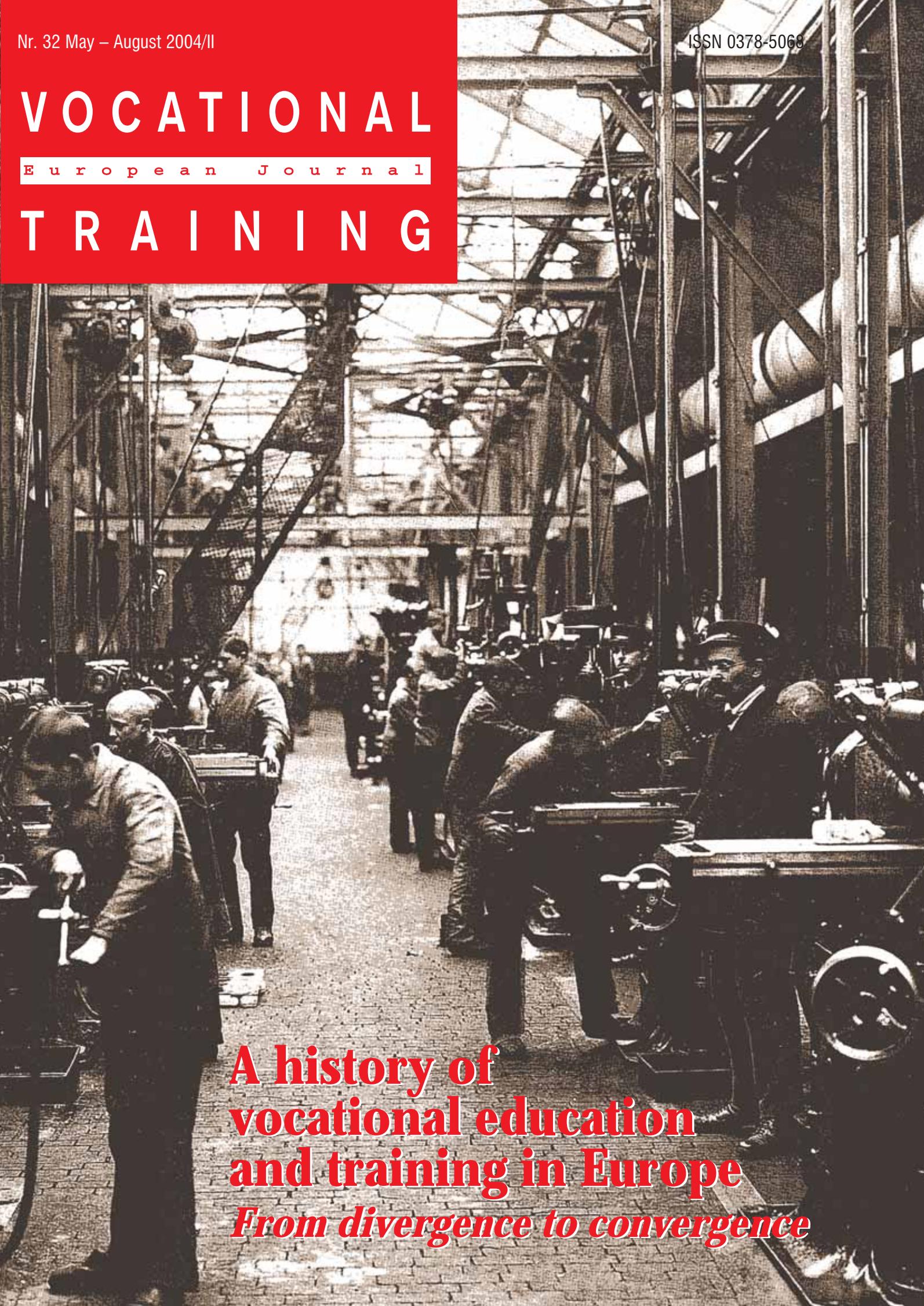


Nr. 32 May – August 2004/II

ISSN 0378-5068

# VOCATIONAL European Journal TRAINING

A history of  
vocational education  
and training in Europe  
*From divergence to convergence*





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Cedefop assists the European Commission in encouraging, at Community level, the promotion and development of vocational education and training, through exchanges of information and the comparison of experience on issues of common interest to the Member States.

Cedefop is a link between research, policy and practice by helping policy-makers and practitioners, at all levels in the European Union, to have a clearer understanding of developments in vocational education and training and so help them draw conclusions for future action. It stimulates scientists and researchers to identify trends and future questions.

The European Journal 'Vocational Training' is provided for by Article 3 of the founding Regulation of Cedefop of 10 February 1975.

The Journal is nevertheless independent. It has an editorial committee that evaluates articles following a double-blind procedure whereby the members of the Editorial Committee, and in particular its rapporteurs, do not know the identity of those they are evaluating and authors do not know the identity of those evaluating them. The committee is chaired by a recognised university researcher and composed of researchers as well as two Cedefop experts, an expert from the European Training Foundation (ETF) and a representative of Cedefop's Management Board.

The European Journal 'Vocational Training' has an editorial secretariat composed of experienced researchers.

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Johan van Rens, Director

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No de catalogue: TI-AA-04-032-EN-C

Printed in Belgium, 2004

Responsible for translation:

David Crabbe

The publication appears three times a year in Spanish, German, English, French and Portuguese.

Layout: Zühlke Scholz & Partner GmbH, Berlin

The Portuguese version is available directly from

Cover: Panos Haramoglu, M. Diamantidi S.A.  
Graphic Arts, Thessaloniki

DEEP/CID  
Centro de Informação e Documentação  
Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade

Technical production on DTP: M. Diamantidi S.A.  
Graphic Arts, Thessaloniki

Praça de Londres 22º P  
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The contributions were received in or before July 2004.

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**Interested in writing an article ... see page 100**



# A history of vocational education and training in Europe – from divergence to convergence

The idea of mounting a research project on 'the history of vocational education and training in Europe' was launched at the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) in January 2000. The main aim of this project is to reach a better understanding of the current structure of the various vocational education and training systems in Europe by showing how this has developed historically at national and international level, and by revealing how vocational education and training and European integration have influenced each other. The project starts from the principle that a sound knowledge of historical developments is an indispensable prerequisite for fully appreciating and interpreting contemporary processes and events (1).

Under the aegis of the project, the first international conference on *The history of vocational education and training in Europe in a comparative perspective*, organised by the University of Florence and the European University Institute, was held in Florence on 11 and 12 October 2002.

No fewer than 18 papers were presented over the two days. The first day looked at the development of vocational education and training systems in one or more European countries. The second day considered the role of vocational education and training in the social policy of the European Community, and then of the European Union. The proceedings of this conference are being published in two volumes entitled *A history of vocational education and training in Europe*, the first edited by Georg Hanf, of the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB) and by Wolf-Dietrich Greinert of the Technical University of Berlin, and the second by Professor Antonio Varsori of the University of Padua.

The wealth of materials presented and the scale of the intended aims of both the 'History' project and the Florence Conference led Cedefop to take two further steps to expand the scope and dissemination of the results of the conference: first, a travelling exhibition, and then a special issue of the European Journal 'Vocational Training'.

The idea of a travelling exhibition on the history of vocational education and training in Europe came from the Cedefop expert Norbert Wollschläger, who oversaw the initial presentation at the Cedefop gallery in Thessaloniki. The exhibition itself was designed by Helga Reuter-Kumpmann, an exhibitions consultant, and was mounted in association with the German exhibition on health and safety at work (Deutsche Arbeitsschutzausstellung (2) - DASA). The first presentation of the exhibition attracted more than 2000 visitors in Thessaloniki. The exhibition guide is reprinted below in this issue of the European Journal.

The editorial committee of the European Journal agreed on a special issue because its members were unanimously convinced that the future of vocational education and training in Europe could only be constructed successfully if there were a sound knowledge of its historical antecedents. The future builds on the past. Moreover, one of the aims of the European Journal is to encourage research on vocational education and training in Europe. However, the Journal receives very few proposals for articles on the history of vocational education and training. We hope that this special issue will inspire further contributions on the history of vocational education and training in Europe, in a comparative perspective as far as possible, this being one of the selection criteria of the Journal.



**Norbert Wollschläger**  
VET expert and responsible for Cedefop's exhibition gallery



**Éric Fries Guggenheim**  
Editor-in-chief of the European Journal Vocational Training.

(1) Cf. the website at: <http://history.cedefop.eu.int/>

(2) Cf. the DASA website at: <http://www.baua.de/dasa/index.htm>



The theme of this special issue follows quite closely that which emerged spontaneously at the Florence Conference and was taken up in the sub-title of the travelling exhibition, *A history of vocational education and training in Europe: from divergence to convergence*.

While it is true that vocational education and training followed in the distant past the same pattern of apprenticeship everywhere in Europe through trade guilds, it is equally true that with the Industrial Revolution and the abandonment of the apprenticeship system national systems of vocational education and training came to differ widely in accordance with the societal characteristics of each nation. It might therefore be said, without risk of contradiction, that each country has its own vocational education and training system, but it has to be admitted that such a conclusion does not tell us much and serves little practical purpose. It is possible, however, to make this spectrum of different training systems more comprehensible by using historical analysis. This is what Professor Wolf-Dietrich Greinert does in his article entitled *European vocational training systems: some thoughts on the theoretical context of their historical development*, which provides a model that can be used to classify the different European systems roughly into three broad categories. Although this is only a model, with the usual simplified hypotheses that are open to criticism, it is a suggestive and stimulating one.

It would therefore seem possible and worthwhile to arrive at a scientific classification of the different models of vocational education and training. It is far more difficult, however, to explain why two countries with very similar historical profiles of economic and social development should finish up adopting two systems of vocational education and training that unquestionably belong to two totally different categories. This is very clearly the question raised in the article by Holger Reinisch and Dietmar Frommberger entitled *Between school and company - features of the historical development of vocational education and training in the Netherlands and Germany in a comparative perspective*. Their article is in fact more a programme for research than an answer to the question posed, which they do not in any case claim to have resolved. We hope that this paper will encourage others and that explanations, which might also refer to

other societal contexts, will be put forward in articles submitted to the Journal.

A partial answer is already proposed by Anja Heikkinen in her paper *Models, paradigms or cultures of vocational education*. She shows clearly, from the example of the development of continuing vocational education and training in Northern Europe and Germany, that the emergence and transformation of national systems may be the result of competition between the different 'cultural conceptions' of vocational education and training borne by individuals and collective bodies from an subnational, national or supranational standpoint. The cultural approach adopted by Anja Heikkinen sees education as co-constitutive both of culture and of projects and programmes at the individual, collective and societal level. And in reality, the subject of her article goes well beyond simple comparative analysis of how continuing vocational education and training developed in Northern Europe. What she attempts to show is the role of historians and the practical consequences of their work. She argues that by recognising and making visible certain key phenomena, changes and/or continuities in the field of vocational education and training, historians and researchers in general have in the final analysis the role of jointly defining work and education at the subnational, national and supranational level.

Given this diversity of vocational education and training systems in Europe, European integration is bound to encourage the search for certain forms of convergence. The various European institutions have seen their areas of responsibility grow, particularly with the Single European Act, the Maastricht Treaty, the birth of the European Union and the introduction of the euro. However, as Francesco Petrini tells us in his article *Common vocational training policy in the EEC from 1961 to 1972*, while Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome could hardly be clearer on the goal of developing a common policy on vocational education and training, this common policy has yet to see the light of day. This is explained particularly by the reluctance of Germany and France, which already had well-developed vocational education and training systems and were little inclined to cover the cost of retraining the labour force in the south of Italy. The failure can also be explained by the conflict between the centralising force of European



development and the reactive force of governments seeking to restrain the ambitions of the Commission and to defend their sovereignty. As Petrini says, it took the change in the social and political climate and the beginnings of the crisis in the mid-1970s to force states to think in terms of new forms of cooperation, and this also laid the foundations for the idea of establishing a European centre for the development of vocational training.

As Eleonora Guasconi shows in her paper on *The unions and the relaunching of European social policy*, the European trade unions regarded the creation of this agency as an opportunity to ensure that vocational training would really benefit workers, enabling them to cope with the upheavals of the 1960s and the crisis of the 1970s. In pushing for the establishment of Cedefop, and succeeding in that aim in 1975, the trade unions had the goal of gaining greater representation within the European Community and of developing a common European social policy in the field of employment and vocational education and training.

The establishment of Cedefop, as Professor Antonio Varsori shows in his paper entitled *Vocational education and training in European social policy from its origins to Cedefop*, was a step forward in the sense of greater convergence in vocational education and training in Europe, as well as a way of meeting the need to encourage research in vocational education and training and to expand exchanges in this field between the Member States of the European Community, and an experimental prototype that would lead to the creation of a whole series of specialist agencies.

However, convergence between vocational education and training systems in Europe remains slow and problematic since the nation-states cling to their national prerogatives and the principle of subsidiarity in the field of education. As Georges Saunier shows

in his article *The place of vocational training in François Mitterrand's idea of a European social space (1981-1984)*, in vocational education and training as in other fields, the ability of Europe to integrate lies above all in reacting to the economic and social conditions of the moment. 'While this might be thought an insuperable obstacle, European diversity is fading away - although not disappearing entirely - in the face of necessity. In this field as in others, the integrative capacity of Europe resides above all in the definition of common interests. Convergence, and in particular convergence of education systems, is merely a consequence.'

Since the mid-1980s, the trend towards convergence in vocational education and training in Europe seems to have speeded up in line with this principle. Common interests are identified within the Union, medium and long-term objectives are set, allowing individual interests to be safeguarded, and on this basis integration takes place, indirectly and 'voluntarily'. It was at the Lisbon Council that the heads of state and government addressed questions relating to education policy for the first time. Then in Bruges in 2001, the Directors General of vocational education and training in the countries of Europe adopted an initiative, confirmed by the Declaration of 31 Ministers of Education in Copenhagen in 2002, by which the states of Europe committed themselves to a process of greater cooperation in vocational education and training, as a somewhat veiled way of encouraging convergence through objectives such as transparency, quality of training, mutual recognition of skills and qualifications, expanded mobility and access to training throughout life. These are all topics treated very regularly in the pages of the various issues of this Journal.

All of the articles brought together in this issue point to the need for historical reflection in order to cope better with the present, over and above its importance for building the future.



# Table of contents

<b>From divergence to convergence .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>A history of vocational education and training in Europe</i>	
<b>Research</b>	
<b>European vocational training 'systems' - some thoughts on the theoretical context of their historical development .....</b>	<b>18</b>
Wolf-Dietrich Greinert	
<i>Based on a diachronic analysis from the Industrial Revolution onwards, three general types of VET systems are identified: the liberal market economy model in Britain, the state-regulated bureaucratic model in France and the dual-corporate model in Germany.</i>	
<b>Between school and company Features of the historical development of vocational education and training in the Netherlands and Germany in a comparative perspective .....</b>	<b>26</b>
Dietmar Frommberger and Holger Reinisch	
<i>We know little about why vocational education in countries with similar economic and social backgrounds has evolved differently. Only a few studies address this issue. The following should contribute to filling this gap in research.</i>	
<b>Models, paradigms or cultures of vocational education .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Anja Heikkinen	
<i>The aim of this paper is to question the role of educational researchers and educational history as joint constitutors of political and practical discourses on vocational education, through discussion on continuation education in Finland, Nordic countries and Germany.</i>	
<b>The common vocational training policy in the EEC from 1961 to 1972 .....</b>	<b>45</b>
Francesco Petrini	
<i>Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome very clearly states that a common policy for vocational training should be developed. Yet this common policy has not been implemented. This article tries to explain why.</i>	
<b>The unions and the relaunching of European social policy .....</b>	<b>55</b>
Maria Eleonora Guasconi	
<i>The aim of this paper is to shed light on a series of initiatives taken by the European trade unions at the beginning of the 1970s to promote the development of a European social policy, dealing with employment issues and vocational training.</i>	
<b>Vocational education and training in European social policy from its origins to Cedefop .....</b>	<b>63</b>
Antonio Varsori	
<i>The article, based to a large extent on archive sources, looks at Cedefop's origins and the development of its activities up to its transfer to Thessaloniki in the mid-1990s.</i>	



**The place of vocational training in François Mitterrand's  
idea of a European social space (1981-1984) .....**

**77**

Georges Saunier

*The notion of a European social space, as proposed by François Mitterrand to his partners in the Community in 1981, would change under the pressure of events. This change led vocational training to become one of the main points of this French plan for Europe.*

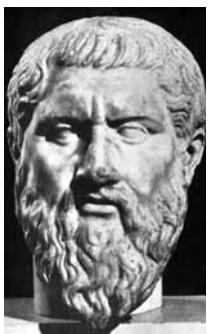
## Reading

**Reading selection .....**

**84**

Anne Waniart

*Section prepared by the Documentation Service with the help of the European network of reference and expertise (ReferNet).*



*"If our youth is and continues to be educated correctly, all our affairs will take a happy course, if not..... the rest is better left unsaid"*

*Platon*

# From divergence to convergence

## A history of vocational education and training in Europe

**Originator of the exhibition and head of project: Norbert Wollschläger  
Design and texts: Helga Reuter-Kumpmann**

The texts are drawn from contributions to the conference on 'The History of Vocational Education and Training in Europe in a Comparative Perspective', organised by Cedefop in Florence in October 2002.

### Why the history of vocational education and training in Europe?

Because to decide where we are going, we must find out where we are coming from.

'The Lisbon European Council in March 2000 recognised the important role of education as an integral part of economic and social policies, as an instrument for strengthening Europe's competitive power world-wide, and as a guarantee for ensuring the cohesion of our societies and the full development of their citizens. The European Council set the strategic objective for the European Union to become the world's most dynamic knowledge-based economy. The development of high-quality vocational education and training is a crucial and integral part of this strategy, notably in terms of promoting social inclusion, cohesion, mobility, employability and competitiveness.'

'The enlargement of the European Union adds a new dimension and a number of challenges, opportunities and requirements to the work in the field of education and training. 'The Copenhagen Declaration', November 2002

*'With every step forward that we take, every problem that we solve, we not only discover new and unsolved problems but we also realise that where we thought we were standing on firm ground, it is in fact shaky and uncertain.'*

Karl R. Popper (1902-1994), school dropout, apprentice carpenter and philosopher of science

### What does this tell us?

Several surprises:

- that vocational education and training were the same in most European countries during the Middle Ages;
- why entirely new and different forms of vocational education and training arose in the various European countries during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- what common features have been created in Europe over the past 50 years.

It also shows that the history of vocational education and training is always our own history, and that our view need not be the same as the views of the historians who write about it.



## Common origins

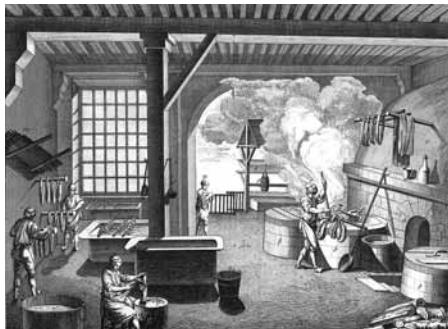
In nearly all European countries and for many centuries after the establishment of the guilds, the work of artisans and their vocational education and training were very similar.

Guilds were associations in which, from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, people who worked in the same trade or craft joined together in a town or city. Guilds wrote their own bylaws, rules that were binding upon all members of the guild. These rules and regulations defined how things were to be made and set 'consumer-friendly' prices. Merchandise was subject to strict quality control. The guild rules ensured that:

- masters' earnings were appropriate to their status;
- poorer members of the guild were taken care of, including the widows and orphans of guild members.

The guild rules also laid down the requirements for membership of the guild and for the training of apprentices and journeymen. In most cities, the guilds played an important political and economic role. But there were conflicts over their influence in civic affairs, e.g. when guilds prevented non-members from settling and plying their trade.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the guild system in Europe lost much of its impor-



*This beautiful illustration of silk-dyeing from Diderot and d'Alembert's 'Encyclopédie' clearly shows the various stages of work in this craft. But it does not show the danger of contact with poisonous substances - one of many reasons why the 'golden craft' also had a darker side for its practitioners.*

tance. Liberal economic doctrine, which encouraged the 'free play of forces', regarded the traditional guild system as an obstacle to competition and a hindrance to free trade.

## Vocational education and training in the guild system

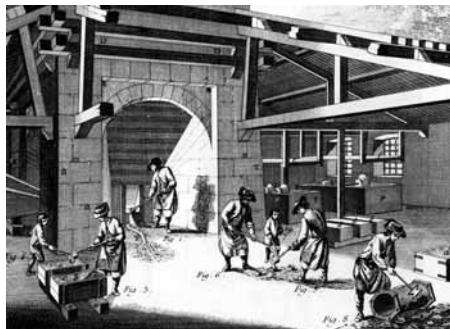
A strict hierarchy held sway throughout Europe under the guild system: apprentice, journeyman, master. The title of master was the only written evidence of competence, while 'certificates of apprenticeship' confirmed completion of the first stage of training. (Women - masters' wives or maid-servants - played only a subordinate role as assistants.)

Only after a trial period lasting several weeks were apprentices accepted into a guild. The family generally paid the master a fee to cover the apprentice's food and lodging. The apprenticeship generally lasted from two to four years, and longer in very specialised occupations.

The period of apprenticeship ended with a specialised examination when the apprentice was 'discharged'. Each trade or craft had its own customs for this 'discharge' and for the former apprentice's acceptance into the community of journeymen. Journeymen's vocational qualifications were recognised in other countries. Generally without family ties, they travelled from place to place, to augment and broaden their skills by learning from masters in other countries: an early form of occupational mobility in Europe. After journeymen had acquired sufficient experience, they would apply to a guild for admission as masters.



*This woodcut from a Dutch incunabulum (1470) shows artists and craftspeople with their tools: pigment grinder, painter, goldsmith, sculptor, organ-maker, clockmaker, and scribe.*



*The apprentices lived and worked with their masters' families. They assisted from dawn to dusk in the workshop, and had to do most of the heavy labour. Over the years, and always under the strict supervision of the journeymen and master, they learned the basic skills of the trade by observing, through direct instruction and by doing. Alongside dexterity in performing their tasks, the virtues instilled in the apprentices - frequently by means of corporal punishment - included industriousness, unconditional obedience and subordination to the rules of the guild.*

*Silk-dyeing, Diderot and d'Alembert's 'Encyclopédia'*

### An exception

**Russia** differs from most other European countries because no artisans' associations arose there during the Middle Ages which were comparable to the guilds.

When Tsar Peter I ascended the throne at age 17 in 1689, he dreamt of reigning over a mighty realm with a strong economy and a powerful navy.

In 1697, he sent emissaries throughout Europe to acquire allies against Turkey, but also to search for people who had the scientific, technical and craft skills that were lacking in his agrarian country.



*In the medieval printing trade, it was customary to subject apprentices to a cruel 'postulant's revel' at the end of their apprenticeship. By agreeing to undergo severe mistreatment, they had to prove that they were prepared to sacrifice their health for their work. At the same time, passing the cruel test meant that the new journeyman acquired the right to be taken care of by the master, to live in his family and to be cared for in the event of illness.*

Beginning in 1698, the Tsar encouraged mining, metallurgy and naval shipbuilding in order to secure and expand his country's borders. An entire education and training system was established: schools of navigation, ballistics, engineering and medicine, academies to train specialist workers, and primary schools.

The population showed little interest in sending their children to these schools, so Peter I passed strict laws to enforce vocational education and training. 'Top-down' control and the influence of political objectives remained a feature of vocational education and training for many centuries.

In 1868, the so-called 'Sequential Method' was established by Viktor Karlovich Della-Vos, who was the director of Moscow's Imperial Technical School. Apprentices began

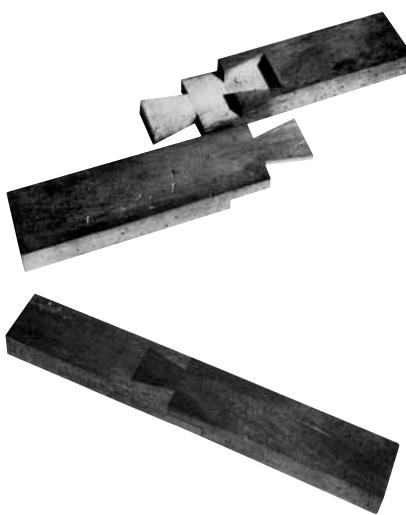


*Peter I travelled incognito along with his emissaries on their travels throughout Europe. Many of the emissaries learned various trades and professions as they went. Peter I learned the theoretical and mathematical basis for the art of shipbuilding, and also worked as a carpenter at a Dutch shipyard.*

by learning to perform and master simple tasks. In a precisely predetermined sequence, the tasks gradually became more challenging. After its presentation at the World Exhibition in Vienna in 1873, this method spread to many other European centres of education and training.

### Divergence

The different forms of vocational education and training in Europe have a number of causes such as:



*Even today, hundreds of courses of study in Europe are still based on the 'Sequential Method'. Models of wooden joints (Clair, 19th century)*

- the abolition of the guild system in the wake of political upheavals;
- the different pace of industrialisation in the various countries;
- the influence of political, philosophical, cultural and religious movements.

