine use of printed

material, telephone contacts with tutors, and short training sessions and assessment in regional centres. Since 1990, young people in Luxembourg facing problems with the pace of theoretical and other courses during apprenticeship have been able to transfer to modular-based variants, which provide for greater flexibility in learning speeds and for the award of a recognized intermediate certificate. In the United Kingdom, many young people, including all those aged under 18 who,

Member States are seeking to head off dropping out and the problems faced by unqualified school-leavers before they arise

though seeking training, are not in full-time education, training or employment, are guaranteed the offer of a suitable youth training place. The scheme offers broad-based vocational education, training and work experience leading to a recognized vocational qualification.

• **Employer incentives:** as part of the Youth Employment Plan, employers in the Dutch-speaking community of Belgium are eligible for a reduction in social security rates if they recruit from among the young unemployed. And in Italy, courses and some financial support are available for young people who want to set up their own business.

This far from comprehensive review of youth guarantee schemes provides some idea of the variety and creativity of Member State approaches to the problems of drop-out and unqualified school-leaving. The strategies adopted are meeting with some success. In 1983, almost one in six

guistic groups. Many of them are likely to be disabled, single parents or children of single parents, ex-drug addicts, ex-offenders, juvenile delinquents, young homeless or from disadvantaged urban areas, deserted rural areas or regions in industrial decline. To achieve a strong multiplier effect, priority participants in Employment-Youthstart will include trainers, guidance counsellors, local development agents, social and youth workers.

The following series of activities will be supported, with a special focus on the first of the four main measures:

The development, in particular on a transnational basis, of appropriate training, guidance, counselling and employment systems, in the public and private sectors as appropriate. Objectives will include the setting of targets and standards, the adaptation and transfer of good practice, and the use of innovative approaches, especially through distance learning.

The provision, where appropriate on a transnational basis, of training and placement, mainly by consolidating and developing pilot actions and experience gained in related EU programmes, especially Leonardo.

students in Greece (17%) dropped out before the end of compulsory education; by the early 1990s, this percentage had fallen to 12%. In France, between 1980 and 1990, the percentage of unqualified leavers dropped from 15.5 to 13.2%. These are promising results, given the significant increase in overall staying-on rates which occurred in the meantime.

Looking ahead

Despite the progress, still more is required to cater for young people experiencing difficulties in the transition from education to training to working life. Assuming that preventive intervention offers the most promising way forward, Member States will have to face a number of challenges:

- Bridging the gaps between the compulsory/post-compulsory stage, as well as between education and sponsored post-compulsory employment/training courses.
- Improving cooperation between all agencies and bodies involved in the transition process. Experience gained in EU programmes, such as Petra and the transition programmes, underlines the relevance of strengthening cooperation and coordination, in particular at the local and regional level, between education, training providers, guidance services, social services and other relevant agencies.
- Streamlining and mutual adaptation of conditions for participation in individual youth guarantee measures, which usually entail incompatible sets of rules regarding access, course content, certification, recognition and remuneration. Situations in which participants opt for certain courses because the level of payment is higher should be avoided.
- Maximum integration of preventive measures with mainstream provision, since participation in special post-school measures is very often stigmatizing. Ultimately the initial strategy of preventive intervention should be available for all young people.

Among the central aims here are the following: coordinated training and placement programmes for young people; training of trainers and placement personnel; special training and placement in the fields of the arts, cultural heritage, environmental protection, urban regeneration and care services.

• Assisting job creation, in particular through transnational cooperation.

Of central importance here are measures aimed at young people to become self-employed, including transnational exchanges between local development agencies and support for local employment initiatives aimed at young people.

• Information dissemination and awareness actions, in particular on a transnational basis.

This means raising awareness, especially among those involved in collective bargaining and other relevant agencies, of the particular integration problems facing young people and of possible responses. It also entails support for related information services at national, regional and local level, and information activities to promote the Employment-Youthstart programme among young people.

Six clues to IMPROVED TRAINING

The usefulness of the following set of principles has been confirmed by a number of European programmes, including Petra, and suggests a "pedagogy for success" in initial vocational training can be developed through a commitment to the following approaches.

Training rooted in reality

Three jointly applicable educational methods promote the development of skills by starting from practice and working back to theoretical knowledge. They are particularly valuable for disadvantaged young people, while enabling all to gain familiarity with the world of work and technological development.

Linked work and training: a lively partnership involving the trainers, the tutors in firms and the young people themselves makes for effective coordination of the role and function of different types of training, and proper appraisal of what the work experience has achieved.

A self-start approach: this is based on the formative experience of running a project in which activities are chosen and carried out by the young people themselves, as illustrated in the youth initiative projects reported on p.16.

Production training: here, as some of the youth initiative projects again illustrate, young people have first-hand experience of producing goods or services as they might in their future occupation. Besides delivering real marketable products, this training method has a much stronger motivating effect than practical simulations.

A career plan

Young people should be able to exercise the widest possible choice, backed by impartial adult advice, in order to establish their vocational identity. In addition to professional guidance services, training can help them make an informed choice and develop an identity giving them occupational self-respect. Allowing for job-specific elements, three general methods may once again be applied as follows:

Making career choices

Young people should have the opportunity to assess the advantages and disadvantages that each trade or occupation would have in terms of their broader life plans.

Maximizing lifelong training opportunities

A young person who has failed, or is trailing, in general education, should be able to switch to vocational training without the move being viewed as regressive.

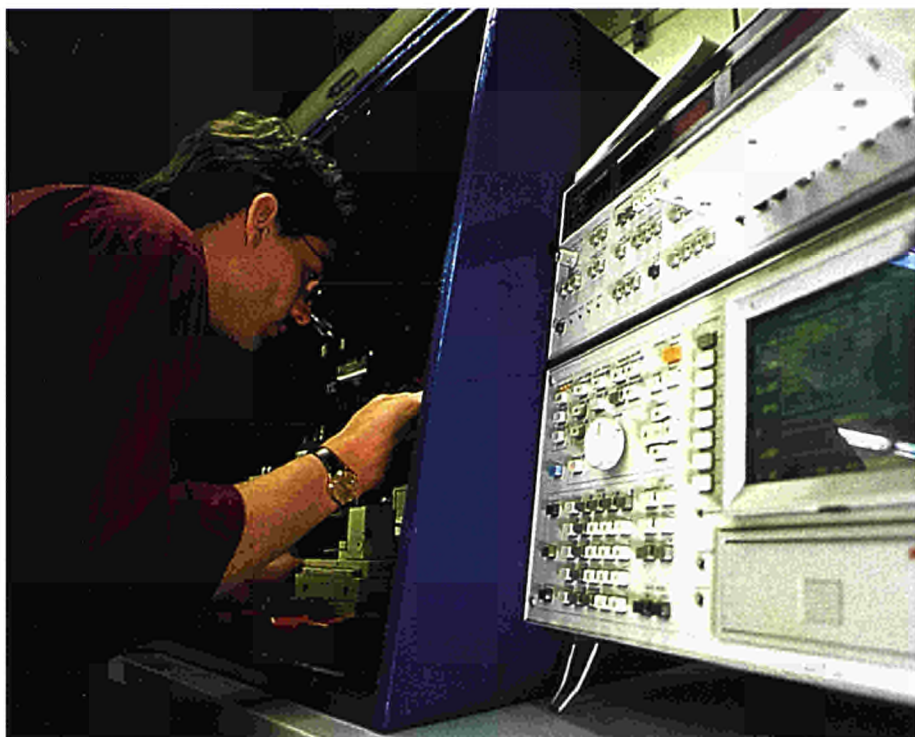
Evaluating and validating experience

For purposes of lifelong learning, adapted methods for evaluating personal results must be used for the validation of achievements and the experience gained at different career stages (including initial training, working life and continuing training).

EU Supportive Measures Employment-Youthstart

The Employment-Youthstart initiative (see box on p.13) aims to promote youth schemes across the EU to provide training/employment guarantees for all young people wishing to benefit. Action will be targeted at those aged under 20 who are failing in – or being failed by – the systems currently in place. It will also seek to help those not acquiring recognized marketable qualifications because they do not have access to mainstream programmes. Proposals from the Member States for support in the form of operational programmes or global grants have already been invited by the Commission.

Within the pilot actions envisaged under Employment-Youthstart, unqualified young people will be the direct beneficiaries of future changes in mainstream systems. Those from disadvantaged groups will get special priority. They may be functionally illiterate, have learning difficulties, or come from immigrant, migrant or travelling families or minority ethnic, religious or lin



Keeping up the skills level

Why worry about those with a job when so many are without? High levels of unemployment and the difficulties faced by people wanting to join or rejoin the workforce surely make those in employment a privileged and not a priority target group. The have-nots come first.

Maybe. But it is short-sighted to tackle employment without getting to grips with its underlying causes, in both the manufacturing and service industries. The continuing vocational training of employees at work can be one way of doing so. Otherwise, previous workers may be unable to rejoin the workforce, while those already in it are downgraded or made redundant. There are three main dangers.

Industrial change marginalizes the untrained

Current industrial change has had sweeping implications for commercial and industrial organization. From technology to production processes and work organization, from management styles to industrial relations, it has had an impact on virtually all jobs and professional skills. Yet in spite of the marked increase in the levels of investment in training, many employees still have no regular or significant access to training to update, adapt or renew their skills. In some countries, the annual rate of access to training is barely 10% of the total workforce. The unlucky 90% are thus gradually marginalized. Excluded from mainstream technological and organizational change, they are pushed downwards in the company hierarchy, where their position becomes increasingly vulnerable.

Rising skill levels widen the gap

Economic, technological and organizational change bring with them fresh job profiles reflecting updated technical know-how, organizational ability and problem solving and communication skills. Companies therefore have to train their employees for more complex, multi-skilled, jobs. Those already trained tend to get the first pick of further training opportunities – in some

countries, the difference in terms of access between those with higher education and those who have no recognized qualification is 1 to 3 or even 4. Workers who lack adequate basic training cannot usually achieve a sufficient level of qualification because of changes in their own position at the workplace.

Constantly changing job profiles require continuing training

Downgrading or redundancy can also hit qualified workers for whom access is often simply not enough for employees to keep up.

Vocational training for all is thus more relevant than ever. Companies need to mobilize all their skills potential in order to improve efficiency and remain competitive in the market. The downgrading of employees can be prevented if companies invest in appropriate retraining for them. As many Force programme projects have demonstrated, internal flexibility of this kind is as economically profitable as shedding existing workers for replacement by more qualified personnel in the labour market.

A European average of around one week of formal training per employee every three years further drives home the point that training should be truly continuous. Fortunately, there are signs in some companies that it is increasingly integrated into real working situations to avoid discontinuity. Such on-the-job training may be one of the best ways of ensuring sure that, in future, the general increase in the level of qualifications does not downgrade or exclude those less likely to keep pace with skills requirements.

Ultimately, lifelong training may be the only effective guarantee against the marginalization, downgrading and exclusion caused by the temporary rift between fresh skills needed in the wake of change and the training measures needed to provide them. The alternative is to defer critical problems to a later date, at a higher cost and with reduced likelihood of success.

From rent-a-tent to eco-tours

Petra Youth Initiative Projects

Since launching Petra, the Commission has awarded non-renewable grants of up to Ecu 10,000 to 1,129 Youth Initiative Projects throughout Europe. Created and managed by young people who have to rely on other sources for at least 50% of the total costs entailed, the projects have granted them the freedom and space to be creative and develop resourceful solutions to exclusion-related problems.

Uninhibited by past failure or the norms of conventional practice, their approaches represent a major potential for constructive social change. From 1995 onwards, the projects will be funded within Youth for Europe III. Here is a small selection of those undertaken so far.

Rap dance

This is how one group of young people, from Montluel in France, are expressing themselves. It is certainly not a typical Petra initiative. But taking part in street performances, and shows in schools or at a big urban dance event in Lyon, gives them the self-confidence and feeling of recognition which is essential if they are to progress further in terms of education, training or job-seeking. "Thanks to the Petra support for Youth Initiative Projects," they write, "our RAP dance group has been able to develop and to organize our own projects. This is very important for us. We now know that an international structure like the European Community does not forget us in our ghetto."

Stitching and pitching

Making Moroccan tents was one result of a local Danish employment project in Frederiksberg. The young people rent out the tents sewn by themselves to groups wanting to organize a party, a concert or a meeting. "Sewing tents for eight hours a day can be really boring. But then when you suddenly put up a 6 x 12 metre tent covered in beautiful Moroccan decoration, it doesn't seem so bad after all." The eight project organizers are of five different nationalities and have to communicate in three different languages. Originally all unemployed, they have now learned new skills and belong to a social network which prevents them becoming isolated. The experience has helped them to see themselves as resourceful people rather than as "problems."

Park guides

Young eco-guides in Greece have learnt

about the theory, practice and implementation of environmental protection. "In the Prespa National Park, we have gained a feeling of pride as we live in an area with a wonderful natural environment." Their experience has prompted the guides to read further and three of them have started learning English, which they felt was necessary for work with non-Greek visitors. Being able to guide and show visitors the natural beauty of their locality helps them towards a fresh view of their own region and a sense of involvement in its development.

Experimental playground

This initiative takes up the time and energy of six unemployed young Italian women. They are providing a different type of children's playground in which games and activities are linked to artistic expression. "We all are facing employment problems, but after two years of nearly insurmountable financial and organizational problems, our experimental playground La Casa di Alice is now in full operation and we can offer small contracts to the people who work on the project." The playground is a space in which children can socialize and gain a sense of autonomy and self-expression. The project provides the young women with direct experience which will be very valuable for their future job prospects as playleaders or in primary school teaching.

Youth self-service

Information from the young for the young. This has been the main idea behind the creation of a Spanish information service project at Inca, in the Balearic Islands. "We have discovered other sources of information we had never really touched upon before and which were useful to us and to others: health education, conscientious objection, all the training and education opportunities on the islands, and so on." The young people running the service have worked with the local television network and are producing leaflets on various issues. They have set up a job service offering training sessions on job-seeking techniques and are also organizing information campaigns. They feel that access to information is essential for young people, to identify opportunities and get the advice and support they most need.



Cesar's book of life

Trading exclusion for integration in an innovation district

The improvement of training in Europe is a collective responsibility. It involves not only the national, regional and local public authorities, but both sides of business and industry, local economic development agencies, non-governmental organizations, training and employment centres, and community youth groups and associations. Under initiatives such as Employment-Youthstart (see p.15), priority support will go to projects which mobilize coordinated partnerships for the development of integrated preventive measures directed at the special needs of the target population – those confronted by personal and institutional barriers to education, training, and the labour market. One northern Cologne suburb typifies how such partnerships may already be taking shape.