By the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, three basic models of vocational education and training for young people had developed in

Europe. The table does not reflect the situation today. Vocational education and training systems are too diverse and they change too quickly. But much of what had come about by that time in the various countries still applies or still has an influence.

**Britain** was where what we now call 'industrialisation' began in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The steam engine and the first mechanical spinning machines and looms were invented. Textile factories arose throughout the country. Countless people left rural areas and settled in the cities to find work.

This led to profound changes in society: the 'Industrial Revolution'.

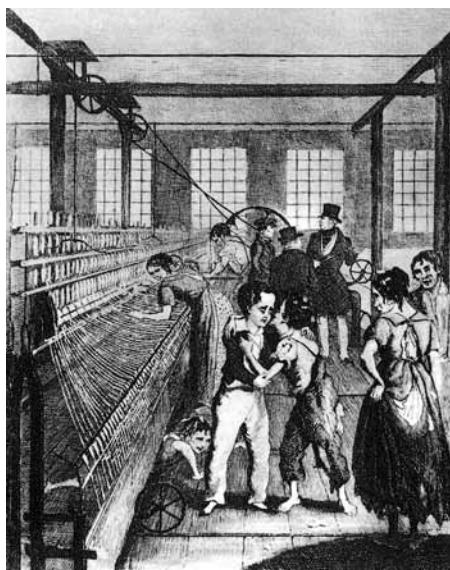
The guild system was abolished - along with the traditional seven-year apprenticeship. Untrained, low-paid labourers operated the machinery in the factories.

For many years, the rapidly growing industries had little need for skilled workers, so young people received no training.

Two ways of thinking, 'Liberalism' and 'Puritanism', influenced life and work at the time. They continue to influence vocational education in the 'liberal market model' today.

#### The three 'classical' models of vocational education and training:

	<b>The liberal market model: Britain</b>	<b>The state-regulated model: France</b>	<b>The dual corporate model: Germany</b>
Who determines how vocational education and training is organised?	Negotiated 'in the market place' between representatives of labour, management, and providers of vocational education and training.	The state	State-regulated chambers of craft trades, arranged by profession
Where does vocational education and training take place?	There are many options: in schools, in companies, in both schools and companies, via electronic media, etc.	In special schools, so-called 'production schools'	In predetermined alternation between companies and vocational schools ('dual model').
Who determines the content of vocational education and training?	Either the market or the individual companies, depending on what is needed at the moment. The content is not predetermined.	The state (together with the social partners). It does not aim primarily to reflect practice in enterprises, but relies instead on more general, theoretical training.	Entrepreneurs, unions, and the state jointly decide.
Who pays for vocational education and training?	As a general rule, the people who receive the vocational education and training are also the ones who pay for it. Some companies finance certain courses, which they themselves provide.	The state levies a tax on companies and finances vocational education and training, but only for a certain number of applicants each year.	Companies finance training within the enterprise and can set off the cost against tax. Trainees are paid a contractually determined sum. Vocational schools are financed by the state.
What qualifications are gained at the end of vocational education and training, and to what opportunities do these qualifications lead?	There is no monitoring of training, nor are there universally accredited final examinations.	There are state certificates which also entitle the best graduates to go on to higher courses.	The qualifications are generally recognised as entitling their holders to work in the relevant occupation and to go on to higher courses.



*As late as the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, child labour was an integral part of dreary daily life in factories, not only in Britain. Children were the cheapest source of labour and were used primarily for jobs under and between the closely spaced machines.*

Representatives of labour, employers, and the providers of vocational education and training negotiate 'in the market place' what sort of education and training should be offered.

'Liberalism', i.e. freedom from state intervention, - and from state protection - makes each person responsible for his or her own fate. The 'free play of forces' is supposed to foster the wellbeing of the nation and its businesses.

'Puritanism', a strict Protestant moral code, demands self-sacrifice and industriousness. Prosperity is regarded as the result of industriousness.

**France** played a leading role in the natural sciences in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Its colleges known



*Part-time schooling was compulsory for young people under the age of 16 from 1901. Lessons primarily stressed the 'moral' basis for work. Many forms of vocational education and training have existed side by side since then: in schools, in companies, in both simultaneously, via electronic learning, and through some state attempts to introduce 'modern apprenticeship training'.*

as 'grandes écoles', such as the Ecole Polytechnique, became a model for technical education in Europe.

France did not reach the high point of its industrialisation, however, until towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the wake of the French Revolution, the guild system was abolished in 1791, and the question of training for skilled workers remained unresolved for a long time.

Under the influence of the 'Enlightenment', with its emphasis on the humanities and sciences, the importance of well-planned childhood education for society and the individual was recognised for the first time.

Schools that had first been created for the orphans of soldiers were changed into "Ecole des arts et métiers", turning out foundry-workers, turners and carpenters for state factories instead of smiths and saddlers for the army.

In other respects, vocational education and training was similar to that in other countries: evening classes, civic and industry schools - but by no means for all young people.

Changes occurred when the Republic was established in 1871:

- Universal compulsory education sought to educate children in the spirit of the Republic, rather than in the Catholic spirit, as had formerly been the goal.
- After completing their compulsory education, 13-year-olds were to be 'taken off the streets' and to become accustomed to working.
- Trained workers were needed above all for modern mechanical and electrical engi-



*In the 'Ecole des arts et métiers', of which there were six in 1900, practical training took place in teaching workshops, while theory was taught in classrooms.*



*Today, one million young people attend vocational and technical secondary schools. An equal number attend classical secondary education. Roughly 300,000 are trained as apprentices in enterprises.*

neering in order to strengthen the nation's economic power and military might.

Two types of public schools were introduced to educate highly qualified, specialist workers and to train manual and clerical workers. The French state continues to regulate vocational education and training today.

In **Germany**, mechanisation of textile manufacture did not begin until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. Afterwards, however, development occurred rapidly in the textile, iron, steel and mining industries. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the electrical, chemical and automobile industries were becoming increasingly important.

Freedom of employment began to spread from around 1811 in Germany, and the guilds were disbanded. This situation did not last very long, however. Traditional craft education and training were legally reinstated in 1897.

At least two reasons played a role in this:

- Strong international competition caused an increase in the need for skilled workers in industrial and administrative positions.
- The workers' movement was becoming increasingly strong, so the government set out to instil its conservative political beliefs into young people. The traditional world of life and work in the craft trades was regarded as a good basis for the social and political integration of apprentices.

In the course of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, apprentices often attended 'continuation schools' in the evenings or on Sundays. These repeated the curriculum taught at primary



*The 'modern' branches of industry took over the traditional relationship between master and apprentice. Training contracts were signed with young people, who were then trained to become 'skilled workers'. Large businesses set up teaching workshops of their own - like this one in the milling division at the Borsig company.*

*Photo: Deutsches Technikmuseum Berlin*

schools, and imparted the theoretical knowledge needed for particular trades.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these schools had developed into 'vocational schools'. In addition to vocational education and training, students were also taught citizenship skills. There was a similar development in Austria, where the vocational education and training system is very like the German.

Today, both elements are still part of apprenticeship: learning on the job and in vocational school.

That is why it is referred to as the 'dual system' of training.

**The Netherlands** gradually began to establish industries from about 1860. These included iron foundries, factories making machinery, shipyards and many types of food-stuff production.

Under the influence of occupation by France, the guilds were finally broken up in 1806.



*Many companies introduced sports and athletics programmes to improve the health of their apprentices and to strengthen their bonds with one another and with the company. ('Fitness' at AEG, 1927)*



*Classes in the 'ambachtschool' were a genuine alternative to apprenticeship. The exclusive goal, both practical and theoretical, was to train students for jobs.*

At first, the skilled workers who were needed came from abroad or were trained in a few schools. From 1860, burgeoning industry needed many more skilled workers, so full-time craft and technical schools were established throughout the country.

The State gradually took over the burden of financing these schools, many of which were initially private 'ambachtscholen', i.e. vocational schools. These schools remained successful well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Another type of school, the 'burgeravond-school', was attended in the evening after work. The original intention of these schools was to complement the general education offered in elementary schools. Very soon, however, these schools were reorganised to meet occupational needs.

The apprenticeship system has played a certain role in crafts and smaller trades. 'Dual' education on the job and in school became more widespread after World War II, but has still not acquired the importance that 'full-time school' education continues to enjoy.

**Finland**, which was ruled for many centuries by Sweden and then by Russia, concentrated industrialisation on the manufacture and processing of agricultural and forestry



*It is curious that for many years, the Finnish word for 'occupation' (elatuskeino) also meant 'living'. This shows that an independent existence comprised all forms of activity.*

products, and on the machinery and tools needed for these tasks.

Finland became an autonomous principality within the Russian Tsarist Empire in 1809. Finnish society began to reorganise itself, and politics, the economy and education underwent far-reaching changes.

Interest initially focused on educating the rural population: itinerant advisers and specialist schools trained rural people to work more efficiently in agriculture. For a long time, responsibility for establishing industries and for vocational education and training were in one and the same hand. Around 1840, one of the first national authorities for the encouragement of production established the earliest craft and commercial schools.

Since 1890, the unanimous desire to escape from Russian influence prompted new and greater efforts to encourage industry and schools. This led to the establishment of state-run, full-time, vocational schools for girls and boys. Alongside occupational knowledge, students were also taught citizenship skills.



*It is interesting that commercial subjects in trade schools are regarded as part of general education rather than as vocational education and training. Perhaps this is not surprising in a trading nation.*



*Although there have been political efforts to introduce training in the form of company apprenticeships, the number of trainees is quite small. Most young people today learn their occupation through education in school.*



*Public teaching workshops and full-time schools (like those in France) began in 1884. Combined training on the job and in vocational school was also introduced: a 'dual system' similar to that of Germany and Austria.*

## Unity in diversity

Is **Switzerland** a model for Europe? Four official languages are spoken in the Swiss Confederation, whose people come from four different cultural backgrounds: German, French, Italian and Rhaeto-Romanic.

This diversity is reflected in the system of vocational education and training. The Swiss economy has flourished for many centuries:

- ❑ guilds in the Middle Ages,
- ❑ watchmaking and textile industries since the 18<sup>th</sup> century,
- ❑ engineering in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century,
- ❑ and many other branches of industry since then.

It was a long time before the state became involved in vocational education and training. There was no federal support for vocational educational and training facilities until 1884.



*A third element has been added to the two in the dual system. This 'third place of learning' forges links between learning on the job and in school. For example, it provides introductory courses so that students can try new approaches and make mistakes, learning to master challenging tasks without pressure.*

How does Swiss vocational education and training differ today from that in other European countries?

Laws about vocational education and training apply to the entire country, but allow for variation from canton to canton.

As in all other countries, the traditions of vocational education and training have deep local roots in the cantons and are resistant to drastic change.

Nonetheless, good ideas, experimentation and improvements in one canton often lead to cautious reforms nation-wide.

Tradition and renewal in vocational education and training are no longer mutually exclusive - an example for Europe to follow.

## 'Aptitude'

Entrance Examinations are found nearly everywhere nowadays. For many activities there is a procedure designed to test and evaluate applicants' suitability - for admission to school, to vocational training and to employment.



*Optometer to test eyesight and ability to judge distance. Industry soon developed techniques to select potential apprentices according to attributes that were deemed important by employers: intellectual capacity, reaction time, dexterity, strength, a good eye, ability to judge distance, etc.*



*The types of demand made on vocational abilities have changed. Creativity, individual responsibility, and the ability to adapt well and quickly to others play increasingly important roles.*

*Photo: Uwe Völkner*

Who measures what and why? An interesting question!

The first procedures to measure vocational aptitude were developed by German psychologists during the First World War. The tests were supposed to show which candidates would be best able to drive a motor vehicle under wartime conditions.

The selection process was obviously designed to help the German army. But did it help the candidates who were selected or rejected?

After the war, the Social Democratic government and the trade unions used so-called 'psycho-techniques' in other fields: young people were to be selected for vocational training according to their abilities rather than their backgrounds. Aptitude tests were also intended to reduce dangers to the general public, e.g. on the railway.

Other countries, especially France, borrowed many of these psycho-techniques and developed new ones. The International Association for Psycho-Techniques was founded.



*Representatives of six European nations signed the agreements in Rome in 1957 which set up the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom.*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*

ciation for Psycho-Techniques was founded.

Nowadays, aptitude tests increasingly serve to discover a person's strengths and to encourage further development to the benefit of the person tested and the employer.

## Convergence

### Europe and vocational education and training - an issue for more than 50 years

Although there was nothing in this agreement about vocational education and training, it nonetheless laid the groundwork for subsequent joint activities in this field.

In 1953, the governing body of the ECSC, the 'High Authority', referred in its first report not only to economic but also to social reasons for joint action. For example, vocational education and training would improve occupational safety in the mining industry, where accidents killed or injured hundreds of miners each year.



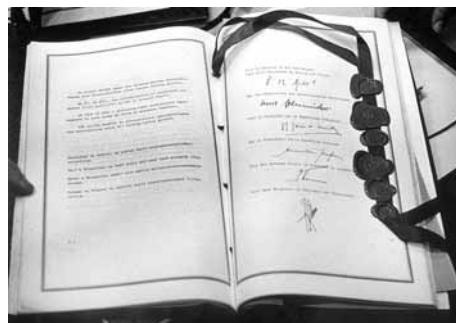
*In Paris in 1951, representatives of six European countries signed the agreement that established the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). From left to right are: the foreign ministers of Belgium (Paul van Zeeland), Luxembourg (Joseph Blech), Italy (Carlo Sforza) and France (Robert Schuman), the German Chancellor (Konrad Adenauer), and the foreign minister of the Netherlands (Dirk Uipko Stikker).*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*

The following programme was gradually implemented after 1953: collection of documentation; organisation of regular meetings and exchange of information among those responsible for vocational education and training in the Member States; and establishment of a 'Permanent Commission for Vocational Training'.

Another important initiative was the financing of vocational training for unemployed miners.

The need for vocational education and training was expressed more clearly in the Treaties of Rome than in the ECSC agreement. It was



*The Treaty signed by the six Member States in 1965 came into force in 1967 and set up the European Community, the EC. This acted as the executive for the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom.*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*

described, for example, as a means of achieving 'a harmonious social situation with a full-employment policy'. Joint action in the field of vocational education and training was identified as a precondition for the free mobility of the workforce and the exchange of young workers within the EEC.

### **Europe and vocational education and training - common interests?**

On 12 May 1960, the Council of Ministers decided to speed up implementation of the vocational education and training programme of 1957. The aim was to overcome the shortage of skilled workers, to alleviate the high levels of unemployment in some regions, such as the south of Italy, and to improve workers' living conditions.

Following consultations with experts in the Member States, trade unions and employers, the Commission put forward a ten-point programme for joint action. France and Germany were particularly opposed to the plan



*Student unrest in the late 1960s demonstrated the seriousness of the crisis facing the education system in nearly every country.*

to transfer responsibilities in the area of vocational education and training to the Community.

There had been much political opposition in the 1960s, but this changed after the summit meeting in The Hague in 1969: the social partners were now to be involved in resolving social issues, and vocational education and training were to be encouraged.

The economic crisis after the Yom Kippur war of 1973 reinforced this trend.

In 1975 the Council of Ministers issued a directive setting up a European research and documentation centre for vocational education and training, Cedefop.

### **The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training**

The idea of a common policy on vocational education and training was slow to develop and met with repeated serious opposition from Member States.

It was feared that tried and tested forms of training might be replaced.

A change occurred after 1970.



*The choice of Berlin as the site of the Cedefop offices was intended to demonstrate that the western section of the city was part and parcel of the EC. After the fall of the Wall and the reunification of Germany, it was decided in 1993 to transfer Cedefop to Thessaloniki.*



*In 1972, Denmark, the United Kingdom and Ireland signed the treaty of accession to the EC. (The photograph shows the Irish Foreign Minister, Patrick Hillary, and Prime Minister, John Lynch.) Greece joined the EC in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1986, Austria, Finland and Sweden followed in 1995.*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*



Governments and trade unions in particular took up the question of initial and continuing training. Vocational education and training was to be improved through research. Institutions to carry this out were set up in many countries.

In response to a proposal from the Economic and Social Committee of the EC, the Council of Ministers resolved on 10 February 1975 to establish the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Cedefop for short, with its offices in West Berlin.

Among the tasks with which Cedefop was charged were the following:

- documenting developments, research and institutions in vocational education and training;
- disseminating information;
- promoting initiatives to facilitate a concerted approach to vocational education and training;
- acting as a meeting point for the parties concerned.

Vocational education and training policy invariably touches on the regulation of society. It is concerned not only with teaching, with skills, knowledge and economic performance, but also with social institutions.

Equal representation of the four interested parties is therefore crucial to the work of the Centre. The Management Board of Cedefop is composed of representatives of government and employers' and employees' or-



*The Lisbon European Council decided in 2000 that: 'The development of high quality vocational education and training is a crucial and integral part of this strategy, notably in terms of promoting social inclusion, cohesion, mobility, employability and competitiveness.'*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*

ganisations in all Member States, and of the EU Commission.

The Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) and the other states in the European Economic Area send observers.

Through its technical and scientific work, the Centre makes a vital contribution to the further development of vocational education and training in Europe: from divergence to convergence.

### **Europe and vocational education and training common paths**

Collaboration in vocational education and training has become ever closer since the mid 1980s. Alongside individual 'action programmes', the foundations have gradually been laid for joint political action.

At the European Council in Lisbon in 2000, heads of state and government dealt for the first time with issues related to education policy.

### **'Action programmes'**

European action programmes were introduced in 1986. One example is a common action programme known as 'Leonardo da Vinci', which has become a testbed for innovation in the field of lifelong learning. Since 1995, this programme has supported projects in which educational institutions, companies, chambers of commerce, etc. from different countries collaborate to encourage mobility and innovation, and to help people to improve their occupational skills throughout their lives.

### **The European Training Foundation**

began activities in 1995 as an EU agency working for over 40 non-EU countries, including the candidate countries, in order to assist and support in reforming and modernising their vocational education systems. The Foundation works closely with Cedefop.

### **Lisbon European Council, March 2000**

The European Union set the strategic goal of becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world by 2010.



*'Since 1 January 2000, training skills acquired abroad can be registered in a personal document, the "Europass-Training". In March 2002, following the request of the Lisbon European Council, the Commission recommended a common format for curricula vitae. The new "European CV" (curriculum vitae) is different from most other CVs in that it emphasises the importance of non-formal and informal learning.'*

*Photo: European Commission Audiovisual Library*

## Stockholm 2001

The European Council set three goals:

- 'improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems in the European Union,
  - facilitating access for all to education and training systems,
  - and opening up education and training systems to the wider world.'
- A single framework for transparency of competences and qualifications,
  - a system of credit transfer in vocational education and training,
  - common criteria and principles for quality in vocational education and training,
  - common principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning,
  - lifelong guidance.

## The way ahead

The 'Bruges-Copenhagen Process' shows that shared goals for full and harmonious personal and working lives can be successfully developed and pursued in Europe.

The process is named after the 'Bruges' initiative of the heads of vocational education and training (October 2001), which resulted in November 2002 in the education ministers of 31 European countries (EU Member States, candidate countries and those in the European Economic Area - the EEA ) adopting the 'Copenhagen Declaration' on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training.

Economic and social developments in Europe over the last decade have increasingly underlined the need for a European dimension to education and training. Furthermore, the transition towards a knowledge-based economy capable of sustainable economic growth

with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion brings new challenges to the development of human resources.' Quoted from 'The Copenhagen Declaration'

The Bruges-Copenhagen process supports the 'aim to increase voluntary cooperation in vocational education and training, in order to promote mutual trust, transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications, and thereby establishing a basis for increasing mobility and facilitating access to lifelong learning.' Quoted from 'The Copenhagen Declaration'.

The Member States, EEA countries, the Social Partners and the Commission have begun cooperation at a practical level on a number of concrete outputs:

- A single framework for transparency of competences and qualifications,
- a system of credit transfer in vocational education and training,
- common criteria and principles for quality in vocational education and training,
- common principles for the validation of non-formal and informal learning,
- lifelong guidance.



*The future of vocational education and training in Europe is closely linked to the goal of improving 'quality of work' by improving people's employability, qualifications, performance and health.*



**Wolf-Dietrich  
Greinert**

Professor of  
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University of Berlin



# European vocational training ‘systems’ – some thoughts on the theoretical context of their historical development

**There are few long-term studies in which the development of vocational education and training (VET) is placed in a larger societal framework. Consequently, there is limited understanding as to why VET has evolved quite differently even in countries with similar economic and social development. In his reflections on a possible theoretical framework for analysing the historical development of European VET systems, Wolf-Dietrich Greinert takes a three-step approach searching for common principles of the various systems. VET is firstly embedded in national work cultures manifest in labour law. It is the work cultures which form the basis of specific VET regimes. Work cultures and VET regimes in turn come with leading ideas, which legitimise a certain didactic orientation. Based on a diachronic analysis from the Industrial Revolution onwards, three general types of VET systems are identified: the liberal market economy model in Britain, the state-regulated bureaucratic model in France and the dual-corporate model in Germany.**

‘The transition from school to the world of work is very different in Germany and Britain. The contrast between these two countries is probably the most marked in Europe, although the British seem to feel that all mainland countries south of Scandinavia use a watered-down version of the German system or a variation on its theme. We consider that Germany has the most pronounced version of what we would call the typical continental model.’ These comments by Liverpool sociologist Ken Roberts (Roberts 2000, p. 65 et seq.) may not be purely objective, but we believe that their pointedness does demonstrate the difficulty even experts have in portraying the European vocational training landscape in a way that is easy to comprehend. If this applies to the variety of existing training systems, how much more difficult must it be to reduce the highly complex historical development of these qualification systems to a common denominator to which experts from various disciplines can relate? The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) has risen to the challenge in its project on the History of Vocational Education and Training in Europe in a Comparative Perspective (<http://history.cedefop.eu.int>). How might one go about finding solutions to the problem?

Paradoxically, the process of industrialisation in Europe did not produce one uniform vocational training model. On the contrary, it more or less destroyed the roughly homogeneous craft/trade-based vocational training methods which had established themselves over the centuries, and replaced them with a myriad of ‘modern’ education systems, which at first glance seem to have very little in common. Given their diversity, however, it would be wise to be careful with the term ‘education and vocational training system’. Walter Georg rightly pointed out that academic system theory can only refer to a ‘system of vocational training’ if the practice in question ‘has become independent and

## I.

Historian Hermann Heimpel claims that what makes Europe so European is that its history is the history of nations. However, this perception of nations as the building blocks



has permanently established itself as a selective communication network in the process of social differentiation of specific functional subsystems. This requires a large degree of self-referential unity and disassociation from internal social structures' (Georg 1997, p. 159).

Georg states that these kinds of independent vocational training systems, characterised by self-referential internal structures and processing mechanisms, exist purely in German-speaking areas under the name 'dual system'. In other countries, both school-based educational methods and forms of in-company initial and continuing training are founded on the logical processes of different social subsystems. In the case of school-based vocational training it is the meritocratic logic of the general education system; in the case of in-company training it is the logic of company-based production and work organisation. Georg concludes, 'The unique German approach of maintaining a self-referential vocational training system independent of schools and businesses makes any attempt to compare it with other "systems" seem like an ethnocentric misunderstanding, because usually no common means for comparison can be found' (Georg 1997, p. 159).

Georg believes that the model for explaining specific national differences in job training for the masses must be expanded to incorporate the constellations of the prevailing cultural and functional-structural relations within a society, that is culture and structure. A society's values, norms, attitudes, convictions and ideals shape education systems, work organisation and professional relationships as well as the more or less stable interaction between specific national job training and other social subsystems such as general education and the various employment system paradigms.

If we take the objections raised above into account, we can extend or refine the criteria for international comparisons of vocational training so that we can distinguish clearly between 'vocational training systems' and 'vocational training models'. The term 'system' should only apply to genuinely independent, self-referential vocational training models. Additionally, a category superordinate to vocational training methods is necessary to define operational structural models and the interaction between

the social subsystems relevant to vocational training. We propose the term 'work culture'.

## II.

The concept of 'work culture' encompasses a series of methodological problems, however. How can we classify the internal correlations between these national subcultures appropriately? Which principles of orientation and which paradigms are decisive? How can we avoid oversimplified idiosyncratic interpretations or biased paradigms?

While seeking a viable way of narrowing down this highly complex topic, we came across a study by Bercusson, Mückenberger and Supiot (1992). They attempt to establish a methodical approach to comparing legal and work cultures (Mückenberger 1998). They used a double testing procedure to examine selected fields in Britain, France and Germany. One aim was to discover what impressions of dependent work jurists from the three countries have which influence their actions and decisions ('work culture' in day-to-day legal routine). Another was to learn what impressions and experiences social competitors in the cited countries have of 'the law' in general and of 'labour law' in particular ('legal culture' in everyday working life).

The study (Bercusson et al., 1992) resulted in the presentation of three paradigmatic contexts incorporating the labour legislation of the three countries. Each paradigm lends shape and form to the prevailing legislation it describes (Mückenberger 1998, p. 37 et seq.).

'In Britain the production relationship is regarded as no more than a market process in which the market participants are members of society, i.e. employees, employers and partners to collective agreement. The image of law is correspondingly negative, characterised by abstentionism, or non-intervention in the market process. "Rule of law, not of men" is the appropriate paradigm.'

'In France even the production relationship is seen as a political entity. The players involved are the state and its executors, known as inspecteurs de travail. This emphasis on the political aspect finds expres-



sion in the recognition of the *ordre public social*. This is a regulation giving central control of working life to the state (not to the market as in Britain or to the interplay between private autonomy and the legal system as in Germany). The paradigmatic background to this Republican version is the *majesté de la loi*, the greatest achievement of the *Grande Révolution*.

□ In Germany the production relationship is regarded as a kind of community which has a tradition of reciprocal responsibility and consideration of the whole. The rules of this social community are, as in Britain, seldom imposed directly by politicians. The social competitors themselves set, elaborate and correct them to some degree. However, they play a more active role than social players in Britain, following a cautious, specific case-related process of adaptation, which arises from interaction between judges and jurists. The paradigms of the "civil constitutional state", private autonomy and supervision by the law characterise this.'

The three countries also have different priorities in the area of industrial relations and labour law. In England there is a primacy of economics, in France a primacy of politics and in Germany a primacy of society. The authors of the above-mentioned study feel that these also encompass the countries' differing priorities of 'security' and 'freedom'. Social security was developed earlier and more completely in Germany than in France and Britain. However, it is accompanied by a loss of freedom. In France the right of political articulation, action and organisation, even militancy, have priority over social security. In Britain freedom also takes precedence over security, not in the same way as in France, but in the form of market activity and collective bargaining. According to the study, in France freedom is the domain of politics. Freedom is achieved within (and through) the state. In Britain the issue of freedom from the state dominates (Mückenberger 1998, p. 38).

This model illustrates that 'work culture', like culture in general, actually conveys a 'vague idea in a consistent context' (Georg 1997, p. 161). The methods for approaching the specific national differences have certainly not been exhausted in the above discussion. However, we can already deduce something that culturalistic-oriented investigations have

confirmed as a general tendency: the incredible persistence of culturally inherent values and traditions and national mentalities (e.g. Hofstede 1993). These factors have made the transformation of social systems notoriously difficult.

Applied to our task of identifying European vocational training models, this would mean that although they represent a specific response to changing technical socio-economic and political problems, their structural change processes are governed by a considerable and dogged tendency to cling to tradition. Tradition and modernity are not adversaries. They are actually identical. We can talk of a specific tradition-bound modernity.

### III.

Of course, we could consider individual countries in isolation when describing the historical development of vocational training in Europe, and restrict ourselves to examining and compiling as complete a summary of the relevant sources and their inherent interpretations as possible, thus presenting an account of historical events. However, the academic and practical use of such a small-scale venture would be limited. As already mentioned, this study is concerned with expounding specifically European aspects. This requires us to analyse dialogue and cooperation which may have occurred between European nations, and of which we knew little or nothing until now, on reshaping their vocational training under the influence or pressures of the changes sparked by industrialisation. What specific principles, organisational forms and learning concepts from this dialogue have proved to be trend-setting and have left their mark in the form of national institutions?

To date historical vocational training research has been able to identify three 'classical', i.e. exemplary, European training models, which formed during the first phase of the Industrial Revolution in response to the erosion of the craft/trade-based vocational training model (Greinert 1999). They are: the liberal market economy model in Britain, the state-regulated bureaucratic model in France and the dual-corporate model in Germany.

The liberal model, first realised in Britain, forms a market relationship between the



functional subsystems of labour, capital and education emerging from the social evolution process influenced by industrial capitalism. The main protagonists of labour and capital, who should be freed from traditional restraints as far as possible, also maintain free market relations with the new education subsystem. Structural disadvantages prevent workers from using the education subsystem to market themselves as a 'qualified' production factor. Thus they must sell themselves as mere human resources and accept the social consequences, which can be disastrous (e.g. child labour).

The corresponding market model of professional qualifications has the following characteristics:

- (1) The quantitative relationship between training supply and training demand is regulated by the market. Those supplying various skills and those demanding them can meet on a voluntary basis in a - in principal - 'free' market (i.e. training market not primarily controlled by the state).
- (2) The type of professional qualifications (qualitative aspect) ultimately depends on their projected application on the labour market and in the actual businesses and authorities. The transferability of professional qualifications between companies varies according to the market, but is usually fairly limited.
- (3) Training practices are not particularly standardised. Schooling, in-company training, alternating school and in-company training and organisationally and technically advanced training methods can all be marketed (e.g. as distance learning courses or via e-learning). However, few widely accepted examinations and certificates exist.
- (4) The cost of training is borne individually, usually by the person requiring training. However, businesses also often pay fees if they are supplying the training themselves. In this case training courses - usually only partial occupational qualifications - are subject to the principle of cost minimisation.

- (5) Countries with market models of vocational training distinguish sharply between general vocational education and specific vocational training, both as definitions and within institutions. Vocational education is always conducted in state schools, vocational

training stems from voluntary agreements between market players.

The bureaucratic, state-regulated model, first implemented rigorously in France, uses the new education subsystem to create a political, power-based relationship between capital and labour. For general socio-political reasons, structurally disadvantaged workers are 'qualified' with the help of a state-regulated and state-financed education sector (which also includes vocational training!). Workers can then confront the capital subsystem, again within a state-regulated framework. This model contains the risk that vocational training institutions may be too strongly influenced by the logical structures of the general educational system and degenerate to a subordinate branch of it.

The corresponding school-based model of vocational training has the following characteristics:

- (1) The quantitative relations between training demand and concrete vocational training are determined by state bodies or bureaucrats. Since this kind of demand planning cannot go into great detail, it functions most effectively when it is based on a limited contingent of basic professions.
- (2) The types of occupational qualifications (qualitative aspect) are less dependent on their immediate application in companies. Abstraction, verbalisation and theorisation usually form the central principles of vocational schools' curricula. Simple occupations characterised by practical activities cannot implement these principles in a desirable fashion.
- (3) School training models are usually characterised by a clear differentiation of individual training course types. Admission to the various schools, which are starkly scaled according to qualification demand and the leaving certificate obtainable, normally depends on the various leaving certificates from general education schools or on special entrance examinations.
- (4) Vocational training in schools is financed by the state budget. Their inherent limitations do not, as a rule, allow extension of vocational schools to accommodate all members of a school year. Seen also from this perspective, school vocational training models seem mainly to embody an elitist system



which primarily focuses on imparting higher-level professional qualifications.

(5) School vocational training models are almost necessarily subject to the 'escalator effect', i.e. their courses have a tendency to keep moving up the qualifications ladder, at least in the medium term. Consequently, new training courses or institutions must constantly be devised to replace the lower qualification levels. Thus, vocational training for all is in an almost permanent state of crisis.

The dual-corporatistic model, which only exists in German-speaking areas, uses a new independent 'vocational training' subsystem as a means of communication between labour, capital and state. The intervention of legally revived, traditional 'intermediary' institutions (the state-regulated chamber system), which administer and manage the qualification of workers on behalf of the state, at least allows some limitation of state and market deficiencies in one important public field of conflict. However, the clear organisational and legal detachment of the vocational training system particularly from the 'higher-level education' system (grammar schools, universities) does create considerable problems.

The corresponding dual-system model of vocational training has the following characteristics:

(1) Dual vocational training systems are largely isolated from the general education sector. They have their own organisational structure and training regulations as they are mainly run privately. Their twofold market and bureaucratic regulation pattern requires complicated coordination.

(2) Companies are the primary learning location in this 'cooperative' system. Young people sign a private training contract with the company as employees with special trainee status. As they also attend vocational school they are subject to the rules of the general education system.

(3) Employers, trade unions and state bodies jointly decide on career profiles and training ordinances in a regulated process. They are legitimised through an act of parliament.

(4) Individual companies usually pay for the training. The costs can be declared as operating expenses for tax purposes. The company provides its trainees with a 'remuner-

ation' which is fixed by collective bargaining. Vocational schools are financed by the public sector.

(5) Dual vocational training systems have a traditional, craft-based background. Three traditional principles have endured to this day. The principle of vocation (*Berufsprinzip*), the principle of self-administration, which applies to the main, in-company part at least and the principle of learning while working.

We believe that these three vocational training models constitute prototypes, which the European nations' search for new ways of approaching vocational training for all in the wake of industrialisation has generated (Greinert 1999). We feel that this process does not contain any further models which Europe could employ as a point of reference and maintain that all other vocational training models which arose in the various European countries throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are variations and/or combinations of these three prototypes or basic models.

#### IV.

The European dimension of conceptional reflection in the formation of specific basic types of vocational training in the industrial age becomes clear if one attempts to question the findings outlined in Sections II. and III. with regard to the ideational context. One is tempted to adopt the characteristic Western dialectic of thinking in threes, since our search process can effortlessly identify three ideas which specifically interact. They are tradition (the vocational principle), rationalism (the academic principle) and liberalism (the market principle).

Thus three central legitimisation principles of European thought form the ideational context to the three vocational training models. The principles do not only apply to the models' regulatory level, but also structure their operational level, i.e. the actual vocational training activities of the specific learning types. This approach has much in common with the three ideal 'qualification styles' devised by Thomas Deißinger (Deißinger 1998). However, there are several pertinent differences.

We define our typology of legitimisation models for European vocational training as follows:



(1) Vocational orientation: According to the modern, post-Enlightenment view, this legitimisation model is ideally based on tradition, i.e. on the one hand on real vocational practices implemented in Europe since the Middle Ages, on the other hand on occupations as a tried and tested way of categorising organisational forms of human resources. From this perspective, occupations are understood as specific combinations of the elements work, qualifications and earnings. The activities they involve are determined according to traditions and social arrangements.

The core elements in the individual occupations are grouped into characteristic exchange models. On the one hand, as a standardised social exchange model a profession forms the central link between social relationships, which are determined according to their 'role'. On the other hand, professions are the primary source of self-identity, i.e. of the image individuals have of themselves and through which they present themselves to their environment. This has not changed fundamentally in Europe.

The 'profession' category allows a training model to develop the capacity to transfer economic, social and pedagogical issues and problems to a system-based logical framework and to process them productively. This capability, which modern system theory terms 'self-reference', can engender an independent training system.

(2) Academic orientation: This legitimisation model is based on the conviction that academic rationality should apply when setting the organisational didactic principle for vocational qualifications. Practical access to the material world should no longer be gained by retrospectively applying scientific findings to the tradition-bound experiences of individual companies and professions, but by subjugating all practices to scientific monitoring and experiments.

The concept of attaining vocational qualifications via an academic approach is an immediate product of the Enlightenment and thus embodies the spirit of modernity, that is, that science, particularly mathematics and the exact natural sciences, will rule the world, especially in the field of technology. 1795 saw the foundation of the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris as the central initial training institution for engineers. This was the start-

ing point for the standardising didactic principle of vocational training through specialised academic training as a framework for all levels of vocational qualification.

Strictly knowledge-based vocational training models are most effective in so-called 'higher-level', theory-oriented (i.e. academic) professions. However, achieving the necessary integration of intellectual qualifications and the acquisition of the relevant practical skills remains a problem.

(3) Market orientation: This legitimisation model is based on the teachings and principles of economic liberalism and classical national economics. The central postulate is that people are capable of organising their social interaction efficiently, particularly their working life, on the basis of their own reason and insights.

Along with the principles of a consistent decentralised economic order, private property, free-market competition, free choice of profession and job, the merit principle, etc., economic liberalism rejects any state intervention in the economy, which is in the hands of autonomous individuals, and demands that state policy be limited to satisfying a few basic general requirements. This includes the avoidance of compulsion (e.g. imposition of legally regulated 'duties'). Strict consideration of the individual's responsibility for him/herself should not only be interpreted as an element of freedom. It also entirely fulfils liberals' expectations of the function of a social adaptation mechanism.

Market-oriented qualification systems impart only marketable qualifications, i.e. company-specific practical knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for concrete positions. Young people are not required to gain any particular qualification after completing compulsory schooling. Their integration into the social and labour system is primarily dependent on market pressures.

The three legitimisation models of modern vocational training approaches in Europe outlined above are based on central ideas which can be seen as the new principles of order for human interaction and modern interpretations of the world since the Enlightenment. However, in cases of tradition orientation, significant doubts may surface. We feel they are unfounded. The most famous Bildungsroman of the modern age,



Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile*, deals with the problem of religious orientation. In view of the Enlightenment's philosophical relativity of all religions, Rousseau saw no rational reason for one particular choice. All religions of revelation presented equally plausible options. However, Rousseau surprisingly recommends his pupils to stick to the religion of their ancestors and justifies this by referring to tradition. Viewed critically, this position could be seen as overtaking the Enlightenment. The vocational training expert Herwig Blankertz made the following comment: 'Tradition is the arsenal of values which we acquire not because our sense tells us to, but because we believe in it thanks to the heritage that previous generations have passed down to us (...). Rousseau's pedagogical approach did not overtax the mind but inserted the power of tradition into the rational system of natural upbringing as the last word on legitimising human orientation to norms' (Blankertz 1982, p. 78 et seq.).

We believe that vocational, academic and market orientation should be considered as didactic orientation examples in all European vocational training models, even in those in which a specific structural or regulatory model seems to dominate. In the German system, the principles of market orientation (e.g. in vocational continuing training) and academic orientation (in practically all vocational schools) join the vocational principle as important factors at the operational level. The French training model incorporates occupational and market orientation alongside academic orientation. Even the strongly market-oriented British training model is also structured according to occupations and according to the specialist vocational subject system in the country's further education institutions.

Anyone wishing to compare the profile of the European method with an alternative professional training model need look no further than Japan, particularly Japanese big industry. This is something completely different. One of the striking contrasts is the lack of any kind of vocational orientation. In contrast to Europe, Japan has no 'work culture'. Neither the employment system nor the education system is structured according to specialist vocational models. 'In Japan the focus of the qualification process is not on specialist content, as is the case over here, but more on the social context of the activity. Mastery of one's 'subject' does not

bring social acceptance. Instead the Japanese value readiness and the ability to productively fit into the concrete working situation, i.e. in the employing company' (Deutschmann 1989, p. 240). In Japan corporate identity has replaced 'work culture'. 'The company's own organisational and qualification structures replace external standardisation of work and training, professional identity is replaced by unconditional loyalty to the firm' (Georg 1993, p. 195).

## V.

To summarise, the observations we have presented so far have produced three structural models of vocational training in Europe. Viewed from three different perspectives, each demonstrates characteristics which can be combined into a higher typological unit.

(1) From a work culture perspective, in Type A the economy takes priority. The qualification model is regulated primarily by market orientation. At the operational level, the functional needs of the company or the actual position are the leading didactic principle.

(2) From a work culture perspective, in Type B politics take priority. The qualification model is primarily regulated by bureaucratic control (on a legal basis). At the operational (learning) level, the academic principle is the main didactic tenet.

(3) From a work culture perspective, in Type C society takes priority. The qualification model is primarily regulated by dual control, i.e. a combination of market and bureaucracy. At the operational (learning) level, the vocational principle is the determining didactic orientation.

These three types of vocational orientation for the working masses have been the building blocks for vocational training models in various European countries since the Industrial Revolution. As we stated, they have a great tenacity. A universal decisive move away from this tradition cannot be perceived in Europe. The modernisation and reform of vocational training models in Britain and France in the last 20 years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century provide evidence of this. In both cases it is clear that the central reform initiatives (National Vocational Qualifications and al-



ternance training respectively) adhered strictly to the traditional patterns of qualification models developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Greinert 1999). Politicians in both Britain and France tried to push through alternatives, but ultimately they had 'no choice'. The European structures and control models established in the first Industrial Revolution are displaying remarkable endurance. Despite changing technical and socio-economic influences, even despite wide-ranging explicit political attempts to replace the traditional model with allegedly more attractive and more effective alternatives, the typical procedures and organisational structures of the classic European models presented here maintain the upper hand in the countries in which they originated.

This experience is likely to be repeated in the case of the dual system in German-speak-

ing areas, although to date no generally accepted conclusive concept for transforming this qualification system has emerged. This is not because no one has put forward any convincing ideas and proposals on how to take this necessary step. The German dilemma is simply a result of the fact that, since the Vocational Training Act of 1969, politicians have refused to assume their defined role in the 'cooperative' division-of-labour vocational training system of adapting vocational qualifications to constantly evolving technical and socio-economic circumstances. The last two German governments provide excellent examples of politicians' unwillingness to act. Several years ago a renowned politician remarked that in general Germany did not have a problem with devising concepts, but with implementing them. This also seems to hold true for vocational training.

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## Key words

Historical research,  
comparative analysis, cultural  
identity, educational  
development, institutional  
framework,  
socio-economic conditions



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**We currently know little about why vocational education has evolved very differently in countries with very similar economic and social backgrounds; there are few studies which address the historical development of national vocational education systems from a comparative perspective. This article is intended to fill this gap a little. It describes and discusses the beginnings and subsequent development of vocational education systems in the Netherlands and Germany, which have very differently structured vocational education systems. For a clearer understanding of this phenomenon, the central stages in the development of vocational training in the Netherlands and Germany are highlighted. The comparison between the Netherlands and Germany indicates that the dominant forms of vocational education in each case (school-based versus (inter)company-based) are attributable to additional distinctive national cultural factors and ways of thinking about pedagogical and social questions.**

(<sup>1</sup>) The formulated desideratum marks the background for the initiative of Cedefop to support the exchange of information between scientists researching the history of national vocational education and training.

# **Between school and company**

## **Features of the historical development of vocational education and training in the Netherlands and Germany in a comparative perspective**

### **Questions of Research**

The architecture of vocational education systems differs substantially between the Member States of the European Union, even though significant social, economic and cultural similarities and intersections can be illustrated. Existing differences are of continued importance to the political aim of making Europe a more uniform place to live, work and pursue education. They tend to restrict the possibilities of integration yet could also offer specific opportunities for such policies. Therefore, determining which factors could explain differences in national vocational education systems is of prime importance. The answers could not only serve academic purposes but would also help in developing appropriate political strategies.

We know little about why vocational education in countries with similar economic and social backgrounds has evolved differently; there are few studies which address the historical development of national vocational education systems and even fewer dealing with the development in two or more countries from a historical or comparative perspective (<sup>1</sup>). The following descriptions should help in filling this gap. In this article we aim to describe and discuss the beginnings and subsequent development of vocational education systems in the Netherlands and Germany. Although these countries have national, economic, social and cultural similarities, they have differently structured vocational education and qualification systems.

The article begins with a synopsis of the current structure of vocational education in both countries. As the apparent differences presumably do not originate in different economic circumstances but in the development of the different vocational education systems, we focus on the respective states of

vocational education. Our common starting point for analysing the development that occurred over the years is the ancient European form of vocational education for crafts.

Finally, we examine the genesis of vocational education systems in both countries from a comparative perspective. For a deeper understanding of the dominant forms of vocational education to date (school-based versus company-based) we refer to the typical arguments used in examining vocational education in Europe, such as the role of intermediary instance, forms and times of industrial as well as economic characteristics. However, the comparison between the Netherlands and Germany indicates that the differences can only be understood on the basis of distinctive national patterns of thinking and perception of pedagogical problem areas such as social questions, tendencies towards over-schooling, and professional identity.

### **Current structure of vocational education and training in the Netherlands and Germany**

Today in the Netherlands, there are two different routes by which vocational education and training can be undertaken. There is the full-time, college-based route that includes work placements and there is a part-time, work-based route that combines education with an apprenticeship in a company. Although the places and ways of learning are different, both routes are based on the same curriculum (see Frommberger, 1999; 2004).

Vocational education and training (VET) has traditionally taken place mainly in colleges, not companies, with most pupils continuing via a school-based route rather than a work-based route after finishing compulsory education. This is even the case for stu-



dents who gain higher certificates and who do not aim for A-Levels but for vocational education. The contrary is the case in Germany.

When writing about initial VET in Germany, it is normal to refer to the so-called 'dual system'. However, it is important to mention that the term dual system is not appropriate to the texture and precepts of German VET. Dual indicates simultaneous education and training at the workplace, in enterprises and public utilities and in special schools, but it does not mean that the two parts of the system are equivalent. Training at the workplace dominates the school-based part of VET.

Nowadays the dual system is still the most important pathway from school to working life for young people in Germany. In 1999 there were around 3.3 million students aged 16 to 20 in Germany. Nearly 29 % attended the Gymnasium or a full-time higher vocational school to get permission to study at a university or at an institution of applied science (Fachhochschule). More than 50 % chose the dual system to get a qualified vocational certificate. However, there is a third route from school to working life in Germany, and this way is mostly unknown in other countries. About 21 % of the students aged 16 to 20 attended a full-time vocational school (see Gebbeken and Reinisch, 2001, p. 287; Reinisch, 2001, p. 155). Students often choose this route because in some regions of Germany, and for some times, there is a lack of places in the dual system; they opt for full-time vocational school while they wait for a place in the dual system. A minority of students choose special forms of full-time vocational schools for professions such as nursing, kindergarten teacher or technical assistant in medicine or chemistry. These professions were never integrated into the dual system. In our opinion, the reason for this has its origins in gender: such professions are typically female professions (see Feller, 1997). Another important, and for those in other countries surprising, point is that nearly 20 % of students who have qualified to study at a university choose the dual system instead of the academic route to working life. Apprenticeship, i.e. the work-based route of the dual system, is the most attractive pathway from school to working life for the majority of young people in Germany and for companies too.

## VET development in the Netherlands and Germany

### The Netherlands

We have to look back in history to understand the dominance of school-based vocational education and training in the Netherlands. From 1798 - after the abolition of the guilds - until 1860 almost no systematic vocational education and training was provided, with no industrial schools for poor people (*industriescholen*, *werkscholen*) or night-schools to learn drawing (*avondteken-scholen*) (see Goudswaard, 1981, p. 91, p. 104). At that time, there were insufficient opportunities to qualify young people for the growing needs of industry and commerce. Only in some areas of the Netherlands was there still a tradition of apprenticeship, for instance in the area of Drenthe and West-Friesland (see Bruinwold Riedel, 1907; Santema and Maandag, 1991).

Because of the lack of qualified workers, from 1860 onwards increasing numbers of vocational full-time schools were founded. These *ambachtsscholen* were typical technical full-time craft schools, providing a three-year course during the daytime for specific trades in wood and metal crafts. The foundation of technical craft schools depended on local private initiative, for instance by the Association for Manufacturing and Craft Industry (*Vereniging ter Bevordering van Fabrieks- en Handwerksnijverheid*) or the Society for Public Welfare (*Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen*). The number of schools expanded slowly but, in 1890, 18 technical craft schools in the Netherlands were established and from this time on these schools also received government subsidy. So this type of vocational school was an established part of the national educational provision.

Nevertheless there was also a debate on whether qualifying via apprenticeship or via full-time schools would be better. Some organisations, for instance the General Dutch Workers Association (*Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond*) pleaded for the adoption of the apprenticeship system. Others favoured full-time schools. Wolthuis (2001, p. 119) wrote about this discussion: 'The craft school had an advantage because they could show a successfull practice... Directors and teachers of the present schools took an active part in the ... debates. The sup-

cational education systems. A part of this initiative has been the First International Conference on The History of Vocational Education and Training in Europe in a Comparative Perspective, organised by the University of Florence, the European University Institute and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), held on 11 and 12 October 2002 in Florence. This paper is a short version of that presented at the conference.



porters of the apprenticeship system were found partly in the circles of big industries and partly in circles of workers organisations. This indicates that the apprenticeship system was regarded as preparatory for jobs in the big industries, while the craft schools were oriented mainly towards small industries and crafts.<sup>1</sup> However, after 1895 the apprenticeship system was no longer a real alternative to craft schools in the Netherlands, but only an additional option in some areas and perhaps in some large factories. This relationship between full-time schools and apprenticeship came to characterise VET in the Netherlands in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and even more in the 20<sup>th</sup>. For most Dutch people it was accepted that the best way to qualify young people was in schools and not in companies.

After the First World War the Dutch state began to intervene in VET. In 1919 both the school-based system of VET and the apprenticeship system were regulated in a new law. The *Nijverheidsonderwijswet* was a law for VET in the handicraft and technical sector. The new term was industrial education (see Gelder, 1919). The new act on industrial education made a distinction between lower and middle industrial education. Lower industrial education was supposed to prepare for simple manual labour as a workman. Middle industrial education was supposed to prepare for supervisory labour as a foreman or a surveyor. The new act was the result of an increasing number of young people opting for vocational education and training, with the number of students and schools expanding rapidly. The amount of state subsidy increased rapidly as well. The state aimed for more control of, and more coherence within, lower and middle technical daytime education. In consequence, from this time on there was systematic state intervention in vocational education and training.

Commercial trade education and training took place almost wholly in schools - middle and higher commercial schools - that were part of the national general system of education or higher education and not part of the new act in 1919 (see Hoksbergen, 1975). Control of agricultural education remained with the ministry of agriculture and was also not part of the new act.

After the Second World War, rapid industrialisation meant that skilled workers were

needed. The number of schools and students expanded rapidly again. From 1949 until 1974, the length of compulsory education was raised from 7 to 10 years. More and more young people opted for a second phase in secondary education and for middle or higher vocational education and training, too.