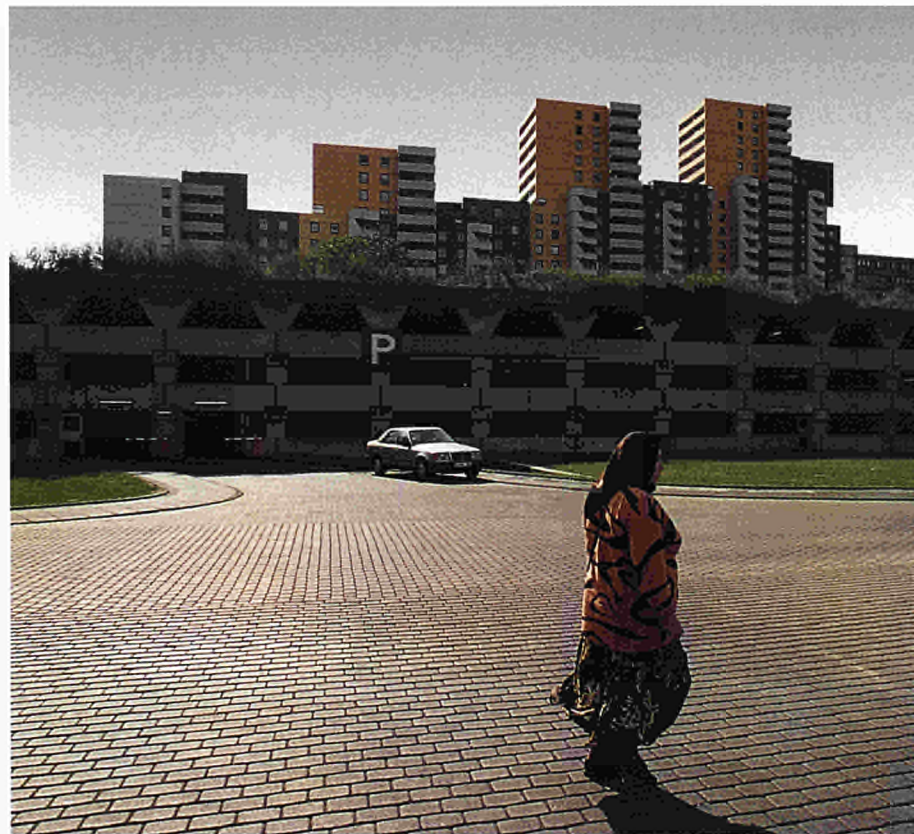
Cesar is now writing a book "about life." This 22-year-old has been living in the Chorweiler district of Cologne for the last three years, more often on the bench in front of the civic centre than anywhere else. Cesar doesn't have a place of his own since he left his family back home in Poland. He's never had any sort of training. "Life is so confusing," he adds, his eyes glazed with alcohol.

In his book he wants to talk about Ilya, the 19-year-old Russian who's been in Germany for a year and has landed up in Chorweiler, where life is multicultural. Nearly 36% of the population of this part of the city are foreigners, although the figure for Cologne as a whole is only about 16.6%. Ilya no longer has a family, speaks no German, has had no training and doesn't know where he's from or where he's going.

Nebil could fill a whole chapter in Cesar's book. Not just because young Turks are in the majority in Chorweiler. The 20-year-old is one of the people everyone knows in the area. "I got my secondary school leaving certificate," he says proudly, "and then I did my general certificate at night school." That puts him in a tiny minority. "But then I got thrown out of home," and the shutters come down, but he admits "I lost all self-confidence."

Cesar's book, if it ever gets written, will be very thick. Two-thirds of all the young people in Chorweiler have nothing but their secondary school leaving certificates; hundreds have never received any training or had a regular job. Each of them has a different story to tell. In most of these tales, the break came before the end of compulsory schooling; problems with school itself, with the family, with the language, with the environment. Chorweiler is a satellite town built in the 1970s to house underprivileged families. Today it is its own town, like hundreds of similar suburbs throughout Europe, with churches and a civic centre, schools and youth centres, advice bureaux and lots of clubs.

"If it was up to me," says Hüseyin Cansay, head of the church 'Treff' centre for children and young people, "I'd start by blowing up all the schools." Cansay has been working at Treff for seven years and he blames the schools and their lack of



involvement for the fate of the many young people who come to the centre every day. In an application to the employment office for money for a social worker to provide vocational guidance at the centre, he wrote: "The young people use their free time more or less purposefully but it does not help them find their way into the working world. No change in this pattern of behaviour is in sight." It took two years for the social worker's post to be funded. Now there is advice and counselling in the youth centre, but no coordination with the schools.

Meanwhile the municipal youth centre is closed. "We're in the process of changing the concept," says the director and, in the empty guidance-café, 24-year-old Erdal practises on his alto sax. "As long as they're changing their concept I can play here." In the office of the German-Turkish club there is guidance but there are no young people. "We'll be offering courses again soon," says Manfred Brinkmann. There will also be courses soon in the secondary school, including computer courses for Turkish girls, sponsored by the Cologne Savings Bank.

It's about 20 minutes by tram to the centre of Cologne where, in the shadow of the cathedral, a distinguished group is meeting for one of its regular round-table get-

togethers. "We must initiate measures against the dramatic increase in youth unemployment," Cologne's mayor, Norbert Burger, recently announced. And gathered at this "Euro-Stammtisch," as the regulars'

Conditions can only be improved if attention is focused on the target group rather than the demarcation of responsibilities

table has come to be known are some of the city's senior decision-makers in a position to support such an initiative. They include the head of the employment office, the director of schools administration, the head of the careers guidance department, the regional government commissioner for the disadvantaged, the director of the vocational information centres and a senior official from the economics ministry of North Rhine-Westphalia. Spread out on the table is a rough plan of the city bearing the title *Innovation District Cologne*.

The plan has been put together by Ludger Reiberg, who represents the GEW education and science union on educational issues within the German Federation of Trade Unions. He has developed concepts for dealing with the growing number of school drop-outs and 'refuseniks.' "We all know," he says, explaining how these regular get-togethers came about, "that on the one hand more and more young people are dropping out, while at the same time there's an ever-increasing provision of

guidance and advisory services. This discrepancy is intolerable in itself, but added to it is the fact that funding for measures is getting tighter and tighter; that rationalization is the order of the day and that many of those involved feel they can't cope."

The alarm has also been sounded by a survey of young people conducted by the city's youth welfare office. Many of the young people questioned said that the guidance provision was "extremely bad," especially those who had not been able to continue their schooling or find any training or work. "This group is getting bigger and bigger," says Ludger Reiberg. "Within the last year, the number of young people applying for training has risen by 10%, while the number of vacancies offered has dropped by 15% over the same period." This June, there were 1,700 young people in Cologne alone looking for a training vacancy. At the same time, there were 600 unfilled apprenticeships. In addition, there are over 6,000 unemployed young people between the ages of 16 and 24.

"Youth unemployment is of a structural nature," according to a representative of the Cologne Chamber of Trade in a letter to the city's mayor. "Forums should be set up to tackle this serious problem." One of the issues that should be discussed is how to improve the educational and training provision. "Because this provision," adds Ludger Reiberg, "influences the strength of an area as a business location." In the proposals for action put forward by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science to help provide qualifications for young people who have so far failed to complete any vocational training is the following prediction: "The size and nature of a qualified, skilled workforce is a decisive factor in maintaining Germany's viability as a location for industry. Semi-skilled and repetitive work will continue to decline in favour of qualified work." In other words: "The chances for people without vocational qualifications will deteriorate considerably."

In the west of Germany, about 14% of young adults aged between 20 and 25 currently fail to complete any formal vocational training and three-quarters of them never even begin a training course. Three groups of young people are affected most: those with no school leaving certificate, those from families with social difficulties and young foreigners. "Underqualification is not only a problem for vocational training," according to the education and science ministry, "as it has its roots in the situation which precedes it."

The decision-makers around the Euro-Stammtisch are very much in agreement. They realise that conditions can only be improved if all involved focus their attention on the target group of these young people rather than the demarcation of responsibilities. "If we approach it from the point of view of who is responsible for what, then nothing will change. We'll all be working in isolation and setting up boundary lines between one another, while the number of those who get lost between all our separate initiatives will continue to grow," accord-

“I am counting on the forces of industry and commerce being strong and powerful enough to provide as many young people as possible, who are able and willing – the two belong together – with meaningful training. It won’t always be in a dream job, just as it wasn’t always in the past. But a first rate training is always an excellent backing for the future.

We, the federal government and myself in particular, will do everything possible, despite the financial difficulties, to make the necessary funds available to ensure that everyone finds a training vacancy. But the order has to be that industry and commerce are called upon first.”

Chancellor Helmut Kohl
addressing young master craftsmen and
craftswomen in Düsseldorf,
15 May 1994



ing to one of the Euro-Stammtisch group. And the head of Cologne’s employment office adds, “Many of us really want to break out of the old routine and do something for this target group at long last.”

What, then, is to be done in concrete terms? “The precondition for all further steps is an innovative atmosphere,” says Ludger Reiberg, who calls the areas which intend to work together in future “innovation pools.” All those involved are to be encouraged to pursue a goal which sounds somewhat visionary: reducing school drop-outs to zero, and trading exclusion for integration.

According to the Euro-Stammtisch group, this calls for an across-the-board approach, encompassing all aspects of the problem. Within the innovation district, all resources must be pooled. Schools and guidance agencies, non-government institutions and industry, clubs and churches must all work together and jointly employ all means at their disposal. The aim of the target group, according to members of Euro-Stammtisch, is to make “offers that no one can refuse.” This must start in schools with young people who are considered likely to drop out, and continue right up to the reintegration of those who have already done so.

The round table in the shadow of

Cologne cathedral is not called the “Euro-Stammtisch” for nothing. The European context is attractive for those who gather here, not so much because of possible funding from Brussels but because of the effects of European cooperation, which will hopefully provide a new stimulus and information on good practice. “The new kind of cooperation in Europe is an asset in itself,” says one of the gathering. “When we think

“When we think European, work together and exchange experiences, the work is easier and the aim achievable.”

European, work together and exchange experiences, the work is easier and the aim achievable.”

It is not only in Cologne that this realization has dawned. The “district approach,” as it is known, is now being tried out in Ireland, the UK, France, Portugal and Spain, where virtually all involved began with the same sort of insight as in Cologne. For instance, Daniel Bancel, the rector of the Academy of Lyon (France), writes about his district, the Bassin de Formation de l’Académie de Lyon: “The complexity of the relationship between train-

ing and employment is constantly growing. It cannot be restricted to a linear model... The initiatives taken at the Academy of Lyon show that to be successful you need a territorial base.” Throughout this territory or district, he says, “horizontal communication must take place between the individual institutions!” Responsibili-

ties and resources must be pooled to make them more easily accessible to the target group, without necessarily blurring the “identity of provision.”

Similarly, the Institute of Educational Sciences at the Autonomous University of Barcelona is now supporting a district approach in Catalonia. Here state institutions, economic development agencies, trade unions and regional authorities are to cooperate in a district near Barcelona, where over 30% of young people have no vocational training qualifications.

The Fife Regional Council Education Authority in Scotland (UK) has already institutionalized this sort of cooperation. “We must help young people who have become excluded to remove the barriers to reintegration,” states the strategy document. “And we must recognize that for industry and the economy vocational education is not money down the drain but represents an investment in our future prosperity – both at local level and for each individual.” In Fife, too, an innovative atmosphere was necessary in order to decide in favour of a consistent district approach. As education director Brian Welsh puts it: “It is absolutely essential to reinforce all new and formal partnerships – with schools, vocational training agencies, employers and other bodies – so that existing resources and experience can be used to the best possible advantage.”

All these districts have in the meantime established their interest in working together, and others are joining them. Some of them have suggested that a European meeting should be held to discuss how the districts can exchange experience and cooperate with one another in future.

Meanwhile, life goes on among the tower blocks of Chorweiler in the north of Cologne where Cesar is gathering material for his book. “I’ll probably never finish it,” he says, “but it’s always worth making a start.” His friend Ilya holds up his hands to show how thick the manuscript is already: “And he’s only just begun!”

In the Treff, it is mainly young Turks who shape life in the youth centre. Nebil has now found himself a job, but only for a few hours a day. He says he’s determined to get “some sort of training” and has already “scoured” all the places where you can get information or help: “No future. But, well, I’m still young. I’ve got time.” And he gives his conducted tour of the centre, as if the place belongs to him.

Hüseyin Cansay gives him full rein. “What young people really need is someone who has time for them, who trusts them, who...” he hesitates for a moment, “... someone who takes them by the hand. Most of them have never had any realistic preparation for their future.” Almost all drop-outs had completely wrong-headed notions of their own abilities and possibilities. “They need people and places that are there just for them,” he says. “But who wants to know what young people need?”

Next to Cologne cathedral, in the meantime, the Euro-Stammtisch participants have agreed on the next step. All the information is on the table and cooperation among the institutions and funding bodies is to be given the official go-ahead. Above all, those present are agreed that the innovation districts must start their work now. One of them is Chorweiler, the satellite town to the north. Here, if the people round the table have their way, “things will look different in five years time.” Perhaps there will then be a new chapter in Cesar’s book about life.

Catching them young

The role of schools in reducing exclusion

Parents want their children to get a good start in life, so they try to get them into the best schools.

Marcel Crahay, a professor at the universities of Liège and Geneva, argues that schools with high standards, reputations and expectations should broaden their intake and create "a multicultural context" in the interests of a fairer education system.

Until recently, educational research has not generally been much concerned with what schools could do to integrate young people into society, even though success at school largely determines future careers and, indirectly, earnings. Those with a higher education qualification are up to four times less likely to be unemployed than those who have only finished basic education.

Although the school system cannot expect to eradicate social exclusion, it can help the greatest possible number of young people to participate actively in economic and cultural life.

A first response is to fight school failure

by reducing the numbers of pupils who repeat classes. A recent review of the literature (Grissom & Sheppard, 1990) showed that pupils of equal ability required to repeat a class were more likely to trail in their studies and therefore to leave school without any qualifications. Indeed the same two authors have concluded that repeating classes in itself increases the risk of failure by 27%.

A second response is to avoid the formation of elite and second-order schools within the same educational system. A further study (Baillon, 1991) shows that parental freedom to choose schools encourages the clustering of those from advan-

tagged backgrounds in institutions with long-standing reputations. Yet the 1966 Coleman Report in the USA established that diversity among the pupils in an educational institution is decisive in achieving fairness; otherwise, inequality mechanisms from the family background interact with those associated within the school system. Many further studies all indicate the importance of the so-called aggregative effect, where pupils from the most well-to-do families are consistently found in the best-equipped schools with the most motivated teachers.