In 1963 the new Act on Secondary Education (or Mammoth Act) was adopted. It was implemented in 1968. With this act all schools of general education and initial VET (in the first and second phase of secondary education) were placed in one legal framework; this would have been inconceivable in Germany. Although there was a strong need for skilled workers, most VET took place in schools. The 1963 act distinguished between vocational education and training, general secondary education and preparatory academic education. VET students could choose between lower, middle and higher pathways. In lower VET, which occupied first secondary education, there were pathways oriented to technical education, household and industrial education, agricultural and horticultural education (still under the competence of the Ministry of Agriculture) and also commercial education and economic and administrative education. The former technical craft school became the lower technical school (LTS), extended lower industrial education became middle VET and the former middle industrial education became higher VET. It might be said that VET at that time tried to find its own position by generalisation, on the one hand, but also by differentiation and extension of the courses on the other (see Frommberger, 1999, p.162).

The apprenticeship system was not part of this new secondary education act but was covered in special legislation brought into effect with the act for school-based VET in 1966. With this act the craft school became an obligatory part of the system. Now, there was a system of VET in the Netherlands - with systematic state intervention - for school-based as well as work-based routes. But, again, most students voted for the school-based route.

From the beginning of the 1970s, and particularly in the 1980s, two topics dominated public discussion on VET. First criticism of the effects of generalisation grew. The school-based route of VET - so the argument went - prepared students insufficiently for the de-



mands of work. The second topic was youth unemployment. During the 1980s unemployment rose quickly and more and more young people decided to stay longer at school. Some official committees pleaded for improvement in the relationship between education and training and the labour market. The committees recommended a dual system (the catchword was dualisation, see Commissie Dualisering 1993) by giving the apprenticeship system a higher reputation or by introducing a larger practical component in middle and higher VET. A real type of dualism was established by the new act on VET in 1996 as result of the work of these committees. There are now two VET routes with the same (formal) value: the school-based route and the work-based route.

## **Germany**

To explain, or better to understand, the dominance of work-based education and training in Germany, we have to look back to the history of the dual system. It was established in the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Greinert, 1995), but the tradition of apprenticeship is much older. The guilds of craftsmen and tradesmen established this type of VET in the 14th and 15th centuries in most European countries but they largely lost their social and economic importance at the beginning of the 19th century (see for England and Wales: Deissinger 1992; for France: Schriewer 1986; Oerter and Hörner, 1995 and for the Netherlands: Frommberger, 1999). In Germany the guilds or corporations continue to exist to the present time. These corporations fixed apprenticeship regulations without the involvement of other communities of interest throughout the 19th Century and, even today, they have a strong influence over German VET.

The public authorities of the German countries - Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony and so on - were not engaged in the vocational training of craftsmen, clerks and workmen until the 1870s. They concentrated their financial and legal engagement on the institutions of compulsory education and of higher education. Universities and colleges for architecture, engineering and later on for commerce and business administration were founded mostly for the needs of the growing bureaucracy. Technical and commercial full-time schools were founded on private initiative for the qualification of low and mid-

dle management in trade, industry and banking. Some part-time schools for apprentices and journeymen were similarly established by private initiative, with the main aim of teaching young working men during the week, mostly on Sunday or in the evening after their work time. The subjects taught were reading and writing, basic arithmetic and technical drawing, especially for young craftsmen, and book-keeping, for young clerks. These schools of further education were called Fortbildungsschule or Sonntagsschule and they are the predecessors of the *Berufsschule*, the German name for the part-time vocational school for apprentices.

The dual system combines part-time education in the Berufsschule with an apprenticeship in an enterprise or in public utilities. But the main reason for the public authorities to add the Fortbildungsschule, the private school of further education, to the apprenticeship by legal acts at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was not to intensify the vocational qualification of the apprentices. The political movement of the working class grew strongly in the period of industrialisation in Germany in the second half of the 19th century and many young workers and apprentices joined trade unions and the socialist party. The leading members of the upper and middle classes looked for a way to influence the minds and the political opinions of the young workers and identified an educational gap between the end of compulsory education and the start of military service. The first attempt to fill this gap was to establish the Fortbildungsschule and, later on, the Berufsschule as a compulsory part of education for all young workers of both sexes. The second attempt was by modifying the curriculum. Subjects focused on vocational or professional branches of knowledge in combination with civics and, currently, civics is still a part of the curriculum of the *Berufsschule*.

Another remarkable shift in the texture of the dual system took place in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: apprenticeship was established in manufacturing. The German employers' associations of the metal-work, electrical, chemical and other industries created a new type of skilled-worker, known in German as *Facharbeiter*. They copied the traditional form of craftsmen's apprenticeship, but changed the way of teaching and learning. They established a



more systematic and didactic aspect of vocational training beyond the workplace in a separate room called the *Lehrwerkstatt*.

After that time there was no important change of the texture of the German dual system until 1968 when a law on apprenticeship came into force. This law, the Berufsbildungsgesetz, regulates the rights and duties of apprentices and employers up to the present day. It gives employers' associations and trade unions, together with the public authorities, the right to construct vocational training curricula within enterprises; nowadays this covers nearly 400 professions. These curricula have an obligating character for both partners in the apprentice contract. The employers' associations and the trade unions also have an important influence on the process of constructing the curricula for vocational schools as a part of the dual system, but these curricula came into force through a legal act of the public authorities of the German countries and not through the federal government.

The German system of initial VET has many 'dualities' within the dual system, not just the duality of training at the workplace and education in vocational schools. Nevertheless, the dominance of the work-based route in German initial VET is accepted by enterprises, young people, the government, politicians and the trade unions.

### **Assumptions explaining the different development of VET in Germany and the Netherlands**

Having described the main features of the historical development of VET in Germany and the Netherlands it is possible to set out factors that may offer a better understanding of the differences.

To sum up:

- In the Netherlands VET was predominantly based at school. It was a theoretical and general preparation for work but also for going on to higher education. In this traditional Dutch view, work and learning in companies - the work-based route - was not 'functional'. VET in schools was functional.
- In Germany VET predominantly took place in the dual system. Most students, who wanted to be qualified, opted for this type of VET, the 'hot smell of companies' being

preferred to VET far away from real demands.

In our opinion the main questions which have to be answered are the following:

- (a) why did so many companies in Germany, not only handicraft companies but also bigger industrial companies, agree to push and finance VET to such an extent? Why did so many companies in Germany agree to qualify on the basis of standardised curricula with a high level of general and vocationally-oriented (and not only company-oriented) qualifications? And why did this not happen in the Netherlands?
- (b) what were the reasons that the school-based route of VET was 'functional' for the companies in the Netherlands? Why did this not happen in Germany?

Some assumptions can be made on the first question:

- (a) in Germany there was no abolition of the guilds of the scale that occurred in the Netherlands. The Netherlands were occupied by the French who enforced this abolition strictly. With such a strength 'of effective intermediation between citizen and state' (Schriewer, 1986) in the German context it was possible to plead for an organised VET in so many companies;
- (b) in the 20<sup>th</sup> century this kind of VET in Germany was adopted by major industries. It was 'functional' to qualify on the basis of broad and standardised qualifications. Skilled workers and companies could deal with each other since both knew what to expect from each other. In the Netherlands such a formulised process of creating curricula for training in companies never took place;
- (c) last but not least, this concept of 'occupation' was combined with a pedagogical argument: in German philosophy it was a good way for adolescents to go into a company to get to know 'real life'. In the Dutch philosophy it was considered to be better to go to school as long as possible.

Some assumptions can be made on the second question:

- (a) in the Netherlands, governmental intervention to subsidise and regulate VET was late but strong. The economy needed skilled



workers, so more schools were quickly established. Companies became used to state intervention, because employers did not have to pay for VET;

(b) increasingly it was 'functional' for the employers to recruit young people after their VET in full-time craft schools;

(c) there was a different 'philosophy' of VET: young people will benefit most from staying as long as possible in school instead of joining the world of work too early.

Finally, we want to emphasise three aspects. First, we have to look back into the histo-

ry of VET if we want to discover which factors could explain the differences in national vocational education systems. Second, analysing the history of one or more national VET systems concerns not only economic, social and technical development but also cultural factors, especially national mentalities or ways of thinking on education, labour and training. Furthermore, we have to intensify research into the history of VET, because we need additional studies dealing not only with the historical development of one national VET system but also with development in two or more countries in a comparative perspective.

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## Key words

History of vocational education and training; German system of initial VET; Dutch system of VET; comparative research in VET systems

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# Models, paradigms or cultures of vocational education

## Enabling, legitimising, marginalising: history as VET policy

The aim of this paper is to question the role of educational researchers and educational history as joint constitutors of political and practical discourses of vocational education. The globalisation of the economy and utilisation of human labour are challenging the patterns and practices of developing occupational competences and identities, which have been constituted in the contexts of building national political, industrial and occupational orders. Policies responding to challenges – on improving competitiveness, mobility, transferability and flexibility – commonly take ‘countries’ as their starting point. Common criteria, single frameworks and principles for developing VET and good practices for implementation are searched across countries. (White Paper, 1995; EU, 2002). When countries are compared, the patterns and practices of VET are interpreted as systems. When high quality and good practices are recognised, they are attributed to the VET system of a country. However, the dissemination of good practices and adoption of single frameworks raises the question of why countries differ and what can be done to improve systems. This is where the discourse on ‘models’ enters the picture. The connection of education and history to political or cultural programmes is less transparent at the transnational than at national level. By recognising and making visible certain phenomena, changes and continuities in VET, researchers are its co-definers. As long as the possibilities of cross-cultural collaborative historical research on VET are marginal, there are temptations to adopt universalising interpretations of occupational work and VET, even if they were developed from certain, selected cultural frameworks.

Most studies about transformation of VET in Europe focus on systems, even when they are taken from specific sector (mainly technical) perspectives.<sup>(1)</sup> VET is seldom con-

sidered as an internally complex field composed of different sectors related to wider educational, political and social programmes. One popular typology of VET systems in transnational discussion and policy making is based on Wolf-Dietrich Greinert (1990): in characterising the German VET system he distinguished between a market or liberalist model (Japan, UK, US), a bureaucratic or school model (France, Italy, Scandinavia) and a dual model (Austria, Germany, Switzerland). Later Greinert (1999) renamed the types into classical models of vocational education. According to him, after the second industrial revolution the models started to mix, but the classical models remained their core. Less popular has been the critically improved version by Thomas Deissinger (1995), who introduced, in contrast with output factors of VET, input factors called qualification styles with their structural and functional dimensions:

- (a) political and organisational regulation frameworks for vocational training processes;
- (b) didactic-curricular orientation of vocational training processes;
- (c) the place of vocational training process in the context of socialisation.

As an example of qualification styles, Deissinger characterises Germany as representing:

- (a) cooperation of state and industry in giving competing regulations;
- (b) aims and contents of training oriented towards complex qualification profiles (occupational principle, Berufsprinzip);
- (c) pedagogical relevance of socialisation in VET, which mediates between general schooling and employment and establishing a learning environment separate both from school and employment.

**By making visible certain entities, phenomena, changes and continuities as being relevant to vocational education, researchers are joint definers of work and education at their sub-national, national and supranational levels. Which stories and mappings are going to have currency in transnational discourses on VET? Studies about transformation of vocational education in Europe speak about systems, even when based on sector-specific perspectives. VET is seldom considered as an internally complex field and as an outcome of wider educational, political and social programmes. The aim of the article is to show the need of cross-cultural research on emergence of meanings and functions of vocational education. Critical to this may be studies on historical periods when VET has been confronted with other forms of education. Through discussion on continuing education in Finland, Nordic countries and Germany, historicisation and contextualisation of models of VET is suggested.**

(<sup>1</sup>) For example in Finland vocational education has come to have much wider meaning - including all branches of industry, most levels of occupational hierarchies, etc. - than in many other countries. The concept of VET school or school-based VET has referred to all occupational fields, although the terminology has shifted towards the dominant English language discourse. Cf. Heikkinen, 1995; Heikkinen et al., 1999; Heikkinen et al., 2000; Heikkinen et al., 2002.



The unique strength of German VET and VET research has given good reasons for researchers and policy-makers at national and trans-national level to adopt such typologies. (e.g. Koulutus ja tutkimus vuosina..., 2000; Stenström et al. 2000, Copenhagen process, first report of the Technical Working Group Quality in VET 2003). The building of models is fundamental in constructing theories to understand and shape the world. Their theoretical value is undermined, however, if their primary function becomes applicability for dominant definitions of the world <sup>(\*)</sup>. For example Greinert <sup>(\*)</sup> argues that beside the three classical models, no others have developed in Europe, and that systems in all other countries are their national versions. Beside decontextualisation, model approach in comparing leads into a-historical use of history: certain moments are selected as unquestionable points of the origin of the models. The aim of this article is to show the need of historicising and contextualising approach - i.e. of questioning the emergence and transformation of educational meanings and functions of VET - in cross-cultural discussions. One way of trying it is to study historical periods when VET has confronted other forms of education.

The specific topic of this article is the transformation of continuing education approximately between the 1870s and the 1930s in Nordic countries and Germany. Throughout the history of educational policy-making, debates on the nature, length and universality of primary education and on the challenges of reintegrating people into employment and education, have provided platforms for discussions about the distinctiveness of different forms of education. One reason for focusing on continuing education is its importance in the history and historical research of VET in Germany. Another reason is the radical expansion of remedial programmes for problem groups in mainstream education and the European economy. The development of separate, corrective measures for low-achievers, the disadvantaged, the ageing, women and ethnic minorities implies disregard for critical analysis of mainstream educational, employment, social or youth policy (Evans et al., 2004). However, national implementation of remedial measures reflects controversies, embedded in the historical development of the wider educational landscape. What kind of instruments does the history of education

provide for policy-making with interpretations of continuation education?

In this context concepts like continuing education (Coffey, 1992; McCulloch, 1989), jatko-opetus (Heikkilä, 1995; Jauhiainen, 2002), Fortbildung (Greinert, 1990), fortsättningsskola and fortsettelse/framhaldsdannning (Michelsen, 1998), refer to institutional solutions and pedagogical definitions about education and training related to transition (typically from initial/compulsory education) into employment and society. Even if educational systems are nowadays figured as age-bound student flows or pathways, it is anachronistic to limit the concern of continuing education with participation in social, political and occupational life to contemporary definitions on ages or stages of (vocational) education.

## Continuing education in Finland

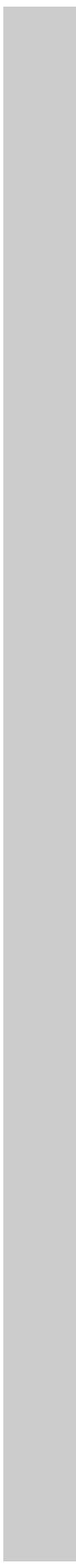
Finnish research on continuing education has been overshadowed by the interest in transforming of the binary system of folk school and gymnasium into a unified system of comprehensive education. Studying this system together with VET would offer new insights into the complex functions of education in general. While the popular-democratic elements of Finnish vocational education are widely ignored, the focus in this article is on relations between folk education and vocational education, though both increasingly have had to compete and compromise with academic education.

The development of Finnish VET started after the wars between France, Russia and Sweden-Finland, when Finland became an autonomous grand duchy of the Russian empire in 1809. For decades, society was reorganising and developing basic structures in the economy, education and governance. The first efforts in a large country with few factories and schools, with a mostly self-sustaining, poor rural population, were holistic programmes (Heikkilä, 1995, 1999, 2000). For a long time, the same networks were responsible for all initiatives towards developing industries and education. The focus of emerging VET was on more efficient and rational farming and healthy living and on the creation of industrially enlightened civil servants and leaders for the country. It was indicative of the connection between state and industry that the first schools for crafts and industry

<sup>(\*)</sup> In his analyses of the culture of virtualism, Daniel Miller argues that abstractions and models of reality are no longer required to understand and shape it. On the contrary there is a market for abstractions which replace rather than model the phenomena they purport to represent. Research and researchers increasingly adopt a consultative approach in legitimisation of managerial governance, which has the power to modify reality according to the abstractions by which politicians wish to interpret it. (Miller 2002.)

<sup>(\*)</sup> See the article published in this issue which corresponds to a modified version of his contribution to the Florence conference in 2002 on the History of VET in a comparative perspective (2004).

<sup>(\*)</sup> In 19th-century Finnish history, a nationalist movement that contributed to the development of the Finnish language and literature and achieved for Finnish a position of official equality with Swedish, the language of the dominant minority. Fennoman Movement. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved April 24, 2004, from Encyclopædia Britannica Premium Service.: <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=794> (note of the editor).



(1842 Act on the training of craftsmen and manufacturers for the country and the 1847 Act on technical schools) were established by the Board of Manufacture, one of the first national boards with the explicit task of promoting vocational education. The Act was based on initiatives from the crafts sector and the schools had a clear vocational mission.

Organising folk education remained, until the 1860s, the duty of the Lutheran Church, homes and municipalities. The differences between rural communities and towns were large until the gradual liberalisation of trade and industry from the 1860s. However, the first non-religious inspectors of folk schools were appointed in 1861 and the independent Board of Schools Affairs (Education) was established in 1869. The national decree on folk schools in 1866 was an outcome of a wider Fennoman (<sup>4</sup>) programme on folk enlightenment, which was permeated with economic and practical aims, especially concerning the rural population.

The debate on relations between VET, folk and continuing education took off during 1880s. Despite the politicised nature of the Finnish popular-democratic enlightenment – connected to the language struggle between Swedish and Finnish – it was more pragmatic and vocationally oriented than in other Nordic countries. The activation of the Fennoman movement motivated some bigger towns to start more systematic teaching of general subjects, home economics and handicraft in continuation classes. The 1879 Act on liberation of trade obliged employers to release employees under 15 to attend school in the evenings. Depending on the region, this could mean either continuation classes in the folk school or the school for crafts and industry. Education was considered to have two different aims (Teollisuushallituksen, 1888). First, it was to provide all children with general education and education for citizenship, which was also the prerequisite for vocational training: this is what the decree on continuation classes meant. Second, the Trade Act referred to school-based vocational education, which aimed at providing occupational knowledge and support for learning at work. Some civil servants and crafts associations suggested obligatory attendance at schools for crafts and industry until the age of 21, but with little consequence. The few crafts had little influence and industrial workers none in the

project of Industrial Finland, whose main focus for some time was developing Finnish engineers, then foremen and skilled workers, through full-time VET.

While the emerging VET institutions in the late 19th century increasingly integrated the promotion of different areas of industry to the projects of Agriculture/Farmers, Industrial and Welfare Finland, the paradigms of VET started to diverge accordingly. All parties had their headquarters in the expanding national governance. One of the main proponents of continuing education during the 1890s to 1920s was Mikael Soininen (Johnsson), head of the Teacher Seminar, inspector and head of the Board of Education (<sup>5</sup>). His prime concern was education for the nation and from this perspective he considered all forms of education. In his article, written after the reform on general election rights 1905, he summarises his educational programme.

‘On reaching adulthood, every young man and woman has to vote about the fate of the country ... Where is s/he going to get comprehension from the structure and needs of the society, in order to become able as its legislator and governor? ... Social science, which is so important for our nation during these times, must be taught after the folk school. For that reason we need continuing education after initial school years. But this is not the only reason why continuing education is needed ... Technical drawing and other preparatory instruction for different industries has become quite usual for urban youngsters in all countries; the rural population needs general instruction in the basics of rational, up-to-date agriculture; future farmers’ wives should have education in the affairs of the household; everybody should know the basics of general healthcare, including many special areas, which are deeply related to the physical and ethical livelihood of the nation.

This kind of continuing education is not strange for us any more ... But in a more mature age they need educational workshops, where the mentality and ability for citizenship can grow freely and thoroughly. We have these workshops ready: the folk high schools ... From these workshops should those men and women grow, who as the closest stewards of the common people are guiding it in its economical enterprises, in life of municipalities and the nation state

(<sup>4</sup>) Mikael Johnsson/Soininen belonged to the progressive Young Fennomans and was active e.g. in promoting the Finnish cooperative movement and developing the folk school into a ‘school for life’.



and in its material and spiritual efforts. They have to establish the educated estate, which is independent from the bureaucracy and which in any hardship will be the nearest support and guardian of the people.' (Johnson, 1906).

Between the 1880s and the 1910s, the promotion of the Finnish economy and industries and the provision of education happened as parallel projects in Finland. The consensual defence against pressure from Russification was channelled through shared efforts to develop national industries and education. Along with new branch departments and boards, a great number of schools, institutes and advisers in all branches of industry were established. The proponents of distinctive VET, especially in the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and developers of folk and continuation school in the Ministry of Education, managed for some time to collaborate in planning national reforms for post-compulsory education. Jalmari Kekkonen, the pioneer and inspector of VET in crafts and industry (1908-1932), suggested that continuation school should serve as preparation for apprenticeship schools, for vanishing evening/part-time schools and followers of the schools for crafts and industry, which in towns had become substituted by full time vocational schools for boys and girls since 1899. The inadequate apprenticeship schools could be turned into real vocational schools instead of being substitutes for continuation school. The mission of vocational schools was to promote the development of occupations; they had to be practical and authentic workplaces, but dominated by pedagogy. (Teollisuushallituksen, 1923; Heikkinen, 1995).

However, the tensions between various projects in Finland were activated after the Russian revolution, the establishment of the independent nation state and civil war. Consensual reform plans from the turn of the century were implemented in the 1920s in a completely new political and economic situation. The contrasts between the urban and rural areas, life forms and industries became visible, the popular movements started to split into communist, social democratic and agrarian parties and the confrontations between workers and employers moved to the national level. Also, the Act on universal obligation to attend folk school was prolonged till 1921<sup>(6)</sup>. The Act stated the obligation to attend (folk)

continuation school for two years after compulsory schooling, if the young person did not continue her/his studies. The question was whether vocational schools could be considered as other schools. Once the folk school had taken off and the political and labour market associations were established beside the popular-democratic movements, the divisions between citizenship education, academic education and vocational education became institutionalised. Advocates of the comprehensive continuation school, conceiving themselves as the followers of the Fennoman programme of universal citizenship, defended it as a general, practical school for the majority of the age group (except grammar school students) and as education for citizenship. Many proponents of the farmers of Finland saw continuation school also as an alternative for initial VET in rural communities, because of the difficulties in providing full-time vocational schools for the peasantry. Their opponents, the proponents of VET for crafts and industry, defended the distinctiveness of vocational education against education for citizenship and academic education and emphasised its vital link to industry. In urban municipalities, VET schools were favoured as substitutes for continuation schools until the 1940s.

Between the 1920s and the 1940s there were repeated initiatives from the Ministry and Board of Education and Teacher Seminars about developing continuation school into practically oriented general vocational school, which would substitute the former institutes of lower VET (Salo, 1944). They connected to a wider political cleansing and domestication of administration, which increased the power of rural and popular parties and associations, which at that time were holding positions in the Ministries of Education and Agriculture, with close links to the folk enlightenment movement (Heikkinen et al., 1999). The proponents of women's VET in crafts and industry and in agriculture, animal husbandry and household economy strongly protested against suggestions of transferring only female branches of VET into continuation school under the governance of Board of Education. However, the most aggressive proponent of the continuation school during 1926-64, folk school inspector Alfred Salmela, saw it as a part of comprehensive, patriotic folk education. The mission of the continuation school was, in the first place, education for citizenship, sec-

<sup>(6)</sup> However, the preparatory schools in towns and first classes of gymnasium, 'middle school', maintained their status as substitutes until the 1950s and the 1970s, respectively.

<sup>(7)</sup> The enrolment rate indicates the function of education: like VET schools and folk high schools, continuation schools were also recruiting adults, before compulsory education covered whole age-cohorts.



ond, to give occupational guidance and, third, to provide practical and occupation-oriented education. Salmela only accepted the gymnasium as an alternative for intellectually talented children (Kailanpää, 1962). His programme was seemingly successful: continuation school became obligatory for applicants for other schools in 1943 and in the 1958 reform it was renamed the School for Citizenship *kansalaiskoulu* (Kailanpää, 1962). The period between the 1930s and 1945 was the peak for continuation school, especially in rural areas, where the enrolment rate could be 140 % of the age group (<sup>1)</sup>). The victory was short (Jauhainen, 2002): the popularity of gymnasium and middle school exploded and vocational schools had expanded and gained national recognition in the modernising of Finnish VET. The reforms for comprehensive schools and a system for school-based VET, integrated to the project of Welfare Finland, were just about to be implemented.

### **Continuing education and models of VET**

#### **The German heritage**

In Germany, historical research on continuing education has focused on the relations between social partners and state and between sites of learning in VET; there has been little on its function in the wider educational landscape (Stratmann, 1990; Greinert, 2002; Greinert, 2004). In contrast, Nordic political and research discussion has concentrated almost exclusively on the relations between gymnasium/middle school and folk school and on the unification of the compulsory school through its academisation (e.g. Rinne, 1984; Jauhainen, 2002; Jarning, 2002). To illustrate the potential of reflections on continuing education for cross-cultural research on VET, this section comments on developments in Germany and other Nordic countries. The attempt is biased, since there is considerable literature on the topic in Germany, compared to the marginal interest among Nordic researchers.