Cherkaoui (1979) reasonably observes that one must make room for representa-

tional factors in explaining social phenomena. Certain effects can be the result of the explicit or implicit expectations of the group of people using the school system. Parents and children, teachers and administrators correctly or incorrectly expect pupils in certain sections or educational institutions to be more likely to make an effort, to be more 'gifted', and therefore more likely to succeed. This belief alone is enough to produce the expected results.

Appropriate methods to combat the injustice often resulting from these preconceptions include awareness-raising among parents and teacher trainers. However, the research available unfortunately suggests that such efforts will not suffice. Can teachers really work against the norms established by hierarchies of excellence engrained in the very organization of the education system? Is it reasonable to hope that parents, in directing their children's school careers, will take the fairness of the education system as much into account as the particular interests of their offspring? The above-mentioned methods – often preferred by educationalists – are useful because every change in the structure of education must be understood by the participants before it can be accepted. Changes will remain without effect if the organization of the system results in mechanisms for selection, guidance and exclusion.

Although research on how educational institutions operate often exposes unfair precepts, it also points the way to solutions. Now, more than ever, an effective means to fairness in an educational system would be control over the formation of school groups and, in particular, the promotion of diversity. In other words, educational systems should be organized in ways enabling each institution to create a multicultural context in which individuals from different social classes and national origins interact.

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Open doors to schooling for immigrant children

"The Community has always been a multicultural and multi-ethnic entity whose diversity enriches the Community itself and benefits all its citizens, but not without creating challenges for society as a whole and its immigrant communities." An extract from the Commission's latest communication to the Council and the European Parliament on immigration and asylum policies.

The Community did indeed begin to concern itself early on with the integration of migrant workers' children. The Action

It is unacceptable that the very people exercising their right to freedom of movement in the European Union should be forced to suffer as a result

Programme in the Field of Education of 9 February 1976 included measures for creating "better facilities for the education and training of nationals and the children of nationals of other Member States of the Communities and of non-member countries."

Shortly afterwards, the Council published a directive which gave children of migrant workers from EC Member States a legal right to schooling adapted to meet their specific needs in the language of the host country. The directive also imposed on the Member States an obligation to promote the education of these children in the language and culture of their country of origin, in a way linked to mainstream schooling and in cooperation with that country.

The effects of this policy are being felt. For example, following a ministerial initiative in the Flemish Community of Belgium last year, the networks of state, communal and independent schools concluded an anti-discrimination pact to promote integration and equality of opportunity for immigrant children. The pact provides for the cooperation of all types of schools at local level to ensure as equal a distribution of immigrant children as possible across all of them. The ministry makes additional funds available to the schools for meeting the needs of immigrant children and requires, in return, that the schools provide intercultural teaching for all pupils. In addition, a committee presided over by the Belgian Centre for Equal Opportunity and Combating Racism has been set up to monitor compliance with the contractually agreed conditions. Where the stipulations are not met, sanctions can be imposed up to, and including, the closure of recalcitrant schools.

For the EU, promoting the educational integration of immigrant workers' children represents a continuing commitment. Thus measures at European level must constantly be reassessed and adjusted to meet changing circumstances. Besides the new challenges, Member State education statistics show that old problems are far from being solved. Despite significant progress in some countries, children from immigrant families are still disproportionately disadvantaged. Even when they have the same qualifications as indigenous school-leavers, they have more difficulty in finding a first job.

In times of economic crisis these long-standing problems acquire new immediacy. The discriminatory tendencies of some employers increase, while the high level of unemployment among young immigrants makes them the target of prejudice. A social climate marked by insecurity and anxiety about the future fosters racism and other forms of discrimination. Peaceful co-existence is clearly not to be taken for granted, and in ensuring that it is learnt and consolidated the role of education is instrumental.

But there are new problems, too, which in recent years have led the Community to step up its efforts to improve the integration of immigrants.

EC countries formerly characterized by emigration (Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland) have become targets for immigration. The educational needs and expectations of the third and fourth generations of young people from immigrant families partly correspond to those of young people from indigenous families. But the influx of refugees and asylum-seekers is lending new immediacy throughout the Community to the perennial problem of improving tuition in the language of the host country.

At the same time, the immigrant population has become more diverse and complex, to an extent hardly conceivable in the past. The cultural and ethnic mix of the school population has undergone fundamental changes. In the major European cities, nearly all children now have daily contact at school with others of the same age but different linguistic and cultural origins. Cultural diversity is no longer the exception but the rule.

In Italy, for example, Turin is one of the cities with the highest percentage of new immigrant children in schools. Over the last two years, the Commission has supported a project which is using the experience of EU countries long subject to immigration to develop a model for the education of migrant children, which combines integrated teaching in two languages (Italian and the mother tongue) with intercultural lessons for all pupils.

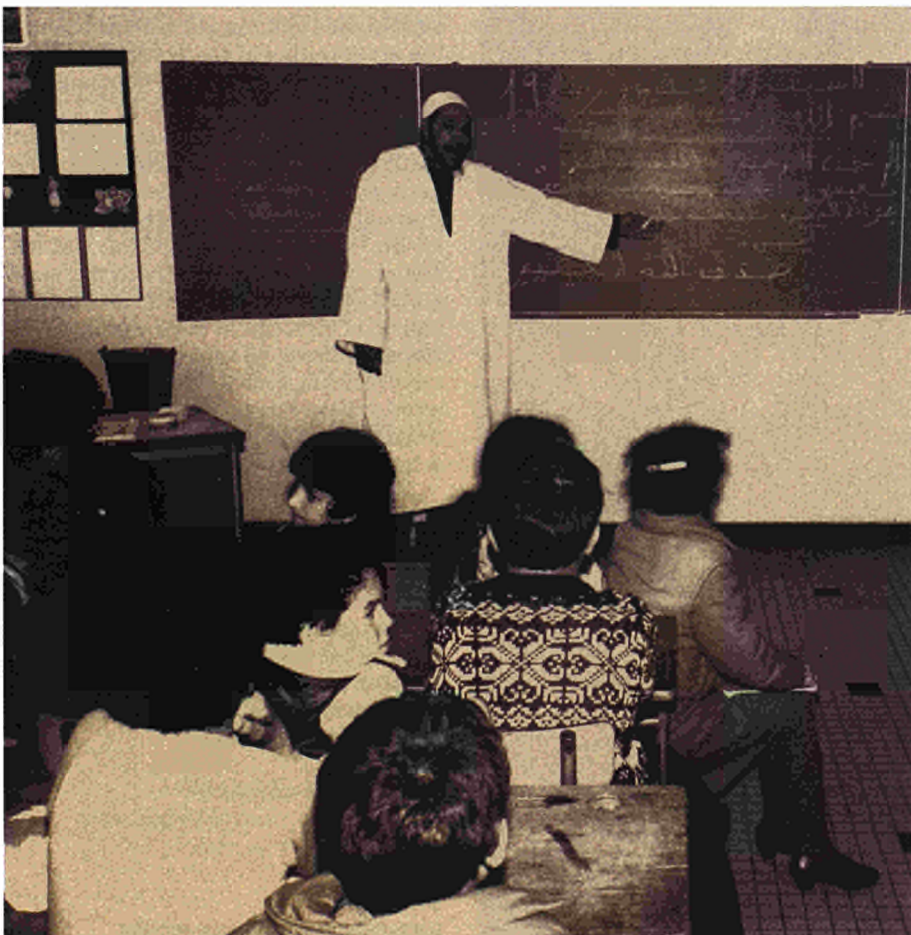
To facilitate cooperation between immigrant parents and schools, an office has been set up jointly by the city of Turin, the Piedmont region and the *Provveditorato agli Studi* (the regional schools inspectorate), which coordinated the work of all involved. Since 1993, Turin has also been part of an EC-wide city cooperation project (with Berlin, Birmingham, Bologna, Marseilles and Rotterdam), in which educational practitioners go on study visits to the other cities to exchange experience and learn from one another how they can improve their teaching provision back home.

In a recently published report on the education of migrant children in the European Union, the Commission asked "whether the capacity of our education systems to face up to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the population they serve ... should not be seen as a powerful indicator of the quality of the education which we offer to the future citizens of Europe."

It will be chiefly the task of the Member States and of their education systems to take on these challenges and come up with the answers. There is plenty of experience in these countries to suggest that many of their problems can be solved.

In Germany, for instance, the city of Essen and Essen University have worked together for years in a programme to help the children of immigrant families at *Gymnasien* (secondary schools) to prepare for the *Abitur* matriculation examination and for the university. Supported by the Commission since 1993, the project now also includes in-service training courses for teachers, making project experience available to other schools. In the near future, the Commission hopes to identify other Member State partners conducting similar projects.

The evidence is that improving the education of immigrant children requires the closest possible cooperation between schools and other local partners. Initial progress is discernible in the majority of Member States. In this respect, as in the field of intercultural education, the Socrates programme should help confirm the additional benefits to be gained from cooperation across national borders.





Youth Policy

Protection from persecution

Far from being exclusively local or national concerns, racism and xenophobia are a worldwide threat to democratic society, according to participants in a European seminar in Bradford, UK, from 25 April-1 May.

The meeting was organized under the Youth for Europe programme by the Task Force, the UK national agency for the programme and the City of Bradford, with European country delegations from all the EU Member States, EFTA and Eastern Europe. The Council of Europe, the Youth Forum and the Council of Europe Minority Youth Committees (CEMYC) were also represented. The seminar called for an effort "to defend the rights and dignity of all people residing in our societies in Europe, regardless of gender, race, culture, religion or nationality."

The same principle is reflected in the youth policy concepts of the European Commission. For example, one of the aims of the Youth for Europe programme since 1988 has been the use of intercultural youth work to help the young adjust to the changing conditions of life in contemporary Europe. These changes include cross-fron-

tier migration both within the EU and into it, as nationals from other countries seek a better living, or protection from persecution.

Commission initiatives here differ from those in which specific measures are used to tackle racism and other forms of discrimination viewed separately. Such phenomena are age-old and cannot be eradicated piecemeal. Youth work is not society's fire brigade. For this reason, EU youth policy measures are aimed at helping the indi-

Youth work is not society's fire brigade

vidual young person to acquire action-oriented skills in a multicultural society. Accepting that "we live in a multicultural Europe" in which "racism and xenophobia have no place," as the Bradford seminar

maintained, is itself an important step in the debate about the causes of violence among young people. The intercultural work of Youth for Europe is thus concerned with the immediate environment of those involved, and develops new perspectives within a multicultural context. It requires a sense of commitment, watchfulness, solidarity and willingness to take a firm stand when respect for democratic or humanitarian principles is threatened. The sort of youth work involved must also sense problems in advance, and be targeted at the groups which feel most vulnerable.

The main recommendations of the Bradford seminar are shown in the box. They reflect a concern with the everyday life of young people, their perception of themselves and others and the stereotypes which can lead anyone astray.

The third phase of the Youth for Europe programme is also set to bring together many young people from different socio-cultural backgrounds to encourage exchanges of view and the resolution of potential conflict.

The Bradford seminar recommendations

A youth exchange cannot in itself combat racism and xenophobia. But it can be the starting point of a process leading from confidence-building and awareness-raising to equality and full participation. This can only be achieved if it is an integral part of an ongoing process in the local community and has a multiplying effect there.

European action. Under the Bradford recommendations, the European Commission is called on to:

- Formulate, implement and monitor, for evaluation purposes, an anti-discrimination policy within the programme of youth exchanges and other related mobility schemes, jointly with the EU Member States.
- Support the Council of Europe's European Youth Campaign against racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance, through the Youth for Europe programme.
- Take measures to inform young people about their rights to mobility.
- Ensure that a mechanism be established to monitor the effect of exchange projects aiming to counter racism and xenophobia and the incidence of barriers to mobility.
- Promote exchanges with appropriate countries outside Europe.
- Contribute to the European-level training of police, customs and diplomatic staff in relation to xenophobic behaviour.

At national level, the Youth for Europe National Agencies are called on to:

- Work together to produce a training course which will be designed to improve the skills of administrators and decision-makers, involve participation from minority groups at all levels, and produce training material which can then be used at national levels.
- Encourage those responsible for youth work training to include anti-racist work in such training and to ensure that equal access is offered to workers from minority communities.
- Take measures to ensure the effective dissemination of information to grass-roots level, thus facilitating access to information at all levels for minority groups.
- Encourage the effective use of advance planning visits to ensure security, reassure parents and establish compatibility between groups.
- Coordinate their work with the relevant structures (like anti-racist movements) in the field of racism and xenophobia.
- Contribute to a greater focus on multicultural education within all formal and non-formal structures.
- Emphasise and encourage sound intercultural preparation prior to exchanges for all groups, of whatever race or nationality, to challenge racism in white-only groups, give greater power to minorities and develop quality multicultural youth exchanges.



Parliamentary Progress

The new European Parliament which emerged from the elections held in June has a much more important role in the fields of youth, education and training, due to the new EU responsibilities in the Maastricht Treaty (Art. 126 and 127), new cooperation procedures, which apply to the European Parliament with regard to training, and above all due to the co-decision procedure in which the Parliament is an equal partner with the Council.

The outgoing MEPs left an important legacy to their successors in completing the first reading of the Youth for Europe III, Socrates and Leonardo proposals and thus enabling the Council to adopt 'common positions' on

them in July.

During September and October, within the framework of the two responsible committees, the Parliament discussed its proposals for recommendations for the second reading, developed on the basis of the Council common positions and formalized in the report of the EP vice-president, Mme Fontaine (F/PPE) for Youth for Europe III, in the joint report of MEPs Pack (D/PPE), Eliot (UK/S) and Vallve (E/EDR) for Socrates, as well as the report of Mrs Boogerd-Quaak (NL/LDR) for Leonardo. (These recommendations were voted and adopted during the October plenary session).

Youth for Europe III, Socrates

The EP committee for culture,

youth, education and the media, chaired by Mrs Castellina (I/GUE), assisted by vice-presidents Banotti (IRL/PPE), Sanz Fernandez (E/PSE) and Cohn-Bendit (D/V), examined the common positions of the Council on Socrates and Youth for Europe III. While pleased that the Council had taken into account the importance of the new momentum that these programmes could inject into cooperation in the fields of education and youth at European level, they again very clearly expressed the disagreement of the Parliament with regard to the reduction of the amounts allocated to these programmes in relation to the proposals of the Commission (respectively Ecu 760 million instead of Ecu 1,005m and Ecu 105m instead of Ecu 157m), as well as the creation of mixed character committees which

would give a predominant role to the Member States in the management of the programmes, excluding the Parliament, which had contributed to the final decision at the same level as the Council.

The youth ministers will reach a decision on 30 November and the education ministers on 5 December. The conciliation procedure between the European Parliament and the Council might have to be used reach an agreement before the end of the year.

Leonardo

The EP social affairs and employment committee chaired by Mr Hughes (UK/Soc.) assisted by vice-presidents McMahon (UK/Soc.), Menrod (D/PPE) and Colli (I/FE), once again looked more particularly into the problems linked to the level of financ-

ing in the Leonardo draft (Commission proposal: Ecu 801m – common position of the Council: Ecu 620m) and the structure of the programme committee (participation of social partners), as well as the significance of the programme in the framework of the White Paper on competitiveness, growth and employment, links with other Community initiatives (Youthstart...) and the European Social Fund, coherence and complementarity with Socrates and the notion of life-long learning.

The cooperation procedure to be applied in the case of training should allow the Council to reach a final adoption during the meeting of the social affairs ministers on 6 December.

1996: European Year of Lifelong Learning

The Commission marked the back-to-school season by proposing that 1996 should be the European Year of Lifelong Learning.

It had originally floated the idea of a year of education in its White Paper *Growth, Competitiveness Employment – the challenges and ways forward into the 21st Century*. The White Paper recognizes that the Member States, rather than the EU, have the primary responsibility for the organization and content of education and training. The EU can play a complementary role in a number of ways: by developing the European dimension of education and training, including cooperation between national systems through programmes such as Socrates and Leonardo; by providing financial assistance through instruments such as the Social and Regional Funds; or by stimu-

lating discussion and increasing awareness of the issues facing the EU as a whole.

The European Year falls into the latter category. In order to achieve the greatest possible impact, the Commission proposes to concentrate on a limited number of themes:

- lifelong learning as the path to both personal development and employment-intensive industrial competitiveness;
- better cooperation between education and training systems and the firm, especially small and medium-sized firms;
- working towards a European area of education and training through recognition of qualifications and incorporating a European dimension into education and training;
- highlighting the importance of education and training in promoting equal opportunities, notably

between men and women.

The messages will be conveyed through a wide range of media: television, radio and the written press, as well as more specialized publications and conferences. To facilitate dissemination, material will be made available in forms such as video clips, interactive CD-based systems and information packs which can be used in locally-organized events.

The emphasis will be on highlighting concrete experiences and achievements which provide a practical demonstration of the benefits of education and training for individuals, firms or regions, particularly in relation to lifelong learning, Community activities and the benefits of transnational cooperation.

The activities to be undertaken during the year will be selected in close consultation with the Member States, each of which

will be invited to designate a body to assist in the selection and implementation processes. In this way it will be possible to tailor the presentation of the underlying messages to particular regional or local audiences or target groups.

In the current climate of financial restriction, the Commission is asking for Ecu 8 million, which is a modest budget for an operation of this type. In compensation, 1996 will be the year when the Socrates and Leonardo programmes become operational, so that there should be a mutually reinforcing impact between publicization of these programmes and the European Year. Secondly, in order to make the most of limited resources, partnerships with public and private-sector operators will be encouraged through the national organizing bodies on the basis of partial Community funding or the use of the logo and themes of the year on a no-cost basis.

The Commission's proposal now goes to the Council and the European Parliament for approval under the co-decision procedure established by the Maastricht Treaty. The Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions will also be consulted during this procedure. A final decision will probably not be taken until well into the first half of 1995, but the first reading should be completed by December 1994 and this should indicate whether the principle of the European Year is accepted and whether any significant shift of emphasis is to be anticipated.

In the meantime, readers may wish to put their thinking caps on and start planning what activities they could organise to make the most of the Year.

ODL: new trans-European projects

Open and distance learning has played an important part in European education and training for some time. Increasing mobility across frontiers, the growing need of users for flexibility in course methods and delivery, and developments in available technology have now all greatly increased the significance of its potential role amongst the learning methods available to students and trainees of all ages.

Recognizing the expansion in education and training possibilities offered by this method as well as the opportunities presented by new technology for applying it, the Commission launched a call for proposals on 15 March concerning a *Community development and demonstration action in the field of Open and Distance Learning*, jointly organized and funded by the Commission's Task

Force for Human Resources and by DGs XII and XIII. A total of Ecu 3.2 million has been reserved by these services as the Community contribution towards the financing. Four proposals have now been selected.

The objectives of the initiative are:

- To demonstrate and develop the possibilities for practical and effective open and distance education and training across the Community via demonstration projects linking the fields of education/training, research on education and training, and telematics for education and training. In doing this, the intention is to prepare for future actions to be carried out in these fields. (The demonstration and development of ODL methods in Community projects is of particular relevance to future activities

under the Socrates and Leonardo programmes).

- To demonstrate ways of ensuring coherence between actions in this field concerning development of networks, technological developments and methodical research.
- To establish models for developing the use of existing networks, tools, infrastructure and targeted research in the field of open and distance learning, so that a larger number of people take advantage of the opportunities it offers them in education and training. Projects to be pursued under this action will have a trans-European dimension covering, in particular, one or more of the following areas:
 - European aspects of environmental issues;
 - languages and cultures in Europe;
 - aspects of the single European market;

- science and technology in Europe.

There was strong interest in this call for proposals – an information package was sent to approximately 2,000 organizations and individuals who asked for further details, while an information day held in Brussels on 3 May was attended by 300 participants – and a total of 126 proposals were received by the Commission. In the majority of cases, proposals were put forward by consortia and partnerships made up of organizations and institutions from different EU countries. A total of 806 organizations or institutes were involved in the proposals submitted, including 41 from EFTA and 10 from non-EU/EFTA countries.

A thorough professional and independent evaluation has been made of each proposal by experts

in the specialities concerned, on the basis of whose report the Commission has selected four proposals, each which has been modified to take into account specific recommendations from the evaluation team.

Work on these projects is now proceeding, and the Commission will be closely following progress with the organizations concerned.

So that all those involved in ODL in the Community can benefit from the experience gained in these projects, documentation and other material produced during their operation will be made available to those interested, and a report/presentation on results is expected when they have been completed.

What were your results?

How other countries mark secondary school exams

In all the EU countries, the democratization of education has led to a vast increase in the numbers of pupils in upper secondary general education, and the numbers leaving with a qualification are continuing to rise. Moreover, the ever-growing needs of training have gradually altered the social role of the school leaving certificate: nowadays, the end of upper secondary education represents less the moment of entry to working life than the transition to higher education.

Given the individual traditions of each education system in relation to assessment, the conditions for the award of diplomas or certificates at this level of education vary from country to country. There are also differences between countries as regards the role and importance of these qualifications for purposes of entry to higher education. However, with the present increasing mobility of students in higher education, the problem of the recognition of qualifications arises in all countries. As freedom of movement of students becomes a reality in the European Union, it is increasingly necessary to identify clearly the criteria on which certification is based.

Conditions for the award of upper secondary general education qualifications

Assessment procedures and certification at the end of upper secondary education divide along two main lines – whether examinations are set, and whether the teacher has sole responsibility for these. The table (below right) illustrates the variety of situations.

Most countries have established systems of external assessment at the end of upper secondary general education, with six exceptions – Belgium, Greece, Iceland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden.

In Belgium, Greece and Iceland, certificates are granted on the responsibility of the teachers in the school attended by the pupil. The teachers take into account the work done during the year, together with the results obtained in the regular written and oral tests and in the final examinations which they set. In Greece, the final decision on granting the qualification lies with the teachers' council. In Belgium,¹ the certificates require official recognition by a homologation committee. In Portugal,² Spain and Sweden, the award of a

certificate depends solely on the pupil's work during the year and there is no final examination.

Organization of external final examinations

In the other countries, it is usually the Ministry of Education or some other educational body which has direct responsibility for setting the external (public) examinations at the end of upper secondary general education. In the Netherlands, the ministry prescribes the criteria and the subjects to be covered, the actual preparation being undertaken by a national committee of experts and a specialist centre. In Germany, uniform examination requirements have been prescribed jointly by all the Länder. In Austria, regulations prescribe the organization of the examination and the common curricula determine the content of the examinations for the whole country. In Austria and in most of the German Länder, exam questions are submitted by the schools to the authorities. In the United Kingdom, the examinations are set by independent examining bodies (called variously board, group or council), each of which sets its own papers; for each subject, schools enter their pupils for the examinations of the examining body of their choice. In Finland, the Ministry of Education appoints a national examination board which sets, corrects and assesses the examinations.

In most countries, the external final examinations include both written and oral parts, except in Ireland and the United Kingdom, where they are only in written form with the exception of modern languages. Oral examinations are generally taken before a teacher from the school and an external moderator. Written examinations are marked by an outside board or by the teachers under the supervision of external examiners (Ireland). In Austria, the examinations are held under the supervision of an external chairman. In Germany, pupils take the Abitur examinations in the school before an examining board which includes representatives of the relevant ministry, the teachers and the head teacher.

In the United Kingdom, pupils have freedom of choice as to both the subjects and the number of subjects they sit. In certain countries, a minimum number of subjects must be taken – four in Aus-



tria, Germany and Finland, five in Ireland and seven in the Netherlands. At least some of these may be chosen by pupils from a list of those available. In Denmark, France, Luxembourg and Norway, the number of examinations and the subjects in which they are taken are decided by the education authorities, the exact group varying according to the main and optional subjects studied. In Italy, the number of examinations is determined by law (two written and two oral). The education authorities decide in which subjects these examinations are to be taken.

External examinations and award of final qualification (diploma, certificate, etc.)

In those countries in which external examinations are held, the results may be combined in a variety of ways with the pupil's school marks in determining the award of the final certificate.

In the Netherlands, the final mark represents the average of the marks obtained in the national examination and in the examinations set by the teacher.

In Germany, the upper secondary certificate is based on the results obtained in the Abitur examination and the marks

obtained in a group of subjects over the last two years.

In Denmark, the Studenterekamen certificate includes both the marks for the year's work and the examinations marks. The average is calculated of all the marks obtained in the year's work and a further average is calculated of all the examinations marks together with the year marks in those subjects in which examinations have not been taken.

In Norway, both the final examination works and the teacher's overall assessment appear on the final certificate.

In the United Kingdom, a certificate is given to every pupil

Written or oral exams, external or internal assessment?

End of upper secondary general education

Certification based on external, standardized (public) examinations or externally supervised

Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom

Certification based on internal final examinations

Belgium, Greece, Iceland

Certification with no final examinations

Portugal, Spain, Sweden

External examinations and award of final qualifications in EU countries		
COUNTRIES	Name of certificate	Name of standardized external (public) examination
AUSTRIA	Reifeprüfungszeugnis	Reifeprüfung
BELGIUM French Community	Certificat de l'enseignement secondaire supérieur (CESS)	_____
Flemish Community	Diploma van secundair onderwijs	_____
DENMARK	Bevis for Studentereksamen Bevis for Højere Forberedelseseksamen	Studentereksamen Højere Forberedelseseksamen
GERMANY	Zeugnis der allgemeinen Hochschulreife	Abiturprüfung
GREECE	Apolytirio lykeiou or Ptychio lykeiou	_____
FINLAND	Ylioppilastutkintotodistus	Ylioppilastutkinto
FRANCE	Baccalauréat	Baccalauréat
IRELAND	Leaving Certificate	Leaving certificate examination
ICELAND	Stúdentoprófsskirteini	_____
ITALY	Diploma di maturità	Maturità
LUXEMBOURG	Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires	Examen de fin d'études secondaires
NORWAY	Reifeprüfungitnemaal (fraden videreganeskole)	Eksamen (fraden videreganeskole)
NETHERLANDS	Vorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (VWO) Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs (HAVO)	Eindexamen
PORTUGAL	Certificado de fim de Estudos Secundários	_____
SPAIN	Bachillerato	_____
SWEDEN	Gymnasiekompetens	_____
UNITED KINGDOM England, Wales and Northern Ireland	General Certificate of Education Advanced level (GCE A Level) and Advanced Supplementary (GCE A S)	GCE A level examination and GCE AS examination
UNITED KINGDOM Scotland	Scottish Certificate of Education	Standard Grade and Higher Grade Certificate of sixth year of studies

who reaches the minimum pass mark in at least one subject; only those subjects passed are mentioned, along with the grades attained in each of those subjects. In Ireland, all pupils who sit the examination are given a certificate; however, entrance to higher education and employment is determined by the grades awarded. Class work is not taken into consideration.

In Italy, only those pupils who achieve satisfactory results during the year are allowed to sit the Maturità, on which the award of the certificate depends.

In France, a minimum overall

mark must be reached across all subjects, and the award of the certificate depends entirely on this.

In Luxembourg, pupils must in principle obtain 50% of the possible marks in every subject in the examination and the school marks obtained during the year will count for one third of the final mark as from the examinations held in June 1994.

In Finland, pupils who pass the external examination receive a certificate indicating the marks obtained in each subject and the overall average; provided generally that they also obtain their upper secondary school-leaving

certificate which is based on the marks they receive for their work in their final year.

¹ In the Flemish Community, the homologation procedure will be abolished as from 1995/96.

² Major changes in the system of pupil assessment are likely to be introduced in Portugal as from 1995/96.

Vocational training in Europe

Different systems, similar problems

Comparative studies of the vocational training systems in the EU Member States all emphasize the very great diversity of these systems, given that they have developed within their own, usually very specific, economic, social and political environment. This means in turn that the debates in the Member States concerning the actual process of changing and reforming these systems are also very different, as they take place within the context of the existing system. However, the problems which are being addressed are often very similar.

The debates in the Member States during recent months have seemed to concentrate on:

- Ensuring that there are sufficient places for young people, particularly in apprentice and other alternance-type training schemes.
- The relationships between vocational education and training and general education.
- The development of qualifications to ensure a continual raising of the skill level of the adult labour force, and thus to respond to the needs of the economy.
- Measures for the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed.
- The 'internationalization' and 'Europeanization' of training.

The debate seems also to be characterized by consideration of similar types of measures for the achievement of these objectives, for example more independence for individual training centres and organizations; closer links between education and training institutions/organizations and companies; decentralization; and enlarging the role and the responsibilities of the social partners in training.

In a short article, it is not possible to deal in detail with all these elements, but the following attempts to report, where possible on a cross-country basis, on some measures and the accompanying debate in Member States.

Training of young people – apprenticeship systems

The discussion now taking place at Community and international level on the revitalization of apprenticeship-type training systems reflects major initiatives in a number of Member States.

The number of those seeking apprenticeships in Germany has

increased slightly, but the overall economic and labour market situation during the early part of the year, when apprenticeship contracts were being prepared and signed, was relatively negative. The result has been that the number of training places, although in global terms numerically sufficient, does not guarantee either the necessary variety or quality of training, particularly in the new Länder. One measure to deal with this situation has been the creation of additional places in inter-company or non-company-based training centres.

In Denmark, there is now an evident expansion of the number of training contracts with companies, with a 10% increase during 1993 and a month-by-month increase during 1994. This is in contrast to previous years in which there had not been the hoped-for increase in the number of such training places in spite of a very broad consensus on the necessity of these being made available.