The German struggle on continuing education during late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century ended with transformation of Fortbildungsschule (continuation school) into Berufsschule (vocational school), but nowhere in Nordic countries did the initiatives and discussions lead to this solution. In Germany, the crucial issue was the governance of

urban, male youngsters. Apprenticeship training, controlled by the crafts and industry, was still the dominant form of vocational education in the period of rapid industrialisation, urbanisation and migration of in the late 19th century. However, in many regions attendance of general – often religious – continuation school had already become obligatory for young people. Because of the erosion of familial forms of upbringing, the integration of occupation and citizenship was endangered among small entrepreneurs and workers (e.g. Greinert, 1990; Stratmann, 1990; Wahle, 1994). Furthermore, industrialisation threatened the prevailing social, economic and political order: big, export-oriented industry undermined the status of crafts; the industrial workers represented the danger of socialism and revolution. Interestingly, however, instead of crafts and industry, vocational schools were initiated by the alliance of primary school teachers and politicians (Deutsche Verein für das Fortbildungswesen, founded 1892-96). Later they became supported by educationalists, accepted by industrialists and gradually also by the crafts sector.

In Germany, in striking contrast to other cultures, educationalists like Georg Kerschensteiner and Eduard Spranger made serious efforts to develop a genuine pedagogical alternative for VET, which would include societal aspects (Kerschensteiner, 1901; Spranger, 1922). Being vocational, continuation school became a politically, legally and pedagogically legitimate alternative in continuation education. The crucial point in the stabilisation of vocational schools was that, in connection with apprenticeship, they became part of compulsory education after primary education. However, the price was the dominance of industry – or corporations/chambers – practices of apprenticeship in VET and the supportive and general nature of vocational schools in relation to occupation and industry. At the same time, the religious and bourgeois conceptions of female work incorporating citizenship into being a *Hausfrau*, geared women's VET into a system of full-time, educational vocational schools, which diverged from the apprenticeship-dominated system for men (Mayer, 1998). Being the heir of continuation school has had a long-standing impact on the image of vocational school in German vocational education. Being a school for Staatsbürgerschaft (occupational citizenship) it

(<sup>1)</sup>) And as part of their personal history, are closer to their life form and self-concept as well.



remained occupationally secondary, general in nature, and compensatory to academic forms of education instead of becoming a distinctive component of institutions developing occupational identity and qualifications.

### **Imported frameworks and Nordic developments**

The lack of reflection on relations between continuing education and VET tempts Nordic researchers to adopt existing comparative frameworks developed in Germany (cf. Greinert, 2002; Luhmann, 2002). According to these, VET is typically considered first from the perspective of regulation, systems and institutions. Legislation, financing and institutionalisation into interest groups are taken as criteria for matters such as recognising and differentiating between systems of VET. Second, crafts and manufacturing industry become standards for occupational work, because of their crucial political and economical role in the making of the German nation state and economy. Third, occupational forms of work become exclusively defined as male Beruf in manufacturing. Fourth, the analyses of VET interest groups concentrate on the role of Mittelstand, for the organisation workers/employees and companies/employers as social partners negotiating their interests in VET. Fifth, the role of the state is reduced to a separate, bureaucratic player in the tripartite interest struggle on regulatory power and financial obligations (Madsen, 1988; Larsson, 1995; Saksliind, 1998; Heikkinen, 1995). The first criterion explains why Nordic researchers tend to copy universalising models, while the focus on systems and institutions has enforced their exclusive interest in folk school, gymnasium and university, which all have been organised and discussed as national issues under church or state governance (\*). However, the development of Nordic VET in relation to continuing education may raise questions about the universality of adopted models.

To begin with, the formation of Nordic VET, relations between interest groups and state cannot be understood without linking them to the transformation of cultural context. Schools were no more separate than the state from cultural, political and economic movements, with their diverse aims and objectives concerning the future nation state. The Nordic solutions to continuing educa-

tion were all influenced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the distinctive enlightenment, a popular-democratic movement with its principle of *folkelighed* (Slumstrup et al., 1983; Gudmunsson, 1995; Jarning 2002). It has been argued that, especially in Norway, the popular education movement hindered the development of technical institutes, which would integrate technology, theory and practice and would serve national industry, because the politically most influential popular-democratic movements maintained their focus on agricultural education. (Korsnes, 1997; Michelsen, 1991, 1998) However, Norwegian trade, craft and manufacturing industries also developed quite independently from rural industries (Saksliind, 1998; Gudmunsson, 1995). While, in the technical sector, part-time schools for apprentices (*lærlingskoler, tekniske aftenskoler*) were maintained by local crafts and manufacturer associations, obtaining independence from Denmark in 1814 and from Sweden in 1905, became the shared interest of the state, church and popular-democratic movement. Folk enlightenment and societal participation, which were promoted through folk schools and folk high schools, were fundamental. While the gymnasium held its superior status, continuing education gradually became preparatory or complementary to academic education (Jarning, 2002). According to Michelsen (1998) female teachers initiated specific vocational continuation schools in Norway, as part of the bourgeois-feminist movement. Women had organised separately from male teachers, who were primarily from agrarian backgrounds. During the 1910s to 1930s, female teachers tried to establish an obligatory, practical youth school (*ungdomsskole*) to continue folk school based on pedagogical ideas of *Arbeitsschule* in the style of Kerschensteiner. Being part of women's emancipation and professionalisation, the initiative received minor attention from crafts and industry and no support from the state. It never became a real predecessor for institutionalised vocational education (*yrkeskoler*), while the crafts defended their apprentice-training system and the labour-movement prioritised development of the comprehensive school. Initial VET remained divided into fragmented local part-time schools loosely controlled by industrial associations, and into a state-controlled school-based system. The dominance of educational programmes promoting political and social participation remained strong and lead to creation of com-



prehensive upper secondary school during the 1970s.

In Denmark, the liberation of trade and industrialisation in the middle of 19th century took place largely as a grass-roots process, integrating peasantry and crafts in small towns. The expansion of agro-industry, the cooperative movement and regional self-governance went hand-in-hand with industrialisation. The popular-democratic movement and *folklig* enlightenment promoted continuity in collective and cooperative social and productive activities. Craft and technical associations took the leading role in vocational education and in establishing the first technical institutes (*tegneskoler -> tekniske skoler*) (Laegring, 1985; Moeller, 1991). The emergence of a new type of small *stationsbyer* along the railways since the 1870s, adjusted rural crafts and industries to the guild traditions of *købstader* and became crucial in establishing VET schools for apprentices up to the 1940s (Hentilä et al., 2002; Kryger Larsen, 2001). Initial VET became part of a wider concept of popular (community-based) education, which integrated political, industrial and educational aims. The same networks initiated the expansion of vocational schools, and later of work camps/youth schools and production schools, as the various forms of folk education (Laegring, 1985; Mayer, 1999; Slumstrup, 1983). The technical associations, which represented occupations, controlled the inspection of schools, the training of vocational teachers and the distribution of state subsidies for technical education. The national Council for Vocational education (*Tilsynet med den tekniske Undervisning for Håndværkere og industriidrivende*), established in 1916, recruited half its members from working life as well as those from the state. However, occupation-specific schools have until today remained subsumed in the apprenticeship system controlled by the social partners. In contrast, the establishment of youth schools (*ungdomsskoler*) since the 1930s represented a change in conceptions of VET: it was not initiated by crafts or local actors, but by national policy-makers. Its target group were 14-18 year olds and its aim was to combat social problems and unemployment. The employment political function of the school was indicated by the development of technical schools and work camps into voluntary alternatives for youngsters after compulsory education. It became the duty of the municipalities to establish schools for boys

and girls to prepare them for work in most common occupational fields.

From the 19<sup>th</sup> century, VET in Finland was embedded in the projects competing for developing industries, occupations and governance, which potentially would become national and constitute a system (Heikkinen, 1995, 2000; Heikkinen et al., 1999). The school context of VET was important precisely in its potential to promote industries and the occupationalisation of work. Even with varying power and influence, the projects were operating through administration: the ministries, departments and boards became the headquarters for their articulation and stabilisation. The promotion and governance of VET remained integrated in the promotion of industry in branch-ministries until the 1970s. The state was engaged in different programmes promoting industries and politics. For instance the main parties debating continuing education – the followers of the Fennoman movement representing Farmers Finland and the proponents of Industrial Finland – channelled their political and economical projects through the Board of Education and Ministry or Board of Trade and Industry respectively.

Both in Sweden and Finland crafts remained marginal compared to export – metal and wood-processing – industry and rural industries. Popular-democratic movements united small farmers, rural workers and the landless with industrial labourers and gained a strongly political character (Kettunen, 1998; Hellspont et al., 1995). The Nordic social-democratic ideology and the idea of comprehensive school were most influential in Sweden from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The concept of *folklighet* may even, in its later social-democratic versions, be influenced by the heritage from a military superpower state, big export industry and large landowning gentry. The Swedish solutions indicate the emerging self-conception of the state as having a privileged and progressive perception of people's educational needs. 'As a matter of fact, social democracy has not been interested in school as such, but only in how it has functioned as an instrument in reforming society' (Lindgren, 1997, p. 2). However, it is also argued for the importance of general education, which was initiated bottom-up by the agrarian population (especially prosperous farms) because of utilitarian and pragmatic reasons, not because



of top-down implementation of mass schooling for citizens of a democratic nation state (Lindmark, 1996; cf. Boli, 1989). In either case, vocational training became subsumed to other forms of education. Evening schools for apprentices/trainees (*Söndagsskolar -> Lärlingsskolar*) became, instead of craft and industry-led institutions, institutes maintained by municipalities, supported, and controlled by the state (Larsson, 1995; Englund, 1986). The National Board of Education (*skolöverstyrelse*) was established for grammar schools in 1904, but since 1918 it has included a department of VET for trade, crafts, industry and home economics. Initial VET became increasingly developed through workshop schools as part of state-supported, full-time municipal school-system (*praktiska ungdomskolar -> verkstadskolsystem*). The initiatives were socio-political in combating unemployment and labour migration, but they were also supported by modernising industry, which preferred technological training and more advanced skills to the experiential learning provided in the evening schools. Other branches of VET were linked to their branch administration, but since the department transformed into National Board of VET (*yrkesskolöverstyrelse*) in 1943, they have gradually become integrated into the vocational component of comprehensive education.

A second issue is that Nordic expressions for occupation are wider than German ones. Finnish, until late 19<sup>th</sup> century used *elatuskeino* - means of livelihood - then *elinkeinoammati* - occupation as a means of livelihood - and finally just *ammatti*. Until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, occupation referred to all kinds of tasks, necessary for independent life, in the totality of an agrarian (type) household. At the individual level, *elatuskeino* could be a craft, office or service. Even in later conceptions of wage-labour and the individual worker, the collective aspect of occupation remained important. For example, wagework in a factory could be conceived as a family occupation, and other members of the family, especially women and children, could substitute or support the person actually contracted. Where an agrarian household was a collective enterprise, women in particular could change tasks and roles (Heikkilä, 1995, 2001; Peltonen, 1992; Apo, 1995). In Swedish and Norwegian the holistic expression *näring* - activity for livelihood/nutrition in rural household - was slowly substituted by *yrke* - occupation - as specialised and individualised work (Hellspont et al., 1995). Also

the Danish still use the old word *erhverv* for occupation in VET. It seemed to be common for Nordic countries in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to integrate the concept of collective industrial labour into the ideal of an independent farmer and owner of one's work, opposing both with the capitalist employer (Kettunen, 1995). Despite the increasing importance of occupational work, the Nordic concepts cannot really be substituted by the German concept of *Beruf*<sup>(\*)</sup>.

In Denmark and Norway, as in Germany, religion had more influence in defining female occupations and education than in Finland and Sweden. While the bourgeoisie was more broadly based in Sweden, there was a stronger interest in separate gymnasium education for girls, transmitting proper patterns of family life. As a consequence, at least in Norway and Sweden, household education developed closer to general education and female citizenship than other areas of VET, indicating similarity with the German concept of female *Beruf* (Michelsen, 1998; Mjelde, 2001; Mayer, 1998). Despite bourgeois initiatives, in Finland household and home industry were conceived as parts of the occupational totality of rural work, later as distinctive occupations. Home industry was not labelled as female work, but was potentially mediating the sub-project of crafts with the projects of Industrial and Farmers Finland. Important inputs to Finnish conceptions of work and occupations also originate from nursing and social work. They amalgamated the popular concept of care in production-consumption of agrarian households with the androgenic concept of skilled occupational work and with bourgeois idealisation of exclusive feminine occupational dispositions. In Finland the principles and practical forms of female-dominated occupations and VET developed in parallel with the male-dominated. Therefore, the schooling paradigm in women's VET need not indicate its integration with citizenship, as in standard VET, but its occupationalisation of work and differentiation in education should be noted (Henriksson, 1998; Heikkilä, 2001).

Additionally, Nordic researchers tend to claim that the development of (technical) VET was hindered, because the 'middleclass' was forced to compromise with the popular-democratic movements (Heikkilä, 1996; Korsnes, 1997; Kettunen et al., 1995; Kettunen, 1998; Michelsen, 1998). However, the explanato-

(\*) A hidden factor influencing the concept of occupational work is immigrant or guest labour. S. Narotzky (1997) compares the consequences of using cheap migrant labour for the divisions of work in Germany and France with those from slavery and cheap labour in countries like Spain, Portugal and Britain. Guest labour was remarkable in Germany and Sweden until the 1970s and enabled the conservation of divided qualification patterns, which favoured the labour aristocracy and ignored the unskilled work of immigrants. The holistic concepts of occupational work and VET may rely on the homogeneity of the population as workers and citizens.



ry power of the concept *Mittelstand* – a mediator between the upper and the lower groups in society – depends on its historical contextualisation. In 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany the central political role of small crafts and trade as a counterweight to industrial workers and unions had to be adjusted to the growing importance of the large export companies, which operated at the nation-state level. This was reflected in the tripartite governance and organisational VET solutions. In Denmark, with its small towns, strong cooperative movement and the domination of agro-industry and domestic manufacture, a *Mittelstand* integrating the traditions and interests of agriculture and crafts was developed (Moeller, 1991; Hentilä et al., 2002; Kryger Larsen, 2001). In other Nordic countries small enterprises and shopkeepers never became a quantitatively or qualitatively crucial societal group nor made up a *Mittelstand* in the German sense. In Finland, the collaboration was of big wood-processing and metal industry with politically important small farmer – *Mittelstand* was facilitated by the state. In Norway, local politics and administration were crucial in negotiating on the development of the nationally fragmented industries of seafaring, trade, fishing and wood processing. In Sweden domestic and export markets were both important for the national economy. Big farms, big industry and traditional (military) gentry facilitated the development of a strong consensual state, which promoted the ideology of a collective where all citizens become middleclass. The farmers, industrial and service workers together with civil servants became the typical Nordic nations of the middle class, with minor interest in crafts or small entrepreneurship. The programmes of industrial and educational modernisation had to recognise and respect them and adjust to their needs and aims: comprehensive experience and universal citizenship became primary in educational reforms.

At the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Nordic social democracy and labour movement adjusted itself to the free peasantry tradition. Consequently, the concept of social partners had importance only in Denmark; in Norway, Finland and Sweden, instead of social partnership, legalistic patterns of negotiating work and VET were developed at the nation state level. For example, in Finland the demands of the labour movement for power and equity in industrial relations were largely

based on rural workers, crofters and landless people. The politicised nature of industrial relations after independence from Russia and the civil war (1917-18) pushed negotiations towards national legalistic, corporatist regulation of work conditions. The representative, consensual negotiations between the employers and employees at local and national level became moderated by the state.

### **Continuing education and the distinctiveness of VET**

Comprehensive primary education was a springboard in Sweden in the 1960s for integrating VET into a unified system of secondary education, covering also administration and teacher training. (SOU 28/1962) Consequently, the vocational strand of upper secondary acquired a prevocational character. Norway, and to some extent Denmark, followed the idea of comprehensive secondary education, even if the internal streaming of pathways continued. In Finland the idea covered only lower secondary, the initiatives on youth school in the 1970s did not succeed, and the distinctiveness of VET as a form of education, despite its school-based organisation, was maintained. Table 1 attempts to refer to some characteristics in the wider educational landscape, in the emerging concept of VET and in institutional solutions, during the period when the distinctiveness of VET was debated in relation to continuing education in Germany and in Nordic countries.

Denmark and Germany have maintained strong connections between industrial, technology and VET policies. In other Nordic countries the negotiation systems and actor-networks in different policy areas have, until recently, increasingly separated (cf. Korsnes, 1997; Larsson, 1995; Heikkinen et al., 1999). While popular-democratic ideas were dominating all Nordic educational programmes, the struggle against integrating vocational into comprehensive post-compulsory school was strongest in Finland. Although German continuing education transformed into separate systems of dual vocational and academic education, occupational citizenship became equally important in Germany and Finland. In Denmark and Finland vocational education became a real alternative for academic education: in Denmark integrating apprenticeship and school, controlled primarily by industry itself, and in Finland



Table 1

<b>Controversies on continuing education and VET in Germany and Nordic countries</b>				
<b>Germany 1870-1920</b>	<b>Norway 1910-40</b>	<b>Sweden 1920-40</b>	<b>Denmark 1880-1940</b>	<b>Finland 1880-1930</b>
Transformation towards double function of VET: <i>*Facharbeitertechnik und Staatsbürgerschaft</i>	Separation of *VET from general education *apprenticeship from vocational school	Establishment of state-led educational system with socio-political function, including VET schools	Establishment of social partnership: journeymen/workers + masters/employers in VET + cooperatives	Establishment of distinctive VET system promoting national industries, networks between administration, industry, schools and civil society
Occupational form of work: <i>Beruf</i> as overarching pedagogical principle	Political control of work/division of labour: national tariff perspective dominates VET	Technological and political basis of occupation in VET	Communitarian form of occupational work in VET	Combination of community and occupational citizenship in work and VET
From continuation school to vocational school; VET as component of education	Rejection of vocational continuation school; marginalisation of VET as education	Dominance of citizenship in continuation school; marginalisation of VET as education	Towards Youth schools; VET increasingly into a labour market category	Defence of vocational schools against vocationally oriented continuation school; VET as a specific form of education

as schools controlled by the state and networks of representatives of industry, occupations, civil servants, schools and teachers.

The old debates on continuing education have become up-to-date again. The attempts to develop the EU and its Member States into the most competitive knowledge and high skills area in the world accelerates the academisation of education and the polarisation of learners into winners and losers in the schooling game. The promotion of active citizenship, employability and social coherence has led to massive efforts at EU and Member State levels. The fight against educational and social exclusion and the challenge of integrating youngsters into VET demands new solutions in education for citizenship and VET (Evans et al., 2004).

## Political implications

Universalising models of VET are attractive because they provide simple answers to complex questions. They represent mythical thinking, which is necessary for people in trying to develop collective identities such as the making of Europe. However, when used to form policies, models are also realities which leads to real consequences (Korsnes, no date; Gudmunssen, 1995; Kryger Larsen, 2001). The constitutive role of educational researchers and historians has developed in a historical period when culture, society and nation-state have become increasingly synonymous and overlapping categories (Wagner, 2001). However, increasingly their interpretations and narratives are

being used in varieties of transnational VET projects. Which stories and mappings of the world are going to have currency in transnational discourses and with what consequences? What could be alternatives for developing universalising models of VET for transnational research and policy discussion?

Psychological and didactic approaches have always been attractive to educationalists and researchers, because they enable decontextualised and universalistic interpretative frameworks. The psychological approach to different forms of education persists, based on psychological differences among learners and learning. Whether it is abilities, attitudes and dispositions or motivation, the form and mode of education should be adjusted to the individual characteristics of the learner. Another attractive alternative are sociological and system-functional approaches, which consider different forms of education and their institutionalised modes in relation to societal and economic hierarchies and statuses. It provides an opportunity to compare the functioning of educational pathways and institutes cross societal and economic systems, ideally conceived as regimes or materialisation of societal laws, in practice as reductions into nation-state societies (cf. Korsnes, 2001) (10).

What other alternatives could cross-cultural educational research have for psychological, economic or sociological universalisation than developing metanarratives on models of VET? Perhaps it could start from collaborative deconstruction of edu-

(10) For example Greinert and Deissinger defend modelling approach by the need of shared theories in comparative research and by referring to Weber's ideal types. Olav Korsnes has pointed out that Weberian ideal type is an ideational picture that is not historical reality, and absolutely not the real reality, and that it is even less suited to serve as a form into which the reality *qua exemplar* can be classified. (Korsnes, 2001)



cational myths at national and sub-national levels: The debates on continuing education can be considered as negotiations and struggles on definitions of education: whether it is one or many, and which forms it can take. In the Nordic context, a basic form of education emerging during the 19th century was popular or citizenship education. It materialised as initial education in folk (-> comprehensive) school and as folk enlightenment in adult education institutes. The basic pedagogical idea in popular education has been the promotion of participation in the life of the family (households), community and nation-state. According to the holistic concept 'means of livelihood', participation also included work and occupations. Another form of education was academic education in gymnasiums and universities. Its guiding pedagogical principle has been to promote the participation in and the production of bodies of knowledge, which is organised into disciplinary structures and practices. It implies transcending and overcoming the boundaries of specific forms of life, including occupational life. Academic education has also included ideas of citizenship and occupation (profession), considering the good of the people, in a distinctive form of education only in relation to the others. It has focused on participation in the world of work in occupationally structured society through specialised skills, technical expertise and trade, which constitute people's occupational identities. A global historical tendency, which can be recognised in the Nordic and German

developments (Heikkinen, 1995; Englund, 1986; Greinert, 2003) is the penetration of academic education into all other forms of education. However, the imperatives of economic relevance and conditioning characteristics for globalising markets may furnish the instrumental version of academic education with distorted versions of vocational and folk education.

The systems of VET we identify today probably represent the hegemonic, victorious cultural programmes which, especially since World War II, have been jointly constructing nation-states, national economies and industries. Therefore, the commitment of researchers and policy-makers to certain models, derived from specific, selected contexts, may support promotion of new hegemonic programmes of VET as joint constituents of transnational policies, economies and industries. A non-conformist alternative would be to deconstruct the transformation of national systems as outcomes of competition between cultural programmes of VET, carried out by individual, collective and meta-collective actors striving for specified sub-national, national and supra-national aims. The differentiation of education is related to the complexities of such cultural projects. Reflections on the Nordic and German history of continuing education indicate the need for a more historicising and contextualised approach which would make different forms of education comprehensible in a wider educational and political landscape.

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### Key words

Cross-cultural research,  
historical periods,  
contextualisation,  
models of VET,  
continuing education,  
Germany and Nordic  
countries



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# The common vocational training policy in the EEC from 1961 to 1972

## Introduction

Article 128 of the EEC Treaty signed in Rome in March 1957 stated that the Council of Ministers of the Community would lay down, based on a proposal of the Commission and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee (ESC), 'general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market'. Article 118 also included basic and advanced vocational training as one of the matters for which the Commission was given the task 'of promoting close cooperation between Member States'. Article 41 specifically referred to vocational training in the agricultural sector, stating that there should be 'effective coordination of efforts in the spheres of vocational training ... (that) may include joint financing of projects or institutions' (1). These were followed by a series of measures (in particular those on the mobility of workers in employment, exchanges of young workers, etc.) which, without explicitly mentioning the adoption of a common policy, could be regarded as indirect legal sources for Community competence in matters of vocational training (2).

It can be stated, then, that the EEC Treaty provided a solid legal base for a Commission initiative directed towards establishing a common policy on vocational training for the workers of the Member States. Such measures were a practical response above all to the demands of those countries with the most pressing economic and social prob-

lems. Italy in particular hoped to find in the Community an instrument for solving the structural problems by which its society was beset, at least in part. Foremost among those problems was what seemed to be endemic unemployment in the less economically advanced areas of the country (3). With this in mind, a common vocational training policy could be seen as of great value in facilitating the job integration and retraining of a significant proportion of the body of unemployed people, especially bearing in mind that the Italian training system was not so highly developed as in some of the other Member States. The economic and social interests of one of the Member States - one of the three 'major' States, perhaps not so much politically as in geographical, demographic and economic terms - together with the concern of the newly created Commission to establish itself as the driving force for integration, at least in those fields in which it had been given specific responsibilities by the Treaty, were all pressures to move in the direction of setting up a common vocational training policy. As stated by the member of the Commission who followed most closely the vicissitudes of vocational training in the 1960s, Lionello Levi Sandri from Italy: '... these are important provisions in the general context of the European Community's social policy since ... it is the only case in which the Treaty makes provision on this subject, in its Article 128, for a common vocational training policy. This enables the Community to make every effort to establish a genuine, adequate common policy, unlike its other interventions, which may in a sense appear to be weaker' (4).



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**While Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome very clearly states that a common policy for vocational training should be developed, this policy has never come to fruition. This is largely due to resistance from Germany and France, which already possessed highly developed vocational training systems. But the failure can also be attributed to the clash between the centralising forces of European development, revealed by the Commission's attempts to take the lead in financing common policies, and the opposing government forces that seek to limit the Commission's ambitions and defend their sovereignty. As a result, attempts to formulate a common policy for vocational training have been abandoned: France and Germany are not at all keen to take on the costs of retraining the southern Italian labour force.**

(1) For quotations from the Treaty, see Historical Archives of the European Communities, hereinafter ASCE, BAC 173/1995, 2824, EEC Commission, *Principi generali per l'attuazione di una politica comune di formazione professionale* [General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy], 26/9/1961.

(2) In particular the Commission cited as indirect sources Articles 49, 50, 57 and 131 of the Treaty of Rome, plus Article 3 of the Implementing Convention on the association of the overseas countries and territories with the Community and the provisions of the Protocol on Italy. See ASCE, BAC 173/1995, 2822, EEC Commission, *Principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle - Projet* [General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy - Draft], 8/2/1961.

(3) On the Italian position on European integration, see Varsori, 1999.

(4) ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1618. Exposé de M. Levi Sandri devant le Comité économique et social [Address by Mr Levi Sandri to the Economic and Social Committee], 1/3/1962.



Would, then, the allied interests of Italy and of the EEC Commission succeed in imposing an 'interventionist' line, in other words one in which the Community institutions and mechanisms would perform a decisive role in vocational training? The reply to this question, at least as regards the years with which we are concerned, is 'no'. Let us try to understand why this came to pass.

### The ten principles of 1963

On 12 May 1960 the Council, on a proposal of the Commission, decided to accelerate the implementation of the Treaty of Rome<sup>(5)</sup>. Vocational training was chosen as one of the sectors in which steps would be taken ahead of the schedule for implementing the provisions of the Treaty. After consulting the competent national authorities and representatives of the trade unions and employers, between February and September 1961 the Commission, with the support of the Italian representatives in the Community bodies<sup>(6)</sup>, succeeded in laying down the content of the general principles on training, as required by Article 128, setting their number at 10<sup>(7)</sup>. These principles were to be the foundation on which a common line for the six countries was to be constructed. We shall not go into each of those principles in detail here, but we shall look at the more important aspects to shed light on the Commission's action guidelines, and we shall then analyse how the Community reacted.

The general objective to be achieved through a common social policy was, in the mind of the Commission, not only higher productivity and greater economic integration pure and simple but, above all the moral and material advancement of workers, so as to associate them in a positive way with the process of integration and its institutions. The development of vocational training in the Member States through a policy of intervention by the authorities therefore came to be seen as crucially important in achieving a form of integration consonant with the social goals set by the Treaty<sup>(8)</sup>. In a situation in which there was a chronic shortage of skilled labour and technicians side by side with the persistence of high unemployment rates in certain regions of the Community, the importance of vocational training in improving workers' living conditions was all too evident: it represented 'a link between demographic and technological development'<sup>(9)</sup>. Of course attempts

could be made to solve the problem of skilled labour shortages by means of intergovernmental agreements or the intervention of the newly created European Social Fund, but, according to Levi Sandri: 'the Community's economic policy and above all its social policy call rather for a vocational training policy ... which, as the Treaty intends, must be a common policy'<sup>(10)</sup>.

Thus the general principles were conceived not in the abstract, not in theory, but as 'precepts that must be effectively imposed on the activity of States'<sup>(11)</sup>.

As the Commission stated clearly on this subject: to plan for a common vocational training policy when its principles are not binding on the Member States would in practice be tantamount to not establishing a common vocational training policy at all. It is clear that the term 'general principles' entails rules of conduct and the idea of a tangible result to be achieved. The act to be adopted, therefore, is of such a nature as to be binding on the Member States by virtue of the general obligation imposed on them by Article 5; it ensures that, in matters of vocational training, the Member States must align their attitudes and their actions with the general principles that are to be laid down<sup>(12)</sup>.

On several occasions the Commission made an effort to stress the mandatory nature of the principles laid down pursuant to Article 128, in an obvious attempt to exclude any likelihood that Governments might apply them according to their national rules and each country in the light of its own priorities, which would have rendered the very idea of a common policy meaningless.

Regarding the long-term outlook, Levi Sandri said he was in full agreement with Maria Weber, the representative of German unions on the ECS, on the idea that, in the transitional period of establishing the common market, an irreversible process should be started up that would bring the Member States up to a common level of vocational training<sup>(13)</sup>. This gradual harmonisation of their training systems called for the development of actions based on common programmes and initiatives; in consequence the Commission should have assumed the role of a true prime mover of the common policy rather than that of a mere coordinator of the Member States' initiatives. In the words of Levi Sandri: 'One cannot accept certain proposals

<sup>(5)</sup> See Gerbet, 1994; p. 214. See also ASCE, CM2/1960, 46. Exposé fait par M. Petrilli au cours de la 37e session du Conseil [Address by Mr Petrilli during the 37th session of the Council], 27/9/1960.

<sup>(6)</sup> See ASCE, BAC 173/1995, 2822, Coreper - Extrait du procès verbal, problèmes relatifs à l'accélération [Extract from the minutes, problems relating to acceleration], 14/7/1961, stating that 'the Italian Representative confirmed his Government's interest in the early presentation of a Commission proposal establishing general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy'.

<sup>(7)</sup> For the final version of the principles see *Principi generali per l'attuazione di una politica comune di formazione professionale* [General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy], 26/9/1961, *op. cit.*

<sup>(8)</sup> General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy - Draft, 8/2/1961, *op. cit.*, in particular pp. 7-8, on the economic and social foundations for the Commission action. It is of interest that the document stressed that the improvement of working conditions could not be left solely to the workings of the free market which, 'according to economic theory and experience', would have accentuated the economic and social imbalances existing in the Community. Neither, moreover, would an 'authoritarian' labour policy have been acceptable. All things considered, a common vocational training policy was the most suitable means 'of creating a social situation as a precursor to an employment policy meeting the general objectives of the Treaty'.

<sup>(9)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(10)</sup> Exposé de M. Levi Sandri devant le Comité économique et social [Address by Mr Levi Sandri to the Economic and Social Committee], 1/3/1962, *op. cit.*

<sup>(11)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(12)</sup> General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy, 26/9/1961, *op. cit.*

<sup>(13)</sup> Exposé de M. Levi Sandri devant le Comité économique et social [Address by Mr Levi Sandri to the Economic and Social Committee], 1/3/1962, *op. cit.*



that would reduce these [the Commission's] powers, proposals that would probably compromise the very implementation of the common policy.'<sup>(14)</sup>

This 'active' concept of the Commission's role was embodied in the fourth principle, according to which the Commission, to ensure the implementation of the common vocational training policy, was to: 'make concrete proposals to the Council, adopt any other appropriate initiative, indicate the order of priority of actions, monitor their development, arrange for their coordination and verify their results'<sup>(15)</sup>.

In particular the Community executive could formulate common study and research programmes and in general propose 'practical realisations' whose implementation would be entrusted to the Member States 'on its [the Commission's] impetus' (in the French version, 'sous son impulsion'), in virtually unlimited time and space, since both short- and long-term projects were discussed, relating both to individual national situations and to the Community as a whole.<sup>(16)</sup> The same principle provided for the creation of an advisory committee on vocational training, consisting of an equal number of representatives of the competent national authorities, trade unions and employers' associations, with the task of assisting the Commission in its action in this field.

Incidentally, it is of interest that in the first version of the principles, dated February 1961 (the final version was approved in September), the fourth principle also included the creation of a European information, documentation and research centre whose terms of reference were to disseminate documentation and information on vocational training, and to study, as directed by the Commission, technical questions associated with the realisation of a common policy.<sup>(17)</sup> This wording disappeared in subsequent versions, in which the Commission itself absorbed en bloc the functions that had in principle been assigned to the European centre for vocational training.

As is apparent the Commission had lofty ambitions, which were received with some perplexity even in those circles most in favour of more integrationist ideas.

In the European Parliament (whose opinion, although not required by Article 128, was

nonetheless sought by the Council, in response to pressure from the Commission)<sup>(18)</sup>, some MEPs raised the problem of respecting specific national characteristics in education, stating that 'the EEC cannot go further than permitted by the established structures in the Member States'.<sup>(19)</sup> Levi Sandri, who was present during the debate, assured the Assembly that the Commission 'does not intend to interfere with problems that come within the purview of Member States'.

The ESC (whose opinion was not a requirement but was sought, as for the Parliament) expressed doubts as the Advisory Committee specified under the fourth principle might in some way be marginalised by an over-partisan Commission. Here again, Levi Sandri intervened to give an assurance that the Commission intended to 'proceed in close contact with the categories concerned'.<sup>(20)</sup>

Despite the doubts generated by certain aspects of the proposal, it can be stated that on the whole the two institutions supported the Commission's grand design. Both expressed favourable opinions, although many amendments to the text presented by the Commission were suggested, especially by the Assembly.<sup>(21)</sup> Nevertheless, as regards the key point of the project, the Commission's power of initiative, the report presented by the Parliament's Social Committee emphasised: 'the vital importance of the action of initiative and incentive assigned to the Executive body of the EEC for the implementation of the common policy. ... It is essential to give the EEC Commission powers enabling it to adopt initiatives of common interest'.<sup>(22)</sup>

In other words, the European Parliament came out in full support of the idea of a leading role for the Commission in the sphere of common vocational training policies, including its right of initiative.

Reactions from the Governments were naturally very different. Almost a year after the European Parliament had given its opinion, a delay that was found surprising in Community circles<sup>(23)</sup>, the Council finally examined the draft principles at a meeting on 21 February 1963.<sup>(24)</sup> On that occasion the Ministers of Labour were given the task of representing their Governments. The Commission was represented by its President, Walter Hallstein, and by Levi Sandri. The discussion focused on the wording of the fourth principle. There were two opposing ideas,

<sup>(14)</sup> Idem.

<sup>(15)</sup> General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy, 26/9/1961, op. cit.

<sup>(16)</sup> Idem.

<sup>(17)</sup> General principles for implementing a common vocational training policy - Draft, 8/2/1961, op. cit.

<sup>(18)</sup> See ASCE, CM2/1961 57. Procès verbal de la 53e session du Conseil de la CEE [Minutes of the 53rd session of the EEC Council], Brussels 23-25/10/1961. The 10 principles were officially brought to the attention of the Council on 3 October 1961. See ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 140. Letter from Mr Hallstein to the President of the EEC Council, 3/10/1961. Note that in his letter Mr Hallstein asked the Council to discuss the principles as early as at the meeting of 23 October next, demonstrating both the priority that the Commission attached to the question and perhaps an under-estimate of the resistance that the planned principles might arouse among national governments. In the October session, the Council did not enter into the merits of the principles but merely gave its unanimous approval to the idea of consulting the Parliamentary Assembly and the ESC.

<sup>(19)</sup> ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1618. Note d'information-Consultation relative à la proposition de la Commission [Information-Consultation note on the Commission proposal], 4/4/1962, in which there is a summary of the debate in the Assembly. The meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly was held on 30 March.

<sup>(20)</sup> See as regards the debate in the ESC: ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1618. Compte-rendu des délibérations XXe session [Minutes of the discussions in the 20th session], 1/3/1962. The statements by Levi Sandri are in: Exposé de M. Levi Sandri devant le Comité économique et social [Mr Levi Sandri's address to the Economic and Social Committee], 1/3/1962, op. cit.

<sup>(21)</sup> See the amended text of the principles as proposed by the Assembly in ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1618. Consultation demandée par le Conseil de la CEE à l'Assemblée Parlementaire Européenne [Consultation requested by the EEC Council of the European Parliamentary Assembly], 2/4/1962.

<sup>(22)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 142, APE, Report on behalf of the Social Committee, 21/3/1962. See also the reports on the Commission debates in ASCE, BAC 173/1995, 2829. Nevertheless, the Assembly remained more cautious about the Commission's powers of initiative. It is significant that, in the wording of the fourth principle, the Parliament had proposed replacing the expression *sous son impulsion* [on its impetus] by the words *sur sa demande* [at its request], with reference to the Commission's action in dealings with Member States in the performance of the projects formulated by itself.

<sup>(23)</sup> See the written question submitted on 29 October 1962 by the Dutch Socialist Deputy, Mr Nederhorst, the Chairman of the European Assembly's Social Committee, to find out the reasons for the delay, and the Commission reply on 29 December 1962, in ASCE, BAC 1/1970, 638.

<sup>(24)</sup> ASCEM CN2/1963, 0009. Procès verbal de la 96e session du Conseil de la CEE tenue à Bruxelles le 21/2/1963 [Minutes of the 96th session of the EEC Council held in Brussels on 21/1/1963], 26/4/1963.



one of them ruling out the competence of the Community institutions for the formulation and application of vocational training policies, the other affirming that competence. The French Minister Mr Grandval and, even more decisively, the German Minister Mr Blank, were the spokesmen for the former argument. According to the French Minister, the Commission seemed 'to have the intention of going beyond its function of guiding the policies of Member States and to want to take direct action within national economies'. In Mr Blank's opinion, it was advisable for 'the Commission to content itself ... with making its views and opinions known to the Member States; it would then be for the Member States to act in due awareness of the facts'. Unless this was accepted, Germany could not give its consent to a text authorising the Commission to make proposals to the Council that the Council, according to the dictates of the Treaty, could reject only by a unanimous agreement. To avoid this possibility, the German Government proposed that the Commission might make proposals on vocational training only to the Member States. In this way, each State would retain its freedom to choose whether or not to follow the Commission's guidance. As the German Minister stated: 'In matters of vocational training, the Member States are competent: any text not recognising this situation would go beyond the Treaty.'<sup>(25)</sup>

In addition to their views on the question of competence, the French and German delegations stated their opposition to the wording of the 10th principle, which provided for joint financing for certain types of measures directed towards attaining the objectives of the vocational training policy. According to the two ministers, this provision should be excluded, leaving it to the discretion of individual countries to choose the means of funding.

The Commission's project also found supporters within the Council. The firmest support for the arguments put forward by the Commissioners came from Italy. In the light of the considerations described above, the reasons for that support can readily be understood: Italy was the country with the greatest interest in the creation of a genuinely common policy on vocational training, especially with the prospect that it might lead to the harmonisation of national training standards for workers in employment, a pre-

requisite for the free movement of workers in the common market - one of Italy's main objectives in taking part in European integration.<sup>(26)</sup> As a result, in the face of Franco-German resistance, the Italian Minister, Mr Bertinelli, put forward a compromise formula to the effect that the Commission could present its proposals to the Council in the first instance and, 'depending on the circumstances', to the Member States as well.

After a prolonged debate culminating in the replacement of the word 'proposals' by the word 'measures', which the French delegation saw as less binding and of more limited legal scope, the Council came to vote on a text that incorporated the compromise solution put forward by the Italians. Four delegations voted in favour, and two - the French and the German - against. With regard to the question of the funds to back the common policy, approval was given - again with the French and German delegations voting against - to the Netherlands' proposal, i.e. that vocational training policy 'could' become the object of joint funding, but in essence that the decision on the methods of funding would be deferred to a later date.

### **The 1965 Action Programme**

After a difficult run-up period the final version of the principles was adopted by the Council in a decision of 2 April 1963. In a second decision reached on 18 December 1963, the Council approved the statutes of the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training.<sup>(27)</sup> The Committee consisted of 36 members, i.e. 2 government representatives, 2 union representatives and 2 employers' representatives per Member State. It was chaired by a representative of the Commission. Levi Sandri, who in the meanwhile had become Vice President of the Commission, took on this task for the first few years of the Committee's work. The address by Levi Sandri himself on the occasion of the first meeting of the Committee, on 29 June 1964, gives a comprehensive picture of the Commission's vocational training programmes following the approval of the general principles.<sup>(28)</sup>

According to the Vice President of the Commission, the common training policy was to be the outcome of concerted action of Member States and Community institutions based on the general principles. The first step would be to lay down guidelines for Community interventions, setting an order of priority in the

<sup>(25)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(26)</sup> On the relations between European integration and emigration policies in Italian politics, see Romero, 1991 and 1993.

<sup>(27)</sup> See the documentation in ASCE, BAC 6/1984, 969 and BAC 6/1977, 679.

<sup>(28)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 467. Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT). Discours introductif prononcé par M. Levi Sandri [introductory address by Mr Levi Sandri], 29/6/1964.

<sup>(29)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(30)</sup> For example, Levi Sandri recalled, based on the proposals formulated by the Commission, on 8 May 1964 the first common programme for the exchange of young workers was approved. Levi Sandri also mentioned a whole series of initiatives designed to establish collaboration in the field of information and research on vocational training with national bodies (such as the University of Frankfurt and Cologne, the Humanitarian Society of Milan) and international bodies (Centre d'information sur la formation professionnelle in Geneva, an organisation closely linked with the ILO). The Commission then embarked wholeheartedly in 1964 on organising an international conference on vocational training, held in Brussels from 16 to 20 November 1964. See the conference proceedings in ASCE, BAC 1/1970, 637 and ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 467, Note d'information concernant le Colloque sur la formation professionnelle [Information note on the vocational training colloquium on vocational training], 23/9/1964.

<sup>(31)</sup> ASCE, BAC 6/1977, 679. Projet de programme d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionnelle [Draft action programme on a common vocational training policy], 1964, but undated.



light of the principles and establishing the more pressing needs. With this in mind, declared Levi Sandri, 'the Commission intends to act as a catalyst for the will of Member States' <sup>(29)</sup>. In particular, pursuant to the fifth principle, it would be the responsibility of the Commission to set up a permanent network for exchange of information among Member States and between them and the Commission, to promote the fruitful pooling of experience with the various vocational training programmes set up at national level. But above all, according to the Italian Commissioner, the aim of the Community action should be the development of training systems and their adaptation in line with economic change and technical progress. Levi Sandri made a point of recalling all the efforts that had been made by the Commission up to that moment <sup>(30)</sup>, but he felt that the time was now ripe for more structured action, for putting the 10 principles into practice. In the Commission's opinion, because the principles were generic and often theoretical, there was a need for 'the objectives of the common vocational training policy and the procedures adopted to attain the ESC objectives to be specified and prioritised ... by defining a general guideline for the action envisaged and by outlining a framework in which that action should be placed.' <sup>(31)</sup>.

To achieve that objective, over 1964 the Commission devoted itself to drafting an Action Programme on common vocational training policy (divided into two parts, one more specifically on agriculture, the other on other fields of work). The end objective of the common action, as defined in the Action Programme, was to establish a system offering 'all young people of the Community, and when necessary adults, an appropriate opportunity for training' <sup>(32)</sup>. The Programme was intended, as was explicitly stated in the general considerations, to be an intermediate stage between the 10 principles and the concrete proposals that the Commission would be presenting to the Council or Member States. A set of short- and long-term actions was planned that should make it possible: 'gradually to implement a common VT policy that might contribute to the harmonious development of both national economies and the common market, accelerate the raising of living standards and improve the prospects of employment for workers, whether in employment or self-employed' <sup>(33)</sup>.

Under the short-term measures the aim was

essentially to promote, through training and retraining, the use of the potential resources of manpower within the Community, as well as the transfer of workers from sectors in which there was a surplus of labour towards those where there were shortages. To this end, there were plans for the development and improvement of Community initiatives aimed at creating accelerated training programmes for adult workers.

Among the long-term measures, the document placed priority on developing training structures, programmes and methods, particularly in developing regions and those at risk of economic decline. To achieve this, importance was attached to training teaching staff and instructors and to permanent training of the work force, so that there could be an adequate response to the demands created by technological advances.

Another priority indicated in the document was the harmonisation of training standards, a result that was 'one of the fundamental objectives of the common policy', in the words of Levi Sandri <sup>(34)</sup>, so that the principle of the freedom of movement of workers and the right of establishment could apply in full. In consequence, harmonisation should relate in the first place to those occupations and qualifications that accounted for the highest rates of emigration within the Community.

In May 1965, after consulting the Advisory Committee, the Commission adopted the Action Programme, which was submitted to other Community institutions for consideration <sup>(35)</sup>. The Parliament gave its favourable opinion in March 1966 <sup>(36)</sup>. In May that year, one of the working groups coming under the Council of Ministers, the Group on social questions, examined the document <sup>(37)</sup>. Within the Group, the German and Netherlands delegations observed that the breakdown of responsibilities between the Community and the Member States had not been made sufficiently clear in the action programme. For its part, the French delegation formally stated its reservations, observing that the Commission proposals went beyond the field of vocational training proper in certain significant aspects. In the opinion of the French delegation, they extended to questions that were the exclusive competence of Member States (relating in particular to employment policy, policy on school education and regional policy). The French delegation pointed out that some of the actions envisaged raised problems of fund-

<sup>(28)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(29)</sup> ASCE, BAC 6/1977, 685. Programme d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionnelle en général [Action programme on a common vocational training policy in general], un-dated.

<sup>(30)</sup> CCFP. Discours introductif prononcé par M. Levi Sandri [Introductory speech by Mr Levi Sandri], 29/6/1964, *op. cit.*

<sup>(31)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 468. Discours introductif prononcé par M. Levi Sandri [Extract from the minutes of the 316th meeting of the Commission], 5/5/1965. ASCE, BAC 6/1977, 685, CCFP. Avis sur le Programme d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionnelle [Opinion on the action programme on the common vocational training policy], 19/3/1965.

<sup>(32)</sup> See the documentation in ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. The Parliament's favourable opinion was issued on 11 March 1966.

<sup>(33)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. Working Party on Social Questions, Note-Action programmes established by the Commission, 9/5/1966.

<sup>(34)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. Texte proposé par la délégation italienne [Text proposed by the Italian delegation], 21/9/1966.

<sup>(35)</sup> See the declarations by the Commission representative to Coreper in ASCE, CM/AI 31452. Note-Programmes d'action établis par la Commission [Note-Action Programmes established by the Commission], Coreper Meeting 5/10/1966. See also ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1619. Note à l'attention de MM. les membres de la Commission [Note for the attention of Commission members], 14/10/1966.



ing, and for this reason the Programme could only be in the nature of guidance, since any concrete commitments would have required a unanimous decision by the Governments. Along these lines, the delegation proposed that Governments come to an agreement on concrete initiatives, without defining a general doctrine on funding. In the same spirit, Germany expressed the view that it was preferable not to adopt a specific position on all the actions covered by the Programme but to do so on a case-by-case basis. This was clearly an attempt by the Governments to impose compartmentalisation of the Commission's projects in such a way as to exclude any form of supranationality.

The Italian delegation alone rallied to the defence of the Commission's approach, expressing the opinion that the Council should not confine itself merely to taking note of the Programme. Italy proposed that a draft declaration be presented to the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) to the effect that the Council stressed on the one hand the need to maintain an overall vision of the vocational training initiatives and, on the other, the value of an action leading to the mutual recognition of occupational qualifications to facilitate free movement of workers. According to the declaration proposed by the Italians, the Council should call on the Commission to present it with projects that would enable the Action Programme to be implemented<sup>(38)</sup>. The Italian position did not gain support from the other delegations. The Commission itself stated that it would withdraw the request for the Council to deliberate on its Programme, whose indicative and general nature - it affirmed - it recognised<sup>(39)</sup>. Given that position, Italy softened its position and withdrew its requests. The Council merely took note of the Action Programme, without discussing it.

What was the reason for this retreat by the Commission? In my opinion, the explanation is to be sought in two kinds of factors. In the first place, the general political climate: we were in the period immediately following the end of the 'empty chair' crisis that was resolved by the Luxembourg compromise (e.g. Gerbet, 1994, pp. 269-284). It may therefore be assumed that the change in the Commission's attitude was also due to its defeat in the confrontation with France. On reflection, France's intransigence too can be interpreted as a consequence of the institutional crisis of the previous months. Se-

condly, part of the explanation can be traced back to events more closely linked with vocational training, specifically the failure of the Commission's first concrete initiative in this field.

In late June 1965, a few weeks after the action programme was presented, the Commission forwarded a proposed decision to the Council, to be adopted by a majority, on implementing an accelerated vocational training programme<sup>(40)</sup>. The Commission intended the initiative as at least a partial response to a real problem. It should be borne in mind that in 1964 there was a serious shortage of manpower in some of the countries of 'little Europe': in Germany, for example, 600 000 jobs were unfilled due to lack of skilled manpower. In Italy, on the contrary, according to the official figures there were 1 200 000 unemployed people. As the Commission wrote: 'There are currently acute shortages of skilled labour in the Community and ... they are so great as to compromise the balanced expansion of the Community economy ... Italy alone is in a position to offer a surplus work force that could be trained to take up jobs in the other Member States.'<sup>(41)</sup>.

From a legal and political viewpoint, the Commission's proposal was based not only on its recently launched Action Programme but also on the general principles, more specifically - as pointed out in the preliminary statement in the proposal - on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> principles, in other words those under heaviest fire from the Governments. The pressure originated from the Advisory Committee which, in its favourable opinion on the Action Programme delivered in March, had pointed out the need to study measures that would contribute towards eliminating existing imbalances on the labour market and had recommended the 'implementation of special accelerated vocational training programmes in the light of shortages of skilled manpower and surpluses of unskilled workers'<sup>(42)</sup>. The Committee expressly suggested proceeding with implementing an accelerated vocational training programme.