In Spain, a new law on apprenticeship was adopted in December 1993. In April, the education and labour ministries signed an agreement aimed at guaranteeing places for the basic training stipulated in apprenticeship contracts. A map drawn up on a regional basis will provide information on 100,000 places in centres associated with the Ministry of Education and the National Employment Institute. Those of other organizations should also be included.

In Ireland, legislation concerned with the financing of the new apprenticeship scheme introduced in 1993 in 15 sectors, and due to be extended to all designated trades in 1994-1995, was recently approved. In the United Kingdom, the Modern Apprenticeship programme, which is eventually to provide 150,000 places, is being launched this autumn with prototype schemes offering 2,000 places.

In France, a government report to parliament in April on apprenticeship and alternance training painted a dark picture, referring to problems such as the quality of training and the lack of financial transparency. It proposed a reform entailing mobilization of all the partners involved and the harmonization and simplification of funding arrangements.





In Luxembourg, on the other hand, parliament approved a law which provides for a new programme within the technical schools to help young people in difficulties to prepare for a vocational qualification.

Status of vocational training

The debate on maintaining the status of vocational training vis-à-vis general education takes place against the background on the one hand of a reduction in the total size of the relevant age group and, on the other, of a general trend towards a higher percentage of this group staying on in some type of education or training. In Denmark, the "Education for All" plan aims to increase the numbers of those in vocationally orientated education from 39% in 1990 to 45-50% in 2000, with an increase in upper secondary education from 38% to 40%. In Germany, the percentage of those eligible to go into higher education who do so appears to be rising again.

A particular point of interest as far as the Netherlands is concerned is that great emphasis is put on alternance-type training as a means of enabling adults, particularly the long-term unemployed, to re-enter the labour market.

Decentralization

In France, following the passing of the five-year law of 20 December 1993, responsibility for the training of young people is to be transferred to the regions. Training leading to a qualification is to be transferred from 1 July 1994, and pre-vocational training and guidance not later than 31 December 1998. Following agreements with the State, two regions have taken the initiative for the transfer of all responsibilities from 1 July 1994, while another has agreed to 1996 as the target date.

By contrast, a proposal in Germany to reduce the role of the federal authorities in vocational training has led to criticism by both the social partners, which have emphasised the importance of a unitary approach to the question of qualifications and the organization of non-school-based training.

In the United Kingdom a report on the development of the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) underlines the need for

partnership at local level, and pilot projects aimed at linking, or even merging, TECs with local chambers of industry and commerce have been launched. The TECs will be largely responsible for the implementation of the Modern Apprenticeship.

Legislation and other major initiatives

In the Netherlands, the Council of Ministers approved the proposals of a major educational and vocational training bill in June. It replaces all existing legislation on vocational training and adult education. It is to take effect in January 1996, with all stages of implementation to be completed by 1 January 1998. This bill also places great emphasis on training taking place outside the school, indicating that at least 20% of provision must be external to the school.

In Ireland, an agreement in February between the social partners and the government on a Programme for Competitiveness and Work has been followed by the establishment of a Community Employment Programme. This aims at providing 100,000 places in combinations of work and training for the unemployed, particularly long-term unemployed.

In Spain, within the framework of the national agreement on vocational training signed in 1992 and covering the period 1993 to 1996, the Foundation for Continuing Training (FORCEM), managed by the social partners, supports training programmes prepared and delivered by companies from a fund levied through quotas on employers and employees.

In Italy, a statutory order in May unified and streamlined previous legislation relating to employment and vocational training.

It covers the social integration of disadvantaged groups and, for example, raises the maximum age for long-term unemployed participation in vocational training courses from 32 to 35.

In Luxembourg, the government approved a law on the training of nurses in January, while in Ireland a major report on this subject was published in July. In Germany, new training regulations for psychotherapists were approved.

In Denmark, there has been a very enthusiastic response to the June 1993 legislation which introduced reforms in training and other forms of leave provision. This enables employees to take training, childcare and sabbatical leave for periods of up to one year with continued salary payment equivalent to 100% of the daily unemployment benefit. Instead of the 20,000 applications expected during 1994, by May 45,000 had already been received.

In Portugal, a law agreed in January fixed the general regulations for vocational training in the public service.

Internationalization or Europeanization of the vocational training system

In Portugal, a law in April defined management structures and procedures for the allocation of Community funds, with indications of the role of the social partners particularly in connection with the allocation of funds from the European Social Fund for vocational training. In Germany there has been a discussion on how to improve the quality of foreign language learning within the vocational training system, including a proposal that a six-month period for all apprentices following the end of their apprenticeship in

another Community Member State should be considered a long-term objective.

In the Flemish community in Belgium, consideration has been given to the question of Dutch being taught to foreigners. An agreement involving the trade unions and employers, as well as public authorities, has been made with the Netherlands concerning mutual recognition of the qualifications of crane drivers. This is seen by the Flemish authorities as an example of a pragmatic approach involving mutual recognition agreements with specific countries in individual sectors.

There are numerous examples of contacts between training organizations involving the movement of trainers and trainees for a whole or part of their training between European Union Member States and with countries in eastern and central Europe, both inside and outside the framework of EU programmes.

Further information can be found in:

- The national monographs on vocational training systems in the different Member States edited by Cedefop and published by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- Issues 2, 3, and 4 (1993) and issues 1 and 2 (1994) of *Cedefop Flash Special* which are available free of charge upon request from Cedefop, Bundesallee 22, D-10717, Berlin.

Note: Cedefop has had a new director, Johan van Rens, since 1 October. His deputies are Stavros Stavrou and Enrique Retuerto de la Torre.



Youth for Europe

Priority Actions in the Youth Field in 1994

This was the final year for the Priority Actions in the Youth Field, a series of measures based on the Council Resolution of the same name, adopted by ministers in 1991 and first implemented in 1992 to provide new scope for Community action in the youth field while complementing existing programmes and initiatives (Youth for Europe, Youth Initiative Projects under Petra, youth activities under Tempus). In 1994, some 336 projects received financial support under the Priority Actions in the Youth Field, bringing the total number of projects supported since 1992 to over a thousand.

Information for young people

Action II of the Priority Actions in the Youth Field specifically addresses the question of youth information. The European Commission made funding available for the first time in 1994 for activities setting out to improve the provision of information to young people about the European Union, its institutions and Community programmes of specific interest to young people, with a view to increasing their mobility throughout the European Union.

Some 93 applications have been submitted to date under action II, by a wide range of applicants (including European youth organizations, national and regional information services, youth associations, local authorities, local youth groups), of which 28 projects have received funding. These were, in the main, network

projects, providing existing youth information networks with the opportunity to extend their work to include the provision of EU information. Other activities included: transnational youth media projects, enabling young people to develop innovative information products and to disseminate them in other Member States; study visits and seminars for people in the field of youth information; and research projects to determine young people's information needs as regards the European Union and the mobility programmes open to them.

In one example, the UK-based charity CSV media and their partners Deadline (a coalition of Flemish youth groups) have joined forces to run an information campaign on opportunities in Europe on their local youth radio stations. Young people from Flanders and the East End of London will be visiting Brussels and interviewing Commission officials, members of the European Parliament and youth groups to find out for themselves how young people can benefit. These investigative reports will form part of the radio information campaign, which will aim to give young listeners an insight into Community programmes aimed at them. The campaign will be backed up by written information which listeners will be able to write in for. Meanwhile,

the whole project will be videoed and broadcast on an educational satellite reaching young people in the wider Europe and former Soviet Union countries.

Life in the local community – an increasing priority for young Europeans

The last selection of Youth Pilot Projects under action III of the Priority Actions in the Youth Field saw over 200 applications for funding from groups of young people: 61 projects received grant support, bringing the total number of projects granted in 1994 to 118.

The projects accepted for funding illustrate the variety of needs, interests and concerns of young people in the Member States. Many reflect the degree of young people's civic participation in their local communities. This is expressed in terms of their increasing concern faced with the rise in racist and xenophobic activity, the destruction of the environment and its effects on the quality of local life, young people in situations of poverty, lack of leisure time provision, health issues, unemployment and 'substance addiction.' In particular, the preservation of local heritage and environmental protection have emerged as popular themes in the southern Member States, and increasingly in the new Länder of the Federal Republic



of Germany. Many projects involve young people using creative non-verbal working methods (audiovisual media, computer mailboxes, theatre, music, puppets, mime) to address the issues of concern to them and to attract attention and raise awareness among their local communities.

Through the Youth Pilot Projects supported in 1994, young people will also be encouraged to network with their European counterparts, incorporating a European dimension into their activity. Whereas in some cases projects are centred on European

project themes (these are mainly information projects concerned with providing European information to the local youth population, e.g. radio programmes, newsletters, electronic messaging board), for the most part the European dimension is expressed in terms of cooperation or the intention to establish cooperation with similar projects in other Member States. The second selection round has seen an increase in the number of pre-established transnational partnerships, within which groups in two Member States set out to develop projects in parallel. For example, youth groups in Aachen and Athens will be working on a joint puppet and shadow theatre project illustrating life in a multicultural society and exchanging video documentaries of each stage of the project.

Exchanges with third countries in practice

In 1994, a total of 99 projects (preparatory study visits, training activities and youth exchanges) with third countries were supported by the Commission. Of these, 44 were with partners in the eligible Central and Eastern European countries (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine). In order to establish lasting cooperation with third countries, activities involving multipliers or persons working directly with young people are particularly important. Recognising this, the Youth Express Network, a European youth association involved in socio-cultural projects and local youth work across Europe, set out to create links between youth workers working with disadvantaged youth in the European

Priority actions in the Youth field										
Country	Action 1	Action 2	Action 3	Action 4	CULT. Ex.*	ICI*	CEC*	LAT*	MED*	TOTAL
B	2	2	12		2	2	3	1	3	27
DK	3	1	5	1				2		12
D	8	2	15	1	2		10	3	1	42
GR	3	2	5	2			2		2	16
E	2	1	13	1		2	5	4	2	30
F	6	3	17	6	5		5	1	3	46
IRL	1	1	8	1				1		12
I	2	3	9	1	2	1	6	2	3	29
L	1		4	1	1		1			8
NL	1	3	4	1		1	1		1	12
P	4	1	10		1			2		18
UK	2	5	16	1			1	4		29
NGO's	7	4		1	4	9	10	11	9	55
TOTAL	42	28	118	17	17	15	44	31	24	336

CULT. Ex.*: Exchanges of young people for cultural purposes

ICI*: Initiatives of Community interest developed by youth organizations

CEC*: Exchanges with Central and Eastern European countries

LAT*: Exchanges with Latin American countries

MED*: Exchanges with Mediterranean countries

Petra

School failure: a better deal instead of a dead end

Union, and their counterparts in Russia and the Ukraine. A train was chartered to travel from Moscow to Lake Baikal, with workshops and debates on methods for working with disadvantaged youth and addressing specific youth problems taking place on board and visits to local youth projects en route.

Some 31 projects with Latin American countries received grant support in 1994. These were not only projects organized by international youth organizations with a tradition of ties with Latin America but also included activities initiated by youth centres operating at local level. The Trinity Youth and Community Centre in London has organized a multilateral youth exchange in Brazil, with young people from Germany, the United Kingdom, Bolivia and Brazil. Based on the theme "Development of identity living in a multicultural society," the exchange will set out to counter cultural stereotyping by encouraging those involved to develop an awareness of how cultural differences have evolved, what they can bring to local community life and how they are linked to social, cultural and economic aspects of life in Europe and Latin America.

In order to promote cooperation in the youth field with Mediterranean countries, funding has been available for certain activities with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. In 1994, a total of 24 projects received funding under this budget heading. Given that most Member States had yet to establish any links with these countries, priority has been given to activities of a fact-finding nature, providing an opportunity for multipliers to carry out initial groundwork in terms of planning for future cooperation, and to joint training activities for youth workers. One example of the latter is a multilateral training project taking place in Belgium, with youth workers from nine Member States, Algeria and Tunisia. The activity is designed to provide participants with practical skills for the organization of youth exchanges, including fundraising, partner-finding and the content of Euro-Maghreb exchanges, as well as a range of leadership techniques for international youth work.

Do government policies anticipate that a certain proportion of young people will fail at school, or are they based on the expectation that all of them will succeed, at least to the extent of completing primary and secondary education and obtaining a basic-level vocational qualification of value on the labour market? How successful is a 'youth guarantee' – a guaranteed offer of basic vocational training for those who have left school and been unemployed – in persuading hard-to-reach young people to return to education/training, rather than run the risk of further unemployment and perhaps the loss of their unemployment benefit? Are there yet any evaluations of this stick and carrot approach?

These are among the questions to be looked at in a report now being prepared for the Task Force, *Strategies to improve young people's access to, and progress within, initial vocational training*. This Petra study will be completed later this year, with the collaboration of experts from all Member States, the four EFTA/EEA countries and the social partners.

The review is the main outcome of a debate by EU education ministers in June 1993 on whether enough is being done by education and training authorities to ensure that all young people participate actively and effectively in working and adult life. It also builds on the European conference on this theme, held near Copenhagen in November 1993, as a follow-up to the Danish Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Behind their concern is the depressing fact that, although good progress has been made in all Member States towards the "Petra objective" of ensuring that all young people should have access to one or more years of recognized initial vocational training, there is still a substantial proportion (up to 30%) who drop out

before the end of schooling, disappear before reaching initial training, or fail to qualify in an initial training course.

These youngsters have been a concern of the Commission since the earliest days of its work with Member States, in the 1970s and '80s, in the so-called "transition from school to work" projects, when mass youth unemployment first began to appear. Since then, much valuable experience has been gained, through these and other initiatives, on how schools and training bodies can improve the quality and suitability of what they offer these young people, and so help them to avoid the dole or the dead-end job.

This study, therefore, will begin by looking at the evidence of success from these and similar initiatives: it will focus on the current explanations in Member States for disaffection and failure in schools; review the story of old and new initiatives to counter them and see what evaluations have been made, and what they have to tell us.

One thing is clear: there is no lack of imagination or commitment on the part of the teachers and trainers in the Member States. But, excellent as they are, these are not enough on their own: they must be matched by policies for assessing the general value of different approaches, and for supporting the dissemination and introduction, on a larger scale, of those that succeed the best.

On a European level, that is the long-term aim of the Commission's work in this field: a better deal for the worst-off of Europe's young people, through systematic study and reporting of national and local attempts to respond better to their needs, and the dissemination of significant examples of policy and good practice to governments and the professions concerned, in all the Member States.

Sharing experience

Petra managers have been working hard to present and disseminate the good practice and approaches developed during the programme so that other individuals and institutions can benefit from this experience. At Community level, a series of 11 publications is being produced, in cooperation with the Petra National Coordination Units, which it is hoped will be exploited by those interested in the development of both

the policy and practice of initial vocational training.