Accepting the Committee's opinion, the Commission drew up a training programme for 3 000 Italian workers aged up to 35 who were prepared to seek employment in the building, metallurgical and hotel industries in a Member State other than their own. The courses were to last from eight months to a

<sup>(40)</sup> ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 468. Proposition de décision du Conseil présentée par la Commission au Conseil [Proposed Council decision presented by the Commission to the Council], 29/6/1965, attachment, Levi Sandri to Couve de Murville, 1/7/1965.

<sup>(41)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(42)</sup> Advisory Committee on Vocational Training. Avis sur le Programme d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionnelle [Opinion on the action programme on the common vocational training policy], 19/3/1965, *op. cit.*

<sup>(43)</sup> There were plans to make available to the initiative a budget with an upper limit of slightly over 6 million units of account, broken down as follows: approximately 1 700 000 u.a. for 1965, the balance to be spent in 1966.

<sup>(44)</sup> See ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. Council, Note-Proposed Council decision, 3/5/1966.

<sup>(45)</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>(46)</sup> In this hypothesis, due to ESF funding mechanisms, the quota to be borne by Italy would be increased by 85 %, whereas the quota for France and Germany would be reduced by 20 % and 42 % respectively.



year depending on the sector of employment and were to be held partly in Italy and partly in France and Belgium. The participants were to be entitled to pay and conditions that were equivalent, in France and Belgium, to those of their own workers attending public vocational training centres. For Italy the terms of remuneration specified included, in addition to the monthly indemnity, a bonus payable on completing the course and a contribution towards the person's transfer abroad. The funding required in implementing the programme was to be charged against the Community budget (43).

The Commission's plans came up against the opposition of the Governments, here again with the exception of Italy. In the debate within the Working Party on Social Questions held over the course of six meetings from the end of March to late April 1966, nobody disputed the social and economic advisability of the proposal (44). What gave rise to the strongest opposition were the political and financial implications of the project. As the Italian delegation pointed out, this particular initiative was of great political significance, going far beyond the frankly modest impact that it might have on conditions on the labour markets: if it became reality, it would be the first concrete Community measure in vocational training to be implemented by common funding, establishing a significant precedent (45). But for the very reason of ruling out any Community competence in what was regarded as the sole domain of national governments, the other delegations proposed that the Commission programme be shelved and that in its place a series of multilateral or bilateral agreements between Italy and the other Member States be reached, or that there should be recourse to the Social Fund. Besides the question of principle as regards competence, underlying the dispute there was also the problem of sharing the costs entailed in setting up the programme. Under the system proposed by the Commission, the burden would be shared in equal parts among the three largest countries, with a significant contribution from the others. If recourse were to be made to the Social Fund, Italy would have had to foot only half of the necessary expenditure (46).

Faced with such opposition, the proposal foundered and was replaced by a series of intergovernmental agreements. This repre-

sented a complete failure of the Commission's attempt to propose itself as the driving force of a common vocational training policy.

In the years that followed, the Commission redirected its efforts to less ambitious objectives of more limited scope. The focus was on studying measures for the harmonisation of vocational qualifications, in application of the eighth general principle. This was an undertaking that, if extended to all labour markets, would have placed an excessive burden on the limited structures and competences available to the Community. It was therefore decided to concentrate the efforts of the Commission and the Advisory Committee on occupations occupied by a large number of people, which were of concern to the Community as a whole and which were of some importance in terms of freedom of movement (47). Based on these three criteria, the industries selected were engineering and building. The objective was to draw up a Community list of the skills required in each trade and to promote its adoption at national level. In 1967 the Commission sent the Council a preliminary proposal on the qualifications for an 'average-level turner'. This was followed by the qualifications of a 'milling machine setter-operator' and a 'grinding machine operator', the three lists being combined into a single Occupational monograph for the training of skilled machine tool workers.

But even in such a technical context, the Commission's work had to reckon with the opposition of the French Government, which disputed the chosen method on the grounds that it might lead to the undervaluation of specific national characteristics and a crystallisation of the skills required to work in trades subject to constant technological change. According to the French delegation in the Working Party on Social Questions: 'The Commission's project .... in practice aims to lay down a single content that Member States should give to training. Fixing an average level would, therefore, create serious problems for the Member States, which would continue to be responsible for establishing and adapting standards to be imposed on the various vocational training systems' (48).

Because of the French opposition, the work of the Commission was suspended in July 1968 by a Council decision, until such time

(43) See ASCE, CM/AI 31457, Council. Nota-Formazione professionale: raccapriccimento progressivo dei livelli di formazione [Note-Vocational training: gradual harmonisation of training standards], 15/12/1967, summarising the statements of a Commission representative to the Working Party on Social Questions on the state of the art as regards the harmonisation of training levels. See also ASCE, BAC 64/1984, 969. L'action des Communautés européennes en faveur de l'harmonisation de la formation professionnelle [The action of the European Communities in favour of the harmonisation of vocational training], 9/10/1968. This is the text of the statement by the Commission's Director General for the Social Affairs, Mr Vink, at a conference organised by the European institute for vocational training.

(44) See ASCE, CM/AI 31457. Note-Formation professionnelle: rapprochement progressif des niveaux de formation [Note-vocational training: gradual harmonisation of training standards], 23/1/1968.

(45) See ASCE, CM/AI 31457. Extrait du procès verbal de la 44e session du Conseil [Extract from the minutes of the 44th session of the Council], 9/7/1968, taking note of the conclusions reached by the Working Party on Social Questions in ASCE, BAC 173/1995, 2840, Note-Formation professionnelle: rapprochement progressif des niveaux de formation [Note-Vocational Training: gradual harmonisation of training standards] 17/7/1968.

(46) ASCE, CM2/1969, 50. Procès verbal de la 90e session du Conseil [Minutes of the 90th meeting of the Council], 24-25/11/1969.

(47) See ASCE, CM/AI 31441 Conclusioni e suggerimenti presentati dalla Commissione al Consiglio dopo lo scambio di opinioni del 25/11/1969 [Conclusions and suggestions presented by the Commission to the Council after the exchange of opinions of 25/11/1969], 20/4/1970, enclosure to Bodson, V. (member of the Commission) to Harmel, P. (President of the EEC Council), 24/4/1970 and the Commission intervention reported in ASCE, CM/AI 31389, Note-Travaux dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle [Note-Work in the field of vocational training], 8/7/1970.

(48) ASCE, CM/AI 31389. Note du Gouvernement français sur les activités communautaires en matière de formation professionnelle [French Government Note on Community activities in matters of vocational training], 16/11/1970.



as a working method could be established that was accepted by all the delegations<sup>(49)</sup>. As a result the Community action ultimately came to a true impasse at the end of the decade.

### The 1972 Action Programme

The impasse was overcome, at least in part, in late November 1969, a few days before the Hague Conference. The Council met to discuss the situation on the labour markets in the Community. The exchange of ideas among the Ministers, at which Levi Sandri was also present, highlighted the persisting shortage of skilled labour in industry in every Member State and the existence of pockets of long-term unemployment, at a time when unemployment rates were generally falling<sup>(50)</sup>. There was a consensus among the Ministers on the stress on the importance of vocational training in maintaining a qualitative and quantitative equilibrium on the labour market, and they stated their agreement as to the need to develop studies and research, encouraging the exchange of experience at Community level. The Italian delegation called for an intensification of the efforts to arrive at more specific commitments at the Community level. At the end of the session, the Council approved a declaration calling on the Commission to present its assessment and suggestions regarding vocational training for adults.

The Commission presented its proposals in April 1970. At the Community level, the Commission suggested developing statistical instruments, intensifying the exchange of information and experience and improving the coordination of research undertaken by the Member States<sup>(51)</sup>. It will be noted that the outlook had changed from the high ambitions of the early 1960s. The only exception to this low-profile policy was the proposal to consider the possibility, suggested by the ESC, of setting up a European Institute for the scientific study of vocational training.

In November the French Government, in response to the Commission's tentative proposals, presented a note on the Community's activities on the subject of training, and this became the basis for the initiatives that were to be introduced over the next three years<sup>(52)</sup>. In its document the French Government set out a severe critique of Community activities in vocational training. In particular the general principles were criticised for

their over-generic nature, which had made it impossible to arrive at 'many practical achievements or those of appreciable interest'; the paper glossed over the contribution that had been made to that disappointing result by the resistance of the governments.

According to the French Government, a new programme of activities should be established with the aim of developing the exchange of information and harmonisation of training standards.

There should be a new basis for pursuing the second objective compared with the past; in other words, the approach should no longer be to take every single qualification into consideration but to look at more general groups of trades and functions, the aim being a constantly evolving description of new working methods rather than a static record of practices that were bound to age very rapidly.

Lastly, France proposed that common actions be conducted in sectors which by their nature required international cooperation or had particularly close associations with Community policies. More specifically, the following were indicated as possible fields for common action:

- (a) language learning for emigrant workers;
- (b) the production of special teaching instruments (such as computers and simulators);
- (c) collaboration on or the exchange of radio and television programmes;
- (d) the development of Community programmes for training in trades in which new problems are arising in connection with technological developments (such as information technology, numerical control machine tools, etc.).

The other delegations received the French proposals favourably<sup>(53)</sup>. It is of interest that the German delegation agreed fully with the negative assessment of the general principles of 1963 and the initiatives that ensued and that nonetheless, rather than sheltering behind the generic criticism of their abstract nature, to a certain extent it ultimately acknowledged the true reason for their failure: 'ESC principles attempt to define above all a number of competences and convey the

<sup>(53)</sup> See the debate within the Group for Social Questions in ASCE, CM/AI 31389, Note-Work in the field of vocational training, 11/1/1971.

<sup>(54)</sup> *Idem*. See also ASCE, CM/AI 31459, Note-Opinion of the German delegation on the work in the field of vocational training, 24/2/1971.

<sup>(55)</sup> ASCE, CM/AI 30661. General guidelines for the formulation of a programme of activities at Community level on vocational training, 27/7/1971. For the debate within the Working Party on Social Questions, see the voluminous documentation in ASCE, CM/AI 31459.

<sup>(56)</sup> ASCE, CM/AI 31416. First measures for the implementation of a common vocational training policy, 25/10/1972.

<sup>(57)</sup> ASCE, CM/AI 31419. European Parliament, Report drawn up on behalf of the Committee on social affairs and employment, 5/6/1973.

<sup>(58)</sup> *Idem*.



impression that it is only the Commission that can take effective action ... This approach could not lead to satisfactory results ..., and it would moreover be wise not to refer back to certain action programmes that the Commission has formulated in the past.'<sup>(54)</sup>.

Based on the French note, an intensive debate developed within the Working Party on Social Questions, leading to the Council's adoption of a document containing basic guidelines for possible Community action in vocational training<sup>(55)</sup>. These guidelines, which to a great extent reflected the ideas put forward by the French delegation, were accepted in full by the Commission, which took it as a basis for a new action programme that first saw the light in October 1972<sup>(56)</sup>. It should be noted how the decision-making process had been reversed compared to the past: now the Commission followed on in turn, after the Governments had taken the initiative. As pointed out by the Report of the European Parliament's Social Committee, the new document represented a step backward from the programme of 1965<sup>(57)</sup>. The scope of the measures envisaged was modest, mainly consisting of promoting cooperation and the exchange of ideas and information among Member States. Obviously there was no provision for any independent action on the part of the Commission. Moreover, the author of the report noted, the Commission itself, in implicitly admitting that the programme was limited, suggested that it be integrated into a future plan of action for the purpose of implementing the common vocational training policy, including it in the framework of the social action programme whose preparation had been entrusted to the Commission by the Paris summit of October 1972<sup>(58)</sup>.

In a few months' time the socio-political climate within the Community was to change drastically. The economic crisis that signalled the end of the 'golden age' of capitalism was to force Western societies to confront a range of problems, and many of what had seemed to be accepted findings were being challenged again. In this new and difficult situation, which forced the States to think about different ways of overcoming it, some of the projects devised in the early 1960s were taken up again. One of these was the idea, included in the first version of the general principles, of creating a European vocational training institute.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to go back to the question I asked at the beginning: why, during the first decade of the Community's life, did the attempts to breathe life into a common vocational training policy fail?

One could find various explanations by following the traces of the succession of events over the period in consideration: opposition from certain Member States, who were reluctant to cede their national powers to the Community in a sector that, however secondary it might seem, in fact involved substantial interests in countries such as Germany and France whose vocational training was highly developed; a measure of imprudence on the part of the Commission, which was unable to keep the over-integrationist pressures under control and thus aroused hostility among the Governments towards projects judged to be too 'audacious'. And again, the projects presented by the Commission could be studied in detail to reveal the weaknesses and shortcomings that were part of the reasons for them foundering.

But the basic reason, and the aspect that makes the study of a relatively secondary element of European construction significant, is one seemingly so far from the heart of the crucial political issues: that the same forces were in play in vocational training as those that determined the course of integration at higher levels. In other words, in the microcosm represented by the attempts to construct a common vocational training policy we can trace the effects of the omnipresent dialectic between intergovernmental momentum and supranational pressures. For instance, in the early years of the decade we see a Commission trying to emerge as an equal partner with the individual nations, one way being its affirmation of its competence in matters of training, as well as in the familiar matters of the funding of common policies, commercial policy, etc. This attempt provoked reactions from some of the Governments, which in turn restricted the scale of the Commission's ambitions. This produced the 'empty chair' policy and, on the more 'modest' level with which we are concerned here, a true boycott of the application of the general principles that were to have guided common vocational training policy and the other Commission initiatives in this field. At the end of the decade, with the new phase launched by the Hague Conference and continuing in so-



cial policy, due to the pressure of the crisis that put an end to the '30 glorious years', with the Action Programme of 1974, discussions started again – albeit on a different footing from the past – on common training policy. In addition, in parallel with the Community dialectic between institutions and governments, a clash of national interests ran alongside and became intertwined with that dialectic. In the course of these events, the

weakest party, Italy, succumbed to the hostility of France and Germany, who were obviously reluctant to take on the financial burdens to restore a social balance for Italy or to relinquish their sovereignty in what was evidently deemed to be an important sector, in spite of the technicality of many issues, since it would affect the prospects for the lives of their citizens and voters.

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### Key words

European construction,  
European Treaty,  
Community policy,  
European Commission,  
training policy,  
vocational training



# The unions and the relaunching of European social policy

## Introduction

An analysis of the role of the unions in promoting a European social policy in the 1970s may be a useful way both of assessing whether social partners are able to exert pressure on governments to shift their attention towards the social dynamics of integration, and of providing food for thought on the length of the route that social policy had to travel in Europe, and how obstacle-strewn was the path taken by the social forces towards launching a dialogue with the Community institutions. The creation of Cedefop in 1975 can be regarded as one of the main achievements of the pressures exerted and claims advanced by the trade unions in their efforts to bring about greater visibility within the EEC and to promote the development of a European policy for employment and vocational training.

This research, conducted at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) of Amsterdam (<sup>1</sup>) and the archives of the Council of Ministers and the Commission in Brussels, has concentrated mainly on the 1970s. It was from the Hague Summit of 1969 and in particular the drafting of the Werner Plan on the creation of an economic and monetary union, that the Community Institutions and European governments, faced with growing unemployment and a serious economic recession, began to draw up the outlines of a social policy paying due attention to employment – a policy not seen as part and parcel of economic integration but as a goal in its own right – and took a wide range of initiatives in the sector of employment and vocational training (<sup>2</sup>).

## The origins of European social policy

Apart from the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), whose founding Treaty contained a considerable number of articles devoted to the welfare of workers and their re-employment following the restructuring

of enterprises, and which gave union representatives adequate representation within the High Authority and the Advisory Committee (Mechi, 1994), the Treaties of Rome had allotted only a marginal role to social policy, regarding it more as an effect of the creation of an integrated market than a goal to be pursued in its own right (Ciampani, 1995a and 2001; Degimbe, 1999). The very concept of social policy seemed complex and diverse, differing from region to region and from actor to actor: for the trade unions and, to some extent, the European institutions, this term covered various aspects of welfare policy, ranging from labour force protection mechanisms to the pension system; for governments it was a way of pursuing specific national interests. The Italian government, for instance, with its long tradition of social diplomacy, considered the development of a European policy for employment to be a necessity if the problem of unemployment, particularly serious in the south of Italy, was to be resolved.

The few paragraphs of the Treaty establishing the principle of free movement of workers within the Community and the institution of a European Social Fund, together with specific measures to guarantee equal pay for men and women, were a concession on the part of the European Governments to the strong pressure exerted by Italian representatives in the Val Duchesse negotiations. The European nations nevertheless maintained control and administered the social effects of economic integration at a national level, preferring to sign bilateral agreements rather than developing a Community-wide employment policy. The Treaty made no provision, moreover, for a political intervention mechanism: Article 118 merely entrusted the Commission with the task of 'promoting close cooperation' among the Member States through analysis, consultation and opinions on employment problems, the right to work, working conditions, vocational training and social security systems



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**The question of European trade unions' approach towards vocational training is an interesting example of a broader issue, involving both the role played by non-governmental actors in shaping the social dimension of the integration process, and the need to develop a social dialogue in the Community. In this context, the establishment of Cedefop in 1975 can be considered one of the main achievements of the protracted pressure and requests from the European trade unions to be better represented in the EC and to develop a series of initiatives aimed at shaping a common European social policy in the field of employment and vocational training.**

(<sup>1</sup>) The author thanks Lorenzo Mecchi and Francesco Petrini of the University of Padua for the documents found at IISH of Amsterdam.

(<sup>2</sup>) For an analysis of the historiographic debate on European social policy, see Geyer, 2000; Hantrais, 2000; Kleinman, 2001; Kowalsky, 2000; Ivor and Springer, 2001; Vandamme (ed), 1984.



(Dølvik, 1999, p. 99), giving the Commission freedom of initiative and governments full control over social policies.

During the 1960s, social questions were not completely overlooked, partly due to the efforts of the Commission and the Economic and Social Committee (ESC), which were particularly active in calling for the promotion of a Community social policy. In practice, however, the social component of integration was swept to one side by the overwhelming interests of France and Germany, directed towards regulating the Common Agricultural Policy and free trade in industrial goods based on the principle of 'synchronisation'. What was in fact institutionalised was a permanent system of *do ut des* - 'give and take'. Just one illustration: the regulations on the free movement of workers were not brought into force until 1968, thanks to the efforts of the Italian Commissioner Lionello Levi Sandri, the prime mover of Regulation 1612/68 on freedom of movement for workers. Another illustration: for the first 10 years of its life the European Social Fund, which was active from 1960, had a minimal amount at its disposal, just ECU 420 million, most of which was earmarked for Italy. The European unions strongly criticised the work of the Fund, as evidenced by a memorandum drafted in October 1969 on the eve of the first reform of the Social Fund, emphasising the limited nature of its interventions: 'The automatism of its interventions, the rigidity of its structure, the complexity of its mechanism, the delays generated by its *a posteriori* criteria for reimbursement, among other factors, have meant that the Fund interventions have been frittered away, without it being possible to coordinate them in a Community perspective' (IISH, 1969).

The half-hearted interest displayed by the creators of the Community in the social component of European construction was reflected both in the exclusion of the unions from the negotiations for the signature of the Treaty of Rome, despite the constant and urgent requests to take part (IISH et al., 1955; Barnouin, 1986; Ciampani, 1995b; Dølvik, 1999; Pasture, 2001), and in the actual role of the body given the task of acting as spokesman for the social partners in Brussels: the ESC, an advisory body that did not receive the right of initiative until 1972 (Varsori, 2000). For their part, European unions

could not say they were satisfied with the limited role assigned by the Treaties of Rome to the social forces, confined as it was to consultation, which could hardly be interpreted as incisive participation in European integration.

The unions' repeated requests to be represented within the Commission or on the Board of Directors of the European Investment Bank remained unheard. In 1964 the Vice President of the Commission, Sicco Mansholt, on the occasion of a meeting with the Executive Committee of the European Trade Union Secretariat (ETUS)<sup>(3)</sup>, reiterated his firm opposition to institutionalising the co-operation with the union movement, preferring what he saw as more fruitful informal contacts<sup>(4)</sup>.

Up to 1967 the Community social dialogue developed exclusively within the advisory committees whose task it was to assist the Commission in tackling the different issues relating to the working world - one of those committees being on vocational training, set up in 1963 - and within the joint committees, consisting of representatives of the unions and employers (Degimbe, 1999, p. 114).

The reasons for this rejection varied in nature: alongside the Commission's desire to retain control of the still embryonic development of social policy, there was the issue of whether the Trade Union Secretariat was truly representative. The rifts within the union movement, reflecting the divisions and tensions brought about by the cold war in the international system (to cite only one instance, the split of the Confédération Générale du Travail, CGT, in France from the Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, CGIL, in Italy), but also the profoundly different approaches and policies of the various federations, had weakened the role and image of the social forces in Europe. Those social forces had their own differing programmes and policies, as demonstrated by the timorous manner in which, during the 1960s, the unions of Northern Europe faced issues associated with social harmonisation, out of fear of a deterioration in working conditions and of coming down to Italian levels.

In addition neither the Christian unions, the Communist organisations, the CGIL nor the

<sup>(3)</sup> ETUS was created in 1958 by the ICFTU. It came into being as a result of the demand by European trade unions of an anti-communist persuasion to coordinate their reciprocal initiatives in dealings with the Community institutions and to win back terrain for union initiatives. It was later renamed the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ECFTU) and was joined by the Scandinavian and British trade unions. In 1974, with the affiliation of the Christian trade unions and the Italian Communist union, CGIL, it became the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

<sup>(4)</sup> The meeting between Sicco Mansholt and the unionists is cited in Guasconi, 1998/1999, p. 249.

<sup>(5)</sup> For an analysis of the historiographic debate that developed on the splitting up of the international organisation, WFTU, see Antonioli et al., 1999; Carew, 1987; Carew et al., 2000; Macshane, 1992.

<sup>(6)</sup> On the position of the CGIL towards European construction see Galante, 1988; Maggiorani, 1998.



CGT were members of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the organisation created in 1949 following the split of the anti-Communist union movements from the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU or FSM) (⁵). The Communist organisations had developed a very critical attitude towards European integration, which was regarded - in line with cold war thinking - as a tool of American imperialism. Only in the course of 1960s did they start to redirect their approach, setting up a standing committee in Brussels in 1966 (⁶). In addition to this, the most powerful European trade union, the TUC in Britain, had been firmly sceptical of European integration, reflecting the position adopted by the British Government right from the creation of the ECSC (Delaney, 2002).

Besides these many different voices in the unions, another factor was the relative lack of interest shown by employers towards closer cooperation with the unions, as demonstrated by the fact that up to 1967 the Union of Industrial and Employer's Confederations of Europe (UNICE) refused to meet representatives of the workers formally, preferring more direct and informal channels through which it could conduct its lobbying (Segreto, 2000).

Up to the 1970s, the limited results achieved in the European environment and the difficulties encountered in arriving at a common stance on Community policy led the European unions to use more traditional means, such as their own national channels, to press their claims and exercise their role. Although the European unions wished to be represented in Brussels, the role they performed was more symbolic and representative than real: their priorities were national initiatives, and they regarded the harmonisation of living and working conditions as an impediment to social progress (Pasture, 2001; p. 97). Despite these views, this first experience of unionism in Europe was not altogether negative, both because unionists came up against situations other than their national experience, something which constituted a process of 'European' training, and because this allowed them contact with influential European politicians such as Jean Monnet, who hoped to see many unionists taking part in his Action Committee.

### **The relaunching of social policy at the end of the 1960s**

The Hague Summit of 1969, in particular the 1970 Werner Plan for the creation of the economic and monetary union, represented a turning point for the interests of the social partners and the progress of social policy in Europe (⁷).

In the course of the conference that marked Europe's passage from the 'six' to the 'nine', with the entry of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom into the EEC, a conference that sanctioned the first attempt to bring about an economic and monetary union, German Chancellor Willy Brandt stressed - albeit in summary terms - the need for social groups to be more actively involved in European integration. At several points the Werner Plan highlighted the need to introduce a dialogue with the social partners as a prerequisite for the effective creation of monetary union (⁸).

The year 1971 saw the first reform of the European Social Fund, and in the following year the Heads of State and Government, meeting at the Paris Summit, solemnly affirmed that they regarded vigorous action in the social field as being as important as European economic and monetary union (Archives Nationales, 1972). They asked the Commission to draw up a social action programme, to be launched in 1974, focusing on three main objectives: full and better employment, an improvement in living and working conditions and greater worker participation in the Community's economic and social decisions.

What were the reasons for the renewed interest among the institutions and European Governments in promoting the dialogue with the social forces and in the development of a European social policy?

- (a) the protest movements of May 1968 that spread to many European nations had highlighted the gradual emergence of new demands and new forces of society;
- (b) the growing economic crisis that, especially with the oil embargo and price rises following on from the Yom Kippur war of 1973, was to affect every European nation, bringing to an end the period of great economic and production growth in the post-war period and in the 1960s. This brought

(⁷) On the Hague Summit see Bitsch, 2001; Guasconi, 2003.