The first to appear is the *European Handbook for Guidance Counsellors*, closely followed by publications on how vocational training can promote initiative and creativity among young people, and how it can anticipate and respond to new skills needs required by the labour market.

A Petra publications list is available from the Petra/Youth Bureau or the Task Force.

What's so great about Europe?

That was the title of a video produced during a week which gave many more Irish young people the chance to find out what Europe might mean to them. "With the largest pro-rata youth population, it is vital that our young people, and particularly the more disadvantaged, can benefit from EU programmes. So we are helping to demystify what goes on in Europe by presenting information in a user-friendly, jargon-free way," says Elizabeth Watters of the Petra National Coordination Unit (NCU) in Ireland.

This *Europe is for YOUth Discovery Week* was planned and organized by a partnership involving the Petra NCU, the National Youth Information Monitoring Committee and 22 youth information centres throughout Ireland. Each of these centres ran its own local programme of events providing information about Petra and other EU programmes and about training, working and living in other Member States. Also, someone was always available and more than willing to show any interested young people how to make the first steps in mobility. One particularly effective method adopted by many centres was to ask young people who had already participated in EU mobility pro-

grammes to tell others about how to get involved and what to expect.

Apart from the video, various information sheets and guides were specially prepared, exhibitions were mounted in libraries and shop windows and an "Espace Europe" set up in the youth information centres. Local MEPs were also willing to participate in information sessions, talks and seminars. With all this activity going on across Ireland, the Discovery Week received considerable TV, radio and press coverage at national level, and local radio and newspapers reported the events organized by the individual youth information centres.

All in all, it was a very impressive first venture which has had lasting effects. Youth information workers are now more confident and able to advise young people about Europe and permanent European sections have been created in some Irish youth information centres. The experience gained, the resources created, the working relationships established and the enthusiasm generated can all be used to good effect in the development of future strategies aimed at informing young people about the EU and involving them in its programmes and activities.

The new role of guidance in the single market

The establishing of the single market has posed a number of challenges for guidance services throughout Europe. As the Task Force's working document on vocational guidance puts it, "It is essential for guidance and counselling services to provide information, advice and experience enabling individuals to become aware of opportunities which exist elsewhere in the Community and to make decisions on their training and career which take into account the prospects of development in the Community."

However, practice in Petra has demonstrated that many of these

challenges cannot be met by Member States acting on their own but only by structured transnational communication and cooperation. So a major European conference to be held on 21-23 November, in Rome, will bring together national decision-makers, social partners and Petra project organizers to review all that has taken place in the guidance strand of the programme. The second and most important aspect of the conference will be to determine what more can be done to reinforce the European dimension of guidance activities in future.



Last Petra projects funded

The final projects to be financed under the Petra programme have recently been decided. They include 203 Youth Initiative Projects (YIPs) and four new transnational development projects in the vocational guidance strand of the programme.

So, since Petra began in early 1988, the following 2,060 projects have received financial and technical support from the Programme:

- 820 projects which were admitted to the European Network of Training Partnerships (ENTP);
- 1,129 YIPs which have been managed and controlled by young people themselves;
- 28 National Guidance Resource Centres, which have worked together to exchange information on education, training and work experience opportunities throughout the EU;
- 15 Training of Guidance Counsellor projects which formed three transnational groupings;
- 7 Transnational Development Projects which worked on issues of common interest in the guidance field;
- 61 Research Projects which worked in 28 partnerships on themes for vocational training policy development.

Given the multifaceted nature of Petra, there has been considerable variation in the level and duration of funding. The smallest one-off grant was Ecu 400 given in 1991 to a local YIP in France, and the largest single grant of Ecu 510,000 has been awarded this year, to the Academia development project, in which all 12 Member States will work together on the training of guidance counsellors. In general, funding of partnership activities lasted longer than one year. Most research projects worked for two years, receiving a total of Ecu 40,000; most ENTP projects worked for three years, receiving either Ecu 60,000 or Ecu 70,000; and the National Guidance Resource Centres are now in their third year of funding.

With the financing of this final group of projects, the Petra budget for 1994 has been fully allocated, so no more project applications can be accepted. However, almost all of these types of activities will be financed within the new Leonardo programme which will become operational next year, the one exception being Youth Initiative Projects which, from 1995, will be integrated into Youth for Europe III.

Consumer opinion

I feel that I learnt more about myself and I have gained self-confidence ... I only regret that I didn't start earlier to get to know other countries, people and languages ... I think that lack of awareness breeds ignorance and I think communication within the European Community is vital ... The person who is sent out gains something on the personal level and this way the employer gets plenty of profit from the investment ... I often had the feeling of not being abroad at all, because when I asked someone whether he/she was Belgian the answer was that he/she was European ... I had never imagined that something as simple as communicating with another individual could be so complicated and yet so satisfying at the same time ... As regards my work in Germany, it will be a plus because I work with documentation in the international department ... It worked out much

better than I expected.

These are quotes from a few of the 40,000 young Europeans who have taken part in a Petra placement. Their views are shared by many other young people who have had a similar opportunity. A recent survey of Petra participants shows that: 76% believed their placement had extended their vocational skills; 80% that it had contributed to their personal development; 94% that it had improved their use of another language; and 69% that it made them feel more European. The most telling statistic is that 95% of participants would strongly advise their friends to go on a Petra training and work experience placement.



UETPs: Realities and perspectives



The Comett II programme has contributed to the establishment of 205 UETPs (University - Enterprise Training Partnerships). Best described as interfaces between the academic world and industry, UETPs analyse the training needs of a given region or technology sector. Working in close cooperation with each other, UETPs can identify the available skills in Europe in a particular subject area and organize training projects tailored to specific needs. Over the five-year lifespan of the programme they have managed over 32,000 student placements in industry, more than 4,500 training courses, and some 800 personnel exchanges between universities and enterprises.

What is a UETP?

Two main types of UETP were set up within the Comett programme:

- Regional UETPs, i.e. partnerships at regional level which bring together groups of universities and enterprises in joint training projects within a specific geographic area. Regional UETPs can have a significant impact on training in their region and coverage throughout the Member States and EFTA countries has

been satisfactory since 1992. On the whole, existing regional UETPs cover the greater part of the Community and EFTA countries and it is estimated that more than 2/3 of Europe's regions have a regional UETP under Comett II.

- Sectoral UETPs, i.e. partnerships of a transnational nature in a technology sector or in a particular sector of industry. Sectoral UETPs bring together universities, enterprises and other associations within a specific industry or technology sector to improve training in that field. The initial structuring of sectoral UETPs was based on reaction to the first Comett Call for Applications in 1990. They were then revised during the second call in order to cover strategic sectors in which there was insufficient coverage. The sectoral UETPs accepted under Comett II therefore span a wide variety of technology sectors and, to a lesser extent, some not inconsiderable industry sectors.

The network

Together, UETPs form a significant network. On average, each UETP cooperates with at least 5 to 6 other UETPs in the network, and forges cooperative links with two or three joint continuing

training projects. In total, some 7,400 different organizations are involved in the UETP network. This figure includes some 3,500 enterprises (73% of which are SMEs, i.e. companies which employ fewer than 500 people), 1,510 are universities or other higher education establishments, and an estimated 2,400 are "other types of organization," such as chambers of commerce and industry, professional and scientific associations, research institutes, the two sides of industry, government organizations, etc. On average, a UETP has 48 partners from 6 different countries, consisting of: 18 enterprises, 13 universities and other higher education establishments, 12 other types of organizations and 5 UETPs.

Added value

UETPs have assumed a leading role in setting up exchange mechanisms, exchanging information, people, expertise, know-how, methodologies, training tools and materials, and specific studies. And yet the question remains: in what way do UETP activities represent real added value within the Community? One of the main achievements of the Comett programme has been the role it has played in helping provide solutions to training problems in Europe. Comett, like other Community programmes such as Force, Petra and Euroteconet, has taken the first step towards training and qualifications on a European level.

There are also direct links between Comett and the Community R&D programmes. Whether it concerns technology transfer (the Sprint programme), industrial technologies (Brite/Euram) or information technologies (Esprit/Impact), UETPs are often at the heart of these processes. Particularly due to the increasing role that training is assuming in the application of R&D results and the transfer of innovation from these programmes.

The challenges

The supply of education and continuing training must be constantly updated. University - industry cooperation must be strengthened to guarantee that training programmes take new professional requirements and technological change into account. As the frontiers between professions yield to the pressure of technological change, current and future workers must have the chance to train and be "recycled" to gain new qualifications. Intellectual mobility must be devel-

Cultural mediators

oped. These are all areas in which the UETPs have helped to provide a response, not just in a local or national context but on a European level.

In just five years UETPs have become university – industry interfaces, fostering cooperation in technology training between both worlds. If these structures continue to build on their experience they will be well placed to meet the challenges of the coming decade.

Defining the mission of a UETP

UETPs work at the crossroads of four broad areas of activity:

- strengthening university – enterprise cooperation,
- by developing initial and continuing training,
- by promoting technologies and their application,
- within a framework of European cooperation.

Each UETP's mission must briefly outline development activities at several levels:

- to specify the UETP's overall activity (e.g. strengthening university – enterprise cooperation in education and training),
- at a more detailed level concerning the different sectors of UETP activity (e.g. student placements: "promoting the European mobility of students through industrial placements in other countries").

Another characteristic concerns the political and institutional environment of the UETP:

- how is the autonomy of those involved in local or sectoral-level training to be preserved while allowing them to access services they themselves are unable to offer?
- how is the UETP to be given the necessary regional or sectoral dimension without being side-tracked by regional or sectoral discrepancies?
- how are certain training organizations to be persuaded to revise their development strategy (if necessary) given the "arrival" of UETPs and similar structures on the training market?

One of the main aims of the Lingua programme is to raise the standard of foreign language teaching by improving the in-service training of foreign language teachers and trainers, and by increasing their opportunities to benefit from appropriate training periods abroad.

Within Lingua, the European Commission has been able to finance a number of European cooperation programmes. Their main purpose is to set up a framework within which in-service teacher training establishments in two or more Member States can develop strategies and opportunities for approaches to the in-service training of foreign language teachers and trainers which are more efficient and more open.

Foreign language teachers have particular responsibilities when introducing children, young people or adults to a kind of learning which may challenge and modify their attitudes as members of a given group and their understanding of cultural identity. They are mediators between different cultures.

The activities these programmes generate therefore imply a wider understanding of nationally based attitudes. These activities should also encourage the acceptance and the integration of the European dimension in the curricula. It is essential that the training of foreign language teachers include sufficient contact with the country where the target language is spoken.

Through Lingua, language teachers are given the opportunity to become aware of a new professional reality: through mobility grants enabling them to improve their linguistic, cultural and methodological competence by spending some time in the country where the language they are teaching is spoken; and through European programmes which provide innovative insights and new solutions via in-service training of language

teachers in other national contexts.

The following are some examples of European cooperation programmes financed by Lingua:

- One programme involves establishments from six EU Member States (France, Spain, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom) in which the partners have jointly developed curricula for in-service training of foreign language teachers. Within this framework, some 200 teachers have already benefited from a large number of in-service training opportunities. In addition to this, the partners have produced a newsletter and documents such as *Good practice in planning in-service activities* and *Evaluation guidelines for course providers*.

- The second programme, involving four establishments from Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK, aims to develop and test a new foreign language teaching model for children. This project will result in a two-year curriculum for teaching Dutch, English, or Italian to children aged between four and ten. The products generated consist of materials such as a handbook for teacher training including methodology, cassettes with the teaching material, story books for the children and supplementary classroom activity materials.

- A third programme devoted to bilingual teaching (UK, Germany) has the following objectives: development of material for history and geography lessons taught in a foreign language, in-service training modules for that purpose, the exchange of teacher trainers and the setting up of a resource data-bank of authentic training and teaching materials.

Further information about past or on-going European cooperation programmes is to be found in the 1991, 1992 and 1993 Compendia of Lingua projects, obtainable on request from Bureau Lingua.



Language audits

In a recent survey supported by Lingua, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) admitted that insufficient knowledge of foreign languages had lost them valuable business opportunities.

But experience has shown that money can often be ill-spent in foreign-language training, with the process resulting sometimes in failure and frustration and even, later, in resistance to language acquisition. This may be due to a number of causes: the choice of an inadequate training organization or of the wrong languages and learning approaches, inappropriate identification of the objectives and so on. In some cases, it may even be that the answer to the linguistic problem of the company is not language learning at all, but rather the recruitment of staff already competent in the appropriate language(s), or the contracting of translation or interpretation services.

The linguistic needs of the company must be properly identified, in the light of its development strategies, present capacities and available resources, through a 'language audit.' This identification clearly needs to be done professionally, by qualified consultants with a highly specialized knowledge both of the linguistic aspects involved and of how businesses operate.

It is also vital that national, regional and local government have appropriate guidance in how to establish foreign language priorities to help provide cost-effective foreign language training.

Improving foreign language competence in economic life – more precisely, enabling SMEs to obtain the right kind of training – are two of the issues which an

important part of the Lingua programme was specifically designed to address. It has made it a priority to bring together the expertise in language audit and language needs analysis existing in different countries and to develop the appropriate tools to carry out the audits. This has been done through several types of Lingua-supported transnational projects:

- General projects: two partnerships were set up to develop and disseminate major language audit techniques, and one to develop software to help SMEs do part of the work themselves. In addition, a partnership was set up to deal with the specific aspect of cost-effective testing of proficiency and aptitude in the context of a language audit, and another project has focused particularly on learning styles and aptitudes of learners.

- Regional projects: surveys of certain European regions (central Scotland, Friuli-Venice-Giulia), including one involving 1,300 SMEs in five different regions in different countries of the EU.

- Sectoral projects: e.g. projects involving tourism, surveys of the foreign language needs of trade unionists.

The Commission has always insisted that the projects subsidized under Lingua should be given the opportunity to get together and to learn from each other, thus networking their experience and pooling their expertise.

To enable this exchange of experience among the audit projects, a three-day symposium for some 40 participants was held in Saarbrücken, Germany, in February, to which representatives from Lingua projects, other experts and employers were invited to exchange information



This article is extracted from "Networks and European training partnerships. Comett UETPs – realities and perspectives," available in English, French and German from the Task Force.

and debate ideas.

The results of this meeting are available in the recently published symposium proceedings, containing papers written by acknowledged experts in the field and a summary of the discussions and outcomes, as well as descriptions of the projects represented at the symposium.

Among the main conclusions were the following:

- A language audit should include information-gathering, detailed analysis of foreign language needs and resources, and advice to the company on foreign language training; it should not normally be carried out by a potential provider of training or other foreign language services.
- There should be improved training opportunities for auditors, including both business and linguistic aspects, and they

should learn to speak "the language of the client" (i.e. that of business!).

- Awareness and dissemination campaigns should give prime importance to language audit, and self-analysis tools should also be further developed and disseminated, to permit SMEs to save money by doing much of the work themselves.
- Regional and sectoral audits should be further encouraged.

Lingua projects in general and audit projects in particular have already led to a considerable awakening of interest in foreign language training among SMEs and contributed greatly to the transnational spreading of language awareness, as well as of the need for language audits and for a much greater accessibility of techniques and services in this area.

The Gent Symposium

In order to bring together all the in-service training projects set up in the last three years and encourage new ones, the Commission organized the Second Symposium on European Cooperation Programmes in Gent (24-26 June). The aim of the symposium, attended by 100 participants from all EU countries was:

- to take stock of achievements in the in-service training of language teachers;
- to carry out a comparative analysis of the characteristics of the different projects;
- to investigate the main areas and topics of European cooperation programmes, such as:
 - innovative material for teacher training;
 - foreign languages in primary education and the corresponding in-service training of the teachers;
 - autonomous learning and the use of new technologies in the in-service training of the teachers;
 - bilingual education and languages for special purposes and their consequences for in-service training.
- and to discuss new ideas about

the future development of the programmes.

One of the most interesting ideas for further reflection was to ensure that the work carried within a given programme would become available to all other professionals working in teacher training establishments, and to have this work recognized at a regional or national level. In other words, European cooperation programmes should become more institutionalized in terms of financing, cooperation and the dissemination of results.

The participants also suggested the creation of a forum for discussion and for the confrontation of different experiences within the same topic area. The aim would be to stress the educational and methodological value of the outcomes.

The symposium proceedings will be available at the end of 1994. For copies please contact Bureau Lingua, tel: (32-2) 511.42.18 or fax: (32-2) 511.43.76.



Erasmus and Lingua (action II)



ECTS – A common language for academic recognition

Difficulty in securing academic recognition of the courses students go on abroad has been one of the main barriers to greater international student mobility. To improve matters, the Commission has developed ECTS, the European Community Course Credit Transfer System. The principles of the system have been successfully tested since 1989 in a pilot scheme focusing on five subject areas at 145 voluntarily selected universities and colleges in the EC and EFTA countries. Internal monitoring and external evaluation demonstrated the validity of ECTS as a tool for academic recognition. The present article takes a closer look at ECTS started under Erasmus and now poised for expansion under the Commission's Socrates proposal.

The novelty of ECTS lies in a uniquely combined set of operational principles. The first is that the road to sound academic recognition of foreign study is a prior agreement reached by students, with their home and prospective host institutions, on the courses they are to take abroad and the measurement of their learning performance

there. Whether compulsory or optional, these courses are always part of the normal curriculum of the host institution concerned, and not created specially for ECTS. Secondly, ECTS assumes that academic recogni-

tion on the purpose, content, structure and assessment of their courses, and on how the commonly agreed procedures for the award of credit are applied to them. They further presuppose the willingness of teaching staff to show entire confidence in the academic judgement of colleagues at the foreign partner institutions.

The practical implementation of ECTS depends on the correct exploitation of several key technical instruments: an information package prepared by all partner institutions; a student application form linked to a firmly binding learning agreement; and a transcript of records to facilitate the transfer of academic credit by showing clearly how students are progressing in their academic careers. An additional instrument, the ECTS grading scale, may assist partners in mutually interpreting their judgement of the quality of student academic performance.

The main technical support for the initial exchange of data between institutions, a comprehensive information package, is the most important means by which students and staff gain an



tion of study abroad can be based on a transferable common currency, the unit of credit related to total student workload. These two principles presuppose a third – that institutions voluntarily committed to ECTS will spare no effort to exchange clear informa-

insight into academic practice elsewhere in the network, and choose suitable foreign study courses.

Courses are allocated a credit rating on the premise that 60 credits represent the normal student workload for an academic year, while 30 and 20 credits correspond to normal semester and (three-month) "term" workloads respectively. "Workload" means not only student/teacher "contact" hours at lectures or tutorials, but further reading, essay-writing, the completion of projects and the preparation of examinations.

The information packages explain other aspects of courses in the relevant field. They describe in detail their content and structure, and their significance for the formal qualifications awarded to home students. And further sections focus on teaching and learning methods (including project and practical work) and full details regarding



all forms of assessment. Finally, the packages enumerate key practical considerations for those considering study abroad at the institution concerned, including term times, admission requirements, examination arrangements and other provisions or facilities especially relevant to foreign students.

Following their preparation (or annual updating), information packages are exchanged at the start of the calendar year among all partners. Would-be ECTS student participants, assisted by ECTS coordinators, use them to consider the most suitable combinations of credit-weighted foreign courses, or course units, offered by each partner. In most cases, they aim to accumulate credit ultimately contributing to the award of a degree or diploma at their home or host establishment. In other instances, credit may be seen as the stepping stone to further recognized study at a second foreign institution.

The best study options identified in terms of the academic level, previous study and degree requirements and the subject interests of students are sent, together with other relevant details, to the preferred host institutions on special student application forms. Also submitted is a draft learning agreement

based on the options selected. Subject to any reservations expressed by the recipient departments, the agreement is binding on the student, the home institution and the host institution concerned once the applicant is firmly accepted for study there. Any subsequent change in study implying amendment to the agreement has to receive similar tripartite confirmation if credit award and transfer are to be formally recognized.

The third technical support for ECTS operation, a transcript of records, is completed by the home institution to supply the accepting host establishment with full details on the past academic record of the successful student applicants.

With these essential formalities behind them, students embark on their agreed courses. On their satisfactory completion, they receive the predetermined credit for their studies which can be aggregated at the host institution, transferred back to the home institution or passed on to a second foreign partner in the ECTS network. Whatever the circumstances, the foreign study achievement will be noted in a fresh transcript of records with reference not only to the credits awarded, but also the quality of student academic performance. However, because grading mechanisms vary across individual institutions, not to mention national higher education systems, institutions have found it useful to apply an ECTS grading scale developed during the pilot scheme to measure the quality of student achievement in commonly understood terms. This scale is emphatically not intended to replace the local grades in the transcript, but to help their interpretation by combining the use of appropriate keywords and numerical definitions.

The ECTS pilot scheme has so far involved five separate groups of partner departments or faculties in the fields of business administration, chemistry, history, mechanical engineering and medicine. In April, the Commission invited the institutions concerned to present their plans for extending ECTS in 1994/95 (the last year of the pilot scheme) to other departments, or into their ongoing exchange programmes. They were also asked to outline their plans for encouraging other institutions to become involved in extension. This invitation to test the wider use of ECTS was very well received and almost all the participating institutions have put forward their extension plans. In this way, the wider use of ECTS will be tested within the pilot scheme to gain experience before the more general promotion starts under Socrates.

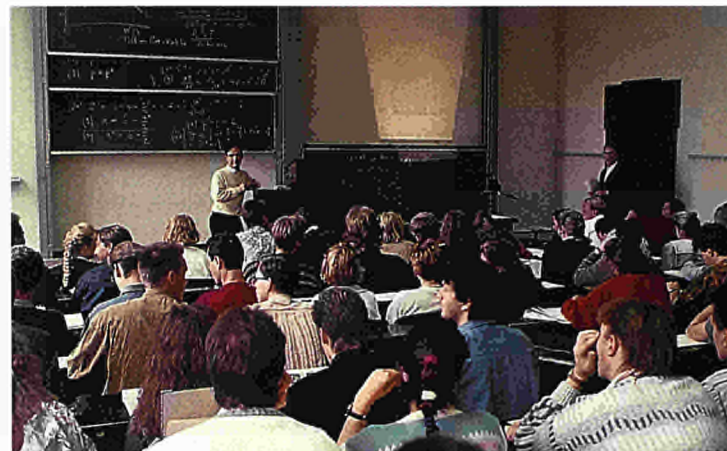
Erasmus

Special funding criteria for former multiannual ICPs

The expected adoption of Socrates has already resulted in measures designed to smooth the transition from Erasmus to the new programme in 1995. One upshot of this for the selection by the Commission of Erasmus and Lingua action II inter-university cooperation programmes (ICPs) in 1994/95 has been the introduction of special criteria, different from those considered in the past for the one-year funding of ICPs which reached the end of their multiannual cycle the preceding year. As a result, 1,117 post-multiannual ICPs out of a total 1,273 (88%) were selected for support in the 1994/95 academic year.

Application of the novel criteria heightened still further this year the complexity and sensitivity of the selection, which has become increasingly difficult as the quality of cooperation has been enriched by the collective experience of ICP coordinators. Enumerated in more detail below, the criteria were equally weighted but, whereas application of the first three ("growth dynamics," "quantitative performance" and "assessment of past performance") involved consideration of objective data related to the multiannual funding period, implementation of the remainder relied on material supplied for the first time by coordinators and partners in a special self-assessment exercise.

ICP Growth dynamics: special consideration has been given by the Commission to the following signs that an ICP has been able to grow satisfactorily, throughout its period of multiannual funding: an increase in the number of different types of cooperation within the ICP up to the maximum of four (student mobility, teaching staff mobility, joint curriculum development and intensive programmes); an increase in the number of partner institutions; a broadening in the spread of countries of institutions within the ICP; a growth in the proportion of ICP partners actively involved in student mobility; a growth in the proportion of potential student mobility flows actually achieved in practice. (For example, in an ICP with three partners, A, B and C, the total number of possible flows is six - A to B, A to C, B to A, C to A, B to C and C to B. If there are no flows either way between B and C, only two-thirds of the potential total is reached.) An increase in this proportion over time has



been regarded as a positive growth indicator for assessment purposes; growth in the total number of students sent abroad and in the number sent on average by each ICP partner; and an increase in the average length of the study period abroad. In the case of teaching mobility ICPs, a rise in the total number of teachers exchanged has also been considered favourably.

Quantitative performance: positive account has similarly been taken of increases during multiannual funding in the following: the student take-up rate, or students who have actually taken part in the student mobility component of the ICP each year as a proportion of the number for whom support has been requested; the ratio between the average real time spent annually on study abroad per student, and the average planned time requested; the number of institutions which have actually sent students abroad as a proportion of those which initially stated their intention to do so; the number of institutions which have hosted students from abroad as a proportion of those which initially stated their intention to do so; the number of real student flows between institutions in the ICP as a proportion of the number of projected flows (for example, in an ICP with three partners, A, B and C, requesting money for four flows from A to B, B to A, A to C and C to A, but in which only flows from A to B and vice versa actually occur, this proportion is 50%); the teacher take-up rate, or teachers who have actually taken part in the teaching staff mobility component of the ICP as a proportion of the number for whom support has been requested; the ratio between the average real time spent abroad each year by teaching staff and the average planned time; the percentage of the ICP

grant actually spent.

Assessment of past performance: the average of all available past performance ratings across all four different types of ICP activity has been taken into account; the broad consistency of this finding with the results of quantitative performance has also been checked.

Quality of implementation: quality has been considered in terms of the soundness of the ICP as implemented overall. Consideration has been given not only to the overall achievement of quality goals but the quality of detailed arrangements regarding matters such as academic recognition, the prior preparation of students, or their monitoring, accommodation and language preparation.

Impact on institutions: favourable consideration has been given to the spin-off effect of an ICP in broadening academic involvement in Community education, training and research programmes and internationalizing the activity of departments or institutions, particularly in areas such as course content or teaching methods.

Need for further funding: the decision to support an ICP has in part turned on what is felt to contribute, more broadly, to higher education in Europe and whether this contribution depends exclusively on Erasmus funding.

Global judgement: consideration has been given to the specific context in which any quantitative growth has occurred, and marked recent improvements in performance have been judged favourably. Incomplete sets of self-assessment forms have been penalized.

JEPs cleared for take-off

European Training Foundation

The three top appointments have been made for the Turin-based European Training Foundation, due to start operations in January:

Peter de Rooij,
director.

Dr de Rooij was previously director for higher vocational education at the Ministry of Education and Science in the Netherlands.

Ulrich Hillenkamp,
deputy director.

Dr Hillenkamp ran the division responsible for cooperation with Central and Eastern European countries in the German Federal Ministry of Education and Science.

Livio Pescia,
deputy director.

Dr Pescia was formerly deputy director with the Italian group IRI, responsible for initiatives and institutional relations in the areas of training, vocational education and higher education.

The establishment of the European Training Foundation is moving ahead fast. Recruitment procedures have been completed and a first group of 60 highly qualified staff will take up their posts at the end of the year.

A proposal for the first work programme was submitted for discussion to the ETF's governing board on 20 September in Turin and to the Advisory Forum, which had its first gathering on 24 October in Brussels, bringing together high-level training experts from more than 40 European countries as well as representatives from international organizations involved in vocational education and training.

Renovation work on the Foundation's building in Turin is in its final stage and on the basis of the progress made so far the date for the move to Italy has been fixed for the end of December. This will include the transfer of technical assistance activities for the Tempus programme from Brussels. From January 1995, the European Training Foundation will have the following address:

Villa Gualino
Viale Settimio Severo 65
I-10133 Turin
Italy

Tempus continues its partnerships and cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union with another round of projects for the restructuring of higher education.

Tempus (Phare) JEPs

This year began with a total of 1,365 applications received by the 31 January deadline for new Joint European Project applications. The intensive selection procedures could then begin. Copies of each project were sent to the relevant national Tempus offices in the eligible countries, while in Brussels extra staff were brought in to cope with the new applications.

Their first task was to process each application in terms of its technical quality. This involves checking whether or not all the relevant requirements have been fulfilled – are all the endorsement letters included? Have the basic partner conditions been respected? Are all the institutions or countries involved eligible? Most important, does the project fit into the priority areas of the eligible country concerned? This has become a compulsory step towards selection under phase II of Tempus. Priorities are not only 'good advice' but they are set up to ensure that the structural approach of Tempus develops in conjunction with the global aims of the Phare and Tacis programmes.

Once the projects had got over this hurdle, they could then go on to the next part of the selection process, i.e. the 'quality assessment.' A total of 975 projects, 71.4%, got through.

The applications were then looked at by Tempus staff in Brussels and in the eligible countries, while a peer review was undertaken in both the EU and the Central and Eastern European countries. The extent of pre-existing links between the partners, the feasibility of the project's activities, the future after the end of Tempus funding, the impact at different levels – department, institution, the overall higher education system and the benefits for society in general – as well as the cost-effectiveness of the project are all investigated at this stage.

The opinions of all assessors, from East and West, were put together at a series of bilateral meetings in May, resulting in a list of projects to be put forward for approval. Final decisions on the size of the budget for the academic year 1994/95 were also taken and on this basis a total of

239 (24.5%) new projects were selected to start in September, to run for a maximum of three years. The total budget for Tempus (Phare) was Ecu 95.9 million.

Simultaneously, projects already running underwent a renewal procedure. Project coordinators were required to submit renewal applications for their projects in March and various factors were taken into account in order to decide whether or not funding should be continued. This included the quality and financial evaluations of the final reports, as well as the results of any on-site visits carried out, and especially the evaluation to see whether the project was progressing towards its initial aims. From the total of 234 renewal applications received, 226 were accepted for continuation.

Over the summer, successful and unsuccessful applicants for both new and renewal projects were informed of the results of the selection procedures and contracts were issued to a total of 465 accepted projects which will run in the academic year 1994/95. Coordinators of unsuccessful applications will have the opportunity to discuss their project assessment with the project evaluators and this may be of assistance if they decide to re-submit their applications in future.

Besides JEPs, which are the main vehicle for cooperation in Tempus (Phare), applications for individual mobility grants and complementary measures have also been assessed and contracts awarded.

Tempus (Tacis) JEPs and pre-JEPs

Selection procedures for Tempus (Tacis) are similar, this being a newer programme which has developed from the experience gained throughout the first phase of the scheme.

As with Tempus (Phare), priority subject areas for cooperation do exist, although in many cases they are much more limited. In addition, despite the fact that there are no Tempus offices as such in the Tacis eligible countries to coordinate the assessment, it is carried out directly in conjunction with local academic experts. Moreover, evaluation of Tempus (Tacis) Joint European Projects is simplified as a result of the compulsory initial pre-JEP phase, which eliminates the possibility of receiving large numbers of lengthy applications. This start-up phase also means that good contacts can be made between the partners before entering into three-year cooperation.

In April, applicants sent in their applications for pre-JEPs to be carried out during the academic year 1994/95. A total of 408¹ new applications were received, of which 76 were accepted. From the first round of 77 Tempus (Tacis) pre-JEPs which started their activities at the beginning of 1994, 72 submitted applications to become full JEPs. Out of these applications, 26 were accepted to

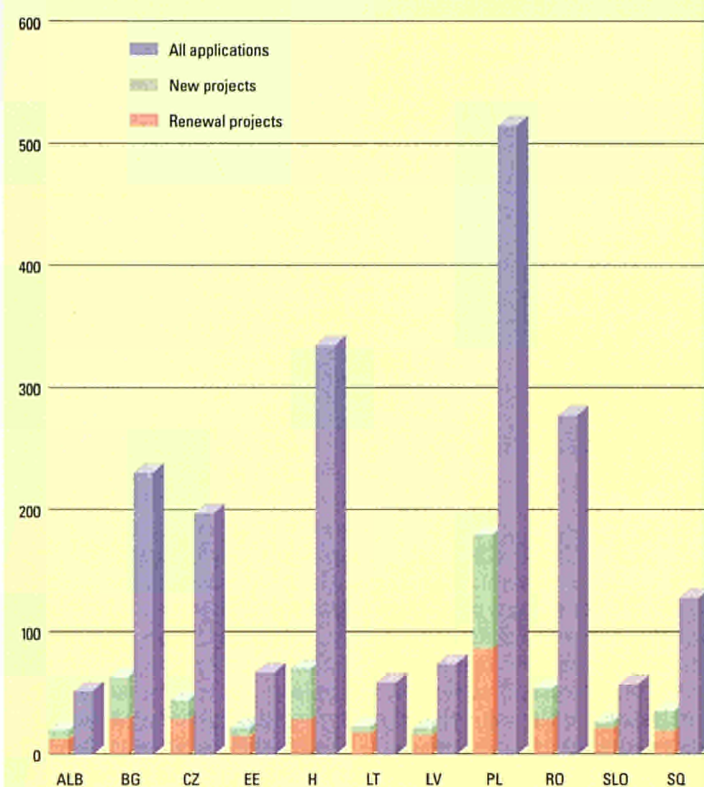
start JEP activities this year. The total budget for Tempus (Tacis) was Ecu 22 m.

¹ All figures for Tempus (Tacis) were correct as of 31 August 1994 but may be subject to change.



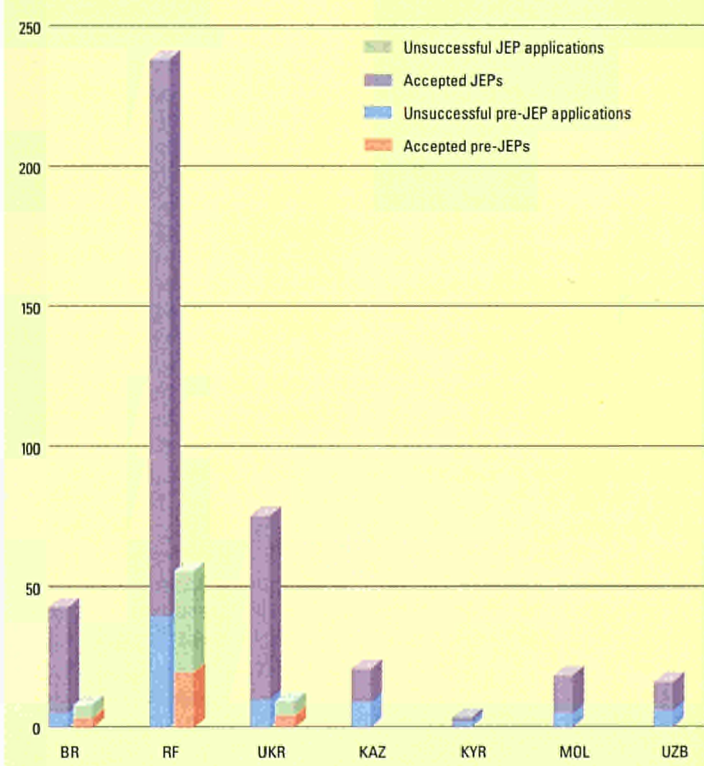
TEMPUS (PHARE) 1994/95

Joint European Projects per eligible country



TEMPUS (TACIS) 1994/95

Pre-JEPs and JEPs per eligible country



Training Products

The Force continuing training programme is designed to have a significant practical impact. There is no more useful and direct way to achieve this than through placing at the disposal of companies, trade unions and trainers all over the European Union the skill needs analyses and the training materials which Force projects themselves have produced.

This was the Commission's rationale in establishing a programme offering co-financing to projects led by companies themselves, by their direct training providers or their sectoral bodies, or by social partners: the users of training would define their real needs and the Commission would invite those prepared to give their work a genuine transnational dimension to compete for funds.

The results of this approach are now beginning to appear in the form of the products of the first of the 714 Force projects to complete their work.

They divide into two groups (the exchange projects were not intended to produce formal training products):

- the training programmes, courses and materials produced by the pilot projects;
- the analyses of training and skill needs produced by the qualification projects.

First product catalogue

The first group of products – from two-year projects financed in 1991 which finished at the end of 1993 – have now been evaluated, and information about them brought together in the first edition of the Force Catalogue of Products (available in English, French and German).

The following examples show something of the wide variety of information and materials now becoming available through Force to European trainers and industrial strategists. Nearly every sector of activity is now represented in Force projects. Workers at every level are targeted in the training, part-time and seasonal workers as well as full-time employees. Small companies and social partner projects have become increasingly important as their numbers have grown.

Banking Services Training,

produced by a Spanish, German and Greek partnership led by the Spanish Banco Sabadell.

Banking and financial services worldwide have experienced a high level and fast rate of technological change. This product uses computer-based training (CBT) to qualify banking staff with little or no knowledge of banking prod-

ucts for future management positions, for other jobs at the same level, and to improve customer service.

It involves five CBT courses: bank services, financial products, foreign trade, accounts for customers, and opening accounts. All of them contain exercises and simulations aimed at getting the trainees' attention and, by feedback, ensuring that the contents are understood. The courses run on IBM PC-XT, or 100% compatible. They have been available since February 1994 in Spanish and will be produced in German and Greek.

Training Planning in SMEs,

produced by a partnership led by the AMV-Center, Aarhus, Denmark.

This is one of considerable number of Force products focused on the needs of SMEs. The material, in written form, comprises: interview material to identify and note employees' existing qualifications, and to determine qualification needs; material for individual training planning; questionnaire forms and a database for planning training for all company employees; examples of action plans and basic written material for project groups; course reports. The training materials are multi-sectoral, and available in Danish and English.

Total Quality Training (TQT),

led by Pirelli Cables (UK) Ltd.

Developed in a UK, Irish and Italian partnership, this CD-RIN with an associated workbook has been developed by Pirelli Cables in the UK and Italy, but is transferable to other sectors and can cost-effectively be customized. Based on the ability to respond to cultural change, and to achieve continuous improvement, it is suitable for all employees in public and private sector organizations, in manufacturing and the service sector. It is equally useful for those who wish to revitalize an existing total quality initiative, and for those establishing one for the first time.

The product is at three levels: the TQM culture and concepts; techniques for implementing TQM; and specific management aids and tools. It can either be used as an open-learning tool, or as part of tutor delivered package, and requires a PC(386) CD ROM drive with sound card and speakers. All levels are available in English, French, Dutch and Italian.

Logistics Job Profiles,

produced by the European Logistics Association (based in the Netherlands).

The products of this qualification are a series of job profiles built by clustering 604 logistics activities

which have been developed by surveys in Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, the UK and the Netherlands. They can be used to define the functions of logistics practitioners, and to determine relevant educational and training topics for their development in this increasingly important discipline.

The final report, available in English, deals with both the methodology used, and the outcomes.

The final report, available in English, deals with both the methodology used, and the outcomes.

Training in the Footwear Industry,

produced by the Hellenic Leather Centre S.A.

There are relatively few training materials available for continuing training in the footwear industry, and none which profit from insights into the changes experienced in the sector in a variety of Member States. The project, involving Greek, Dutch, Portuguese, French, Spanish and Italian partners, has produced 14 written modules covering cutting, stitching, health and safety, pattern development and pattern design. These are available in Greek, Dutch, Portuguese, English, Spanish and Italian, and there is an accompanying video.

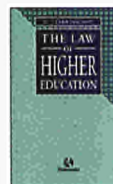
Cristal Energie,

a product for the sugar industry produced by a partnership led by the French sugar producer's association Asforis.

This French language interactive software training package, designed to enable workers to understand the energy phenomena involved in manufacturing, to help them learn to save energy and avoid technical mishaps, is in two parts: 20 – 30 hours' training for each part, including classes with exercises, texts, simulators, a handbook of concepts for trainees and a trainer's manual. It has been produced with French, Spanish, Dutch and Greek partners. The computer-assisted training requires the support of a tutor and the use of an AT 386-type micro-computer with a hard disc under Windows. The product has two levels: one for poorly-qualified workers, the second for senior technicians.

At the beginning of 1995 the products of around 500 more Force projects will become available, and will be added to the product catalogue.

PUBLICATIONS



The Law of Higher Education

D.J.Farrington; Butterworths, London, 1994, 531 pp., ISBN 0-406-02678-5.

The last few years have witnessed major upheavals in the organization of higher education in the United Kingdom. The divide between universities and polytechnics has disappeared, funding has never been so tightly and centrally controlled and the ethos of the Citizen's Charter has turned students into customers of higher education.

Dr Dennis Farrington has put together a comprehensive guide to the law of higher education in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The book assumes no legal knowledge on the part of the reader. A useful publication for administrators and lecturers in higher education as well as for students.



The European Challenge: Geography and development in the European Community

Edited by Mark Blacksell and Allan M. Williams; Oxford University Press, 1994.

This publication examines the impact of the EU on a number of different aspects of the geography and development of the various Member States with a view to illustrating how the European Union has influenced social and economic changes at national level. It was produced as a result of an Erasmus teaching exchange programme involving 14 geographers from eight European universities in seven countries. Each author writes from his or her own national perspective, so the text provides for a uniquely varied view of the late 20th century geography of the EU countries. Although written in English, there are extensive summaries in five other languages.



Erasmus Programme Annual Report 1993

European Commission, Brussels, 1994. 46pp.

The 1993 Erasmus Annual Report contains precise and valuable information on the implementation of the Erasmus programme during the year; complete with statistical tables and data on the different Erasmus actions. Available in nine official languages of the European Union from the Task Force.



The UK Guide for Students entering Higher Education in 1995

Published by the UK Erasmus Students Grants Council in association with ISCO Publications.

This Guide contains a presentation of all the 1994/95 Erasmus Inter-University Cooperation Programmes in which British universities participate. It gives the name and address of the institutions, the courses offering an Erasmus period of study abroad, the participating countries and the length of the stay abroad. Available in English at ISCO Publications, 12a-18a Princess Way, Camberley, United Kingdom GU15 3SP. Price £1.10.

DIARY DATES

CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITIONS

24-26 November 1994: **6th Annual EAIE Conference** (European Association for International Education). Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London.

Theme: *Quality in International Education*. Further information: EAIE Secretariat, Van Diemenstraat 344, NL-1013 CR Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel: (31-20) 625.27.27. Fax: (31-20) 620.94.06.

30 November-2 December 1994:

1st Global Conference on Lifelong Learning organized by the **European Lifelong Learning Initiative (ELLI)** with the cooperation of **The World Initiative on Lifelong Learning**, Sheraton Hotel, Rome.

Theme: *Lifelong Learning: Creating and sustaining learning organizations integrating the development of human potential*. Further information: Keith Davies, ELLI, 60 rue de la Concorde, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: (32-2) 514.33.40. Fax: (32-2) 514.11.72.

24-26 November 1994: **Delta Conference for Education and Training**. Düsseldorf Neuss. Theme:

Shaping the new information and knowledge society. Further information: FIM Psychologie, Delta '94 Conference, Maximiliansplatz 3, D-91054 Erlangen. E-mail: delta.94@fim.uni-erlangen.de.

5 December 1994:

Second Erasmus Prize Award Ceremony, Brussels. Organized by the Task Force Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth, European Commission.

12-13 December 1994:

Comett Conference organized by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), Bonn. Theme: *Comett: Evaluation and Lessons for the Future*. Further information: Mr Bernd Wächter, Bonn (D), Tel: (49) 228.88.22.57, Fax: (49) 228. 88.24.44.

8-11 February 1995:

8th European Student Fair. Parc des Expositions, Brussels. Organized by In-Media/Reed International. Further information: In-Media secretariat, Rue de la Caserne 86, B-1000 Brussels. Tel: (32-2) 514.10.11, Fax: (32-2) 514.48.18.

STOP PRESS

Third Compendium of Force projects The Compendium of 1993-1994 Force projects has just been published in English, French and German. It includes information on the 165 projects selected under Strand 1, dealing with training and qualification development as a means of responding to industrial changes, and the 134 Strand 2 projects, focusing on continuing training issues highlighted in the Force sectoral and contractual policy surveys. Each project summary gives details of the objectives, activities and expected results of the projects, together with full partnership lists and contact addresses.



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L-2985 Luxembourg