(⁸) On the Werner Plan see: Girault and Poidevin, 2002; Frank, 1995; Bossuat, 1995; Ludlow, 1982; Verdun, 2001; Werner, 1991; Wilkens, 1999.



home the problems associated with unemployment, persuading the European Governments of the need for renewed dialogue with the social partners, above all the unions, which seemed to be playing a far stronger role (as exemplified by the 'hot autumn' of 1969 in Italy);

(c) the forthcoming enlargement of the Community to the countries applying for membership, which raised the problem of how to harmonise profoundly differing social policies in countries which, like United Kingdom, were living through a dramatic industrial decline; it led to a realisation of the need for a European social dimension, side by side with the more specifically economic dimension of integration;

(d) the role played by European partners such as Italy in promoting a Community-wide social policy, not just based on the free movement of workers, as an instrument for solving the problem of depressed areas such as the south of Italy;

(e) lastly, the greater international strength of the unions, exemplified by the creation in 1973 of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), whose membership included the Scandinavian unions, the British trade union movement, the Christian unions and, after prolonged internal struggles and due to the support of the Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions (CISL) and the Unione Italiana del Lavoro (UIL), the CGIL from Italy. The birth of the ETUC was a true turning point for union representation vis-à-vis the Community institutions, as it marked an end to the divisions that featured so prominently in the history of the union movement after the Second World War. The unions now acquired the role of a social interlocutor in the eyes of the European institutions. Although in the early years of its life the unions saw the ETUC as a coordinating body and a Brussels lobbying channel, in 1974 the Confederation had a membership of 17 unions and represented some 36 million workers. It was evident, then, that 'given the historical legacy of splits and rivalry within the labour movement, the establishment of a regional trade union association including unions from all western European countries, most ideological directions and different global internationals, was a significant achievement' (Dølvik, 1999, p. 74).

### The first Tripartite Conference on employment in 1970 and the problem of vocational training

The dramatic prospect of an economic recession and a crisis in the European labour market led the European institutions to devote new attention to social issues and the issues raised by employment.

In April 1970 the first Tripartite Conference on employment was held in Luxembourg, attended by representatives of the unions and employers, the Commission and the Ministers for Labour of the Six. In the memorandum that the unions submitted to the attention of the Council of Ministers on 25 March 1970, the organisations stressed the need to develop a European employment policy, whose objective would be to promote the creation of jobs in regions where there was surplus manpower and encourage movements of manpower from these regions to more productive and expanding sectors, to help match the supply of and demand for jobs, as well as to improve training and vocational training guidance for young people (European Council of Ministers, 30567-b). The report explicitly called for the creation of a standing committee on employment, linked with the reform of the Social Fund (<sup>9</sup>) and made up of representatives of governments, the Commission and the social partners. The aims of this committee, which would have the right of initiative, would be more efficient organisation of the labour market, provision of good vocational training services and better use of existing administrative instruments such as the Social Fund and the European Investment Bank, in part through more effective coordination among the committees working in vocational training and the freedom of movement for workers (European Council of Ministers, 30567-a).

During the Conference the debate focused on the need for a change in the Community's approach to and policy on the employment problem. The policy based solely on free movement for workers had been unsatisfactory, creating regional imbalances, as shown in the case of the south of Italy (<sup>10</sup>). The problem of vocational training was also tackled and debated at length: vocational training was defined as a 'permanent process' (European Council of Ministers, 30565) and a necessary way of bringing about economic growth and improving the prospects

<sup>(9)</sup> The unions had first asked for a standing committee on employment to be set up in their memorandum on the reform of the European Social Fund (IISH, 1969).

<sup>(10)</sup> On the debate during the Conference on employment, see Guasconi, 2003.



of workers. In particular the French union, Force Ouvrière, tabled a plan which was accepted as a basis for the debate (IISH, 1970). The Council of Ministers, in a note drafted after the Conference, stressed the growing importance of vocational training, now seen as an instrument that would help develop an effective policy on employment and provide a key to solving many economic and social problems (European Council of Ministers, 30541).

While the Council asked the Commission to study the problem of vocational training, the Standing Committee on Employment was set up in December 1970 and became one of the first centres of the European social dialogue, the body through which the social partners tried to influence the Community decision-making process. Right from its first meeting, held in Brussels on 18 March 1971, the German union DGB highlighted the importance of vocational training being one of the Committee's priorities and proposed the creation of a European institute for coordination, research and the production of technical and teaching method studies in the fields of vocational training and employment (IISH, 1971a). The European Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ECFTU), the predecessor of the ETUC, was to take up this proposal, presenting it formally during the second meeting of the Committee held in Brussels on 27 May. As the ETUC wrote in its report on the meeting: 'Our delegation stressed the need to go beyond the stage of choosing doctrines and principles and on to the implementation of concrete actions. The creation of a European Institute for the scientific study of vocational training, with the objective of more intensive reciprocal information on actual experience and the methods and programmes used, was called for' (IISH, 1971b).

The union demands were not accepted at the time, partly because they were offset by the lack of interest displayed by the union organisations in the Committee, as evidenced by the fact that no ECFTU leader, either its Secretary-General or its President, took part in the first two meetings. This attitude imprinted a very negative image of the ability of European trade union forces to take an adequate part in the promotion of Community social policy, conveying the impression that, in spite of their Europeanism, the unions preferred national to Community initiatives, something that obviously detracted from the

credibility of the union movement in the eyes of the Council of Ministers and the governments. A similar pattern of behaviour could be linked both with the refusal of the Council of Ministers to recognise the binding power of decisions taken by the Committee (Degimbe, 1999; p. 119) and to the greater importance attached by the European unions to the Tripartite Conferences, in which the Ministers for the Economy and Finance also took part (Barnouin, 1986, p. 89).

### **The European unions and the creation of Cedefop**

The Paris Summit of October 1972 was another turning point in the development of a European social policy. For the first time the Heads of State and Government stressed the need to promote 'vigorous action in the social field', calling on the Commission, with the help of the other Community institutions and the social partners, to outline a social action programme whose objectives would include establishing a common vocational training policy with a view to the step-by-step achievement of its objectives and in particular the harmonisation of vocational training standards, especially by creating a European vocational training centre (IISH, 1974a), something regarded as of the utmost importance. It was clear from this programme that social policy was no longer regarded as a side issue of economic integration but had become a goal in its own right - one however that was not free from risks and ambiguities, as it was very difficult to draw a clear line between this social policy and the economic sector.

This call from the Heads of State and Government was shaped by an explicit request from the European unions which, in June 1972, presented a memorandum for the Summit calling on 'the Community governments and institutions to give practical support to the creation of a European labour institute aimed to train and prepare union leaders for their task of representing workers in terms of the European dimension'. On the subject of vocational training it stated that 'permanent training is not just a generous idea but a fundamental requirement of our times' (IISH, 1972).

Despite this new call for action, the Council and Commission were to regard many aspects of this programme, such as the cre-



ation of a European vocational training centre, with great caution. The Communist unions bitterly criticised this attitude, as demonstrated by a letter sent by the Committee of the CGIL-CGT in Brussels to the President of the ESC, Victor Feather, in June 1973. 'The governmental side,' the unions wrote, 'has expressed reservations on the more significant points of the draft Action Programme submitted for debate, relating to measures on employment, working conditions, vocational training, emigration ... All that it took was to create an incident in order to avoid the debate, and this is what was done with the Council of Ministers' refusal to take account of certain views expressed by the more representative trade unions' (IISH, 1973b).

For its part, the ECFTU reacted to this stonewalling by putting forward numerous proposals, including a social conference in May 1973, to provide a new forum for debate with the Commission and Governments; its main objective was to implement genuine consultation with the social partners who would jointly set the priorities for the programme promoted by the Council of Ministers (IISH, 1973a). This was an occasion to propose once again the creation of a European institute for vocational training with the task of acting as a channel of information, promoting the harmonisation of European training and carrying out pilot programmes aimed at reducing the imbalance between the demand for employment and its supply.

The decision to set up Cedefop did not make it any easier for the European Governments to discuss such important factors as the membership of the management bodies of the new institution, its budget, its functions and the participation of the social partners. In July 1974, during a heated debate at a meeting of the Council of Ministers social group, the UK delegation expressed strong reservations about the creation of Cedefop, while the German delegation bitterly criticised the composition of the Management Board, pointing out that, based on the proposals put forward by the Commission, the social partners, with two thirds of the votes at their disposal, would be able to impose their decisions on the other members (IISH, 1974a). Despite the Commission's attempts to defend its proposals, the German delegation exerted pressure on the other partners to change the composition of the Management Board, thus giving the Governments a majority vote. The

Board was then to consist of nine representatives of the Governments, three of the Commission, six of the unions and six of the employers. There was also disagreement as to the procedures for nominating representatives of the social partners, with the French, Irish and Dutch governments being opposed to union nominations, preferring candidates to be nominated nationally (IISH, 1974b). The unions, for their part, attached great importance to controlling the appointment of the Director, on whom in their opinion the future effectiveness of the Centre would depend (IISH, 1974b).

On 10 February 1975 the Council of Ministers announced the creation of a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop), whose seat would be Berlin. Three months later, on 26 May, the Foundation for Working and Living Conditions was established in Dublin.

The first few years of Cedefop's life were not easy. Most of 1976 was devoted to recruiting staff and drawing up internal regulations. It was not until the end of the year, in December, that Cedefop organised its first study seminar on the problems of youth unemployment in Zandvoort. Staff members complained of their terms of recruitment, which they saw as less advantageous than those of Community staff. The first Director, Karl Jørgensen, decided to resign. In spite of these initial difficulties, the unions proved to be particularly cooperative in promoting the Centre's activities. One example was the appointment of the new Director, Roger Faist, the former Secretary General of the Confédération Française des Travailleurs (CFDT) whose name was put forward by the ETUC following a unanimous vote. This was the outcome of an informal agreement reached with UNICE, the employers' union: UNICE was to control the appointment of the Director of the Dublin Foundation, allowing the trade unions to exert their influence over Cedefop's activities (IISH, 1975).

## Conclusions

During a meeting of the union representatives of Cedefop and the Dublin Foundation in Düsseldorf in June 1978, Maria Weber, the German DGB unionist and, as ETUC member, active promoter of Cedefop, who served as its chairperson in 1979, stressed the commitment of the European unions towards



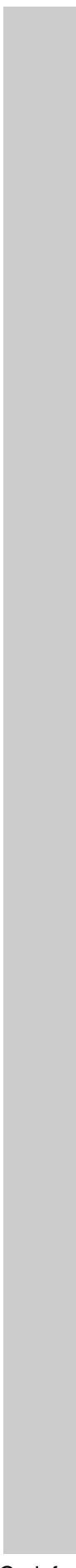
promoting a Community social dialogue, both generally and in vocational training. 'What I would like to say,' declared Maria Weber, 'without any emphasis is that it is the workers' representatives who secured the creation of these three bodies, by means of a protracted campaign at the level of the Commission's advisory committees, the Economic and Social Committee and negotiations by the European Trade Union Confederation, three bodies that are of great importance for the workers of Europe ... These institutions were necessary, because it became increasingly apparent that the administration of the European Communities was unable to perform the necessary tasks as effectively and as successfully as was wished in the various social domains; this of course was due to its structure and organisation but also to the fact that staffing in social affairs had been progressively eroded, despite the merging of Euratom-ECSC and the EEC and the enlargement of EEC to nine Member States.' (IISH, 1978).

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### Key words

Case study,  
EU labour market,  
European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training,  
labour relations,  
social policy,  
trade unions' role



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# Vocational education and training in European social policy from its origins to Cedefop

## Introduction

In the course of 2001, under the auspices of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) and with its support, and in collaboration with the Historical Archives of the European Communities (HAEC), a group of researchers at the University of Florence, under the guidance of the undersigned, launched a research project on vocational training policies in the context of European integration. A detailed survey was conducted not only in several libraries, including the library of Cedefop itself, but also in various European archives (<sup>(1)</sup>). Drawing on this research and the material found, we focused on our attention on certain topics and points of particular relevance:

- (a) the role of vocational training in the early stages of European integration (from the Schuman Plan to the early 1960s);
- (b) the more significant developments in Community policies on vocational training between the late 1960s and the early 1970s;
- (c) the part played by the ESC, as well as by the Commission and Council, in the birth of Cedefop;
- (d) the influence exerted by certain social partners in developing Community policies on vocational training;
- (e) the activities of Cedefop from its institution up to the 1990s.

These subjects have been covered by a number of studies. The report that follows draws on the general findings of the research, but focuses on the history of Cedefop from its origins to the 1990s (<sup>(2)</sup>).

## Vocational training in the early phases of European integration up to the birth of the European Coal and Steel Community

When the process of European construction began in the second half of the 1940s, some of the nations of the old continent had to confront the grave economic and social problems brought about or aggravated by the world war that had just ended, ranging from high unemployment to housing shortages, from questions of health to educational systems requiring radical reform. For most of the leaders of the European countries there was a pressing need to find solutions to those problems, and some of the continental states committed themselves to the quest for a coherent, effective response in a national environment. Here we merely need to mention the commitment of the new Labour Government in Britain, on coming to power in the summer of 1945, to the goal of creating a 'welfare State' to meet the needs of the citizen 'from the cradle to the grave' (<sup>(3)</sup>). Although the construction of a welfare State was expressed mainly in national policies, the same demand also became apparent as the first few steps were taken towards European integration. At certain points in their programmes, the European movements originating in the second half of the 1940s indicated the relevance of this issue and suggested solutions to the social problems, set out in the plans, which later led to the Brussels Pact and the Council of Europe (Hick, 2000). But the social question was often considered to be part of a broader process of economic reconstruction. Furthermore, it was widely felt that an adequate response could be found to demands of a social nature in a national setting. Vocational training was no exception, being perceived as one aspect of a broad-



**Antonio  
Varsori**

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**The article, based to a large extent on archive sources, looks at Cedefop's origins and the development of its activities up to its transfer to Thessaloniki in the mid-1990s. The foundations of a European policy on vocational training, starting with the ECSC, are firstly reviewed, looking at the first steps taken in the 1960s in this field by the EEC. The article goes on to examine the decision-making process that led to the creation of Cedefop by the European Community, and at the Centre's development from the point of view of its organisational structure and objectives, and its relations with the social partners, national bodies and the Community institutions. Events are viewed in the broader context of European integration, focusing in particular on the development of Community action on vocational training.**

(<sup>1</sup>) The archives in question were:  
a) the Historical Archives of the European Communities attached to the European University Institute (EUI) of San Domenico di Fiesole in Florence;  
b) Cedefop's archives (Thessaloniki);  
c) the archives of the International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam);  
d) the archives of the European Commission, Council and Economic and Social Committee (Brussels).

(<sup>2</sup>) This study has been made possible in part as a result of the collaboration of a number of institutions and people. We would first of all like to thank Cedefop and all members of its staff for their invaluable help, in particular the Director of the Centre, Mr J. van Rens, the Deputy Director, Dr S. Stavrou, Mr N. Wollschläger, Mr M. Willem, Dr S. Peterson and Dr A. Nilsson. We should also like to mention the HAEC, especially Dr J.-M. Palayret, the staff of the IISH in Amsterdam, and the staff of the Archives of the Commission, Council and Economic and Social Committee, and Mrs J. Collonval and Mr J.-M. Libert in particular. The results of the research are included in the volume *The*



er reform of educational systems and of the organisation of labour markets. In that general context there was one fairly significant exception: the position of Italy. Among the various major problems with which post-war Italy had to grapple was its age-old economic and social problem: the presence of a great surplus of manpower, especially in the impoverished and backward regions of southern Italy. One of the few effective remedies to that problem was emigration. Against this background, the Italian authorities focused their attention on Europe because they felt that the process of integration might open up the labour markets of Western Europe to the Italian unemployed. The question of vocational training could not be ignored, even though government initiatives did not often prove effective and although the problem was tackled from the national viewpoint (Romero, 1991). Another factor that could not be disregarded was the influence exerted by the Marshall Plan, and not only in the economic context since the Marshall Plan had broader implications. The emphasis placed on new forms of industrial relations and modernisation highlighted the role of the economic and social forces in the construction of an affluent society on the one hand and, on the other, the desirability of up-to-date vocational training that would enable the labour force to adapt to a modern economic system, whose point of reference was the United States. A major role was performed by what was called the 'productivity program' (Carew, 1987). As pointed out by David Ellwood: ... great emphasis was placed on collective consumption and the redemption of wartime promises of housing, education and security in work, old age and ill health. To realise those aims and maintain economies in balance was the purpose of the 'social contracts' which emerged almost everywhere in these years. Involving permanent negotiation between governments, employers and trade unions of a distinctly 'corporatist' kind, these arrangements characterised the long boom throughout Western Europe and appeared an indispensable element in the foundation of post-war mixed economies' (Ellwood, 1992). Although the Marshall Plan aimed to promote forms of close European cooperation, the most significant impact of these phenomena in Western European societies was mainly at a national level. The Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) - the most important outcome of the initiatives developed under the

European Recovery Program in the late 1940s - ultimately came to be seen as an instrument for achieving bland intergovernmental cooperation without there being any serious attempt to create a European social model (⁴).

As is well known, the Schuman Plan, launched in May 1950, was the true starting point for the process of European integration, especially as it stressed the functionalist approach and the objective of supranationality (⁵). In fact it was to lead to the development of one of the first European social policies, under which vocational training was to have a certain role. When the French authorities put forward the plan for an integrated coal and steel community, Monnet and his colleagues realised that it would have had a strong impact not just on production and the future of the coal and steel industries but also on the lives of thousands of workers in the coal and steel sector. To implement the Schuman Plan, therefore, it was advisable to secure the broad consensus of all those workers whose destiny would be so heavily influenced by the decisions of the future High Authority. Monnet and Schuman could not ignore the sombre atmosphere of the cold war and the tough opposition to Europeanist plans from the Communist parties and the unions under Communist control. In both France and Italy there were deep rifts in the workers' movement, and the Catholic and Socialist unions were trying to persuade workers that their interests were defended not only by the Communist organisations (⁶). Meanwhile in West Germany the union movement, although generally taking an anti-Communist stance, was influenced by the Social Democratic Party, which had come out critically against the Schuman Plan (Ciampani, 1995; 2001). Monnet therefore decided to involve some of the union leaders in the Paris negotiations, and certain articles of the treaty setting up the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed in 1951, provided for the implementation of social action by the Community, although some of them were fairly vague. When the High Authority launched its activities in summer 1952, Monnet was aware that the ECSC would have to establish close, constructive relationships with the economic and social partners, including non-Communist unions, and that a broad consensus for the new Community among the iron and steel workers could be achieved only if it were to embark on

*Development of VET in the Context of the Construction of the EC/EU and the Role of Cedefop*, published by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities in Luxembourg.

(⁴) On the important Labour experiment in the creation of a 'welfare state', see Addison, 1975; Morgan, 1984. More generally, see Silei, 2000.

(⁵) On the Marshall Plan and the OEEC, see Milward, 1984; Girault and Levy-Leboyer, 1993.

(⁶) On the Schuman Plan see in particular Spierenburg and Poidevin, 1993; Poidevin, 1986; Schwabe, 1988.

(⁷) For a general view of events in the main European unions, see A. Maiello, 2002.



new and effective policies in the social environment.

In the first place the ECSC stressed the question of representation. Two union leaders, Paul Finet from Belgium and Heinz Potthoff from Germany, became members of the High Authority. Furthermore, the High Authority urged the creation of an Advisory Committee that would be made up of representatives of employers' organisations, trade unions and associations representing consumers and 'traders' (Mechi, 2000).

As regards social policy, the High Authority formulated various initiatives: a) plans were launched for the construction of thousands of new housing units for coal and steel industry workers; b) studies were initiated with a view to improving safety and working conditions; c) last but not least, measures were introduced in favour of workers who might lose their jobs as a result of the High Authority's decisions. In this respect, the ECSC had funds for relocating redundant members of the work force, and vocational training was regarded as one of the most effective instruments for this purpose (Mechi, 1994/95; 2003).

### **The Treaties of Rome and the first steps towards a Community policy on vocational training**

Although the ECSC initiations are normally considered to be a major step forward in the development of a European social policy within which vocational training had a significant role, the creation of the EEC and its early actions are seen as a very different story. Political leaders, diplomats and experts who played a prominent role in the negotiations that were to lead to the signing of the Treaties of Rome rejected Monnet's proposal and the pressures brought to bear by the unions for involving the economic and social partners in defining the text of the treaties (Varsori, 1995; 1999). They adopted a very cautious attitude to the supranational approach and to the implementation of European policies, except for the creation of an effective customs union for industrial and agricultural products. Once again, Italy was a separate case: due to the gap between itself and other countries, its economic weakness and the persisting problem of southern Italy, the Italian delegates attempted to include certain clauses in the EEC treaty that provided for some form of European social

policy. An internal agreement was in fact reached on certain principles, such as the advisability of solving the problem of regional imbalances. There were plans for setting up a European Social Fund (ESF), as well as a European Investment Bank. In addition, Italy's partners accepted the principle of mobility of labour. Lastly, in the final phases of the negotiations, especially as a result of the pressures exerted by certain unions, the 'Six' also tackled the question of representation of the economic and social forces. Despite strong opposition from the West German delegates, the Treaties of Rome made provision for setting up an Economic and Social Committee, under the Commission and Council, which was to have a tripartite membership of representatives of employers, the trade unions and organisations representing 'various interests'. The ESC was, however, to be an advisory body and would not be empowered to adopt measures on its own initiative (Varsori, 1995; 1999; 2000).

It is usually held that the EEC had no effective social policy from its origin in 1958 up to the early 1970s. This is only partly true. The majority of the leaders of the 'Six' felt that problems of a social nature ought to be tackled at national level, and in those years the Community Member States created or reinforced their own national welfare systems (*Le politiche sociali in Europa*, Bologna, 1999). In addition, the economy of Western Europe was passing through a period of strong, steady growth, combined with close to full employment, which in the end helped to ease social tensions (Aldcroft, 1993). Nonetheless, the social issue was not altogether neglected (see in general Degimbe, 1999). The ESC fought strenuously for recognition as an independent body that could influence the decisions of the Commission and the Council. Within the ESC the representatives of the unions proved to be particularly active, and frequent calls were made for the Community to develop an effective social policy. Very soon the ESC developed a clear concern for the connections between work and education, focusing its attention on vocational training, which was conceived as a useful instrument for improving workers' conditions, modernising the economic system and creating closer and more effective links between the labour market and educational systems. The Italian authorities also reaffirmed their interest in drawing up some form of European social policy that might contribute towards

(\*) It should be pointed out that a European vocational training policy was regarded not as an objective in its own right but as an instrument for promoting economic development.



their country's development and help to solve the problems of southern Italy and emigration (see Petrini, 2004). In 1960 the EEC set up the ESF, although for over ten years of its life this could draw on no more than 420 million units of account. It should be borne in mind, however, that part of those funds were allocated to vocational training measures to help jobless workers, although this was implemented in the national context and without a specific Community approach emerging to the question of vocational training. In fact, Article 128 of the EEC Treaty established that it would be the task of the Council of Ministers to lay down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the economic development of the Community (<sup>7</sup>). Discussions on implementing Article 128 were launched shortly thereafter and in March 1961 the then Commissioner for Social Affairs, Lionel Levi Sandri from Italy, said that: '... the demand for coordination of vocational training policies was making itself heard not only at Community level but also within the various countries having agencies and authorities with responsibility for vocational training'. And he added: '... In proposing several general principles designed to guide the implementation of a common policy on vocational training, the Commission aims to provide uniform guidance on the problem in every Member State' (<sup>8</sup>). In that context the Commission was strongly supported by the ESC, which produced a series of studies on the issue (<sup>9</sup>). But not until April 1963 did the Council state those principles, and even then in very vague terms. The principles did not clarify the duties of Member States and the Community, nor did they provide a detailed description of the content of a possible European vocational training. Nevertheless, in late 1963 the EEC set up an Advisory Committee on vocational training, consisting of 36 members (each national delegation was to consist of six people, two representatives of government departments, two of the unions, two of the employers' associations) (<sup>10</sup>). Some Member States, Italy in particular, hoped that this Advisory Committee might play a significant role in formulating effective European action in vocational training (<sup>11</sup>). In fact the Advisory Committee made an effort to develop certain specific initiatives and, for example, in 1965 set up a working group with the task of identifying the principles that should guide experts involved in vocation-

al training in the 'Six' (the training of trainers) (<sup>12</sup>). In the same year the Commission concerned itself with the idea of a Community policy on vocational training, with special reference to agriculture; it should be borne in mind that only a few years earlier the EEC had launched the Common Agricultural Policy. It is significant that both the Commission and the Advisory Committee suggested greater integration in this area and the development of studies to promote a common approach by the 'Six' to vocational training (<sup>13</sup>). This opinion was shared by political circles in the European Parliament, and on occasions the Strasbourg Assembly pointed out the advisability of creating close contacts between the national bodies concerned with promoting vocational training (<sup>14</sup>). In fact many officials within the Community seemed to be persuaded that it was in the interests of the 'Six' to launch a common policy on vocational training, but their ideas were unclear and it was difficult to identify a common conceptual framework of reference; each Member State, with the possible exception of Italy, preferred to follow its own national path.

### **The turning point of the 1970s and the birth of Cedefop**

The EEC's attitude towards the question of social policy, and also to vocational training, underwent a radical change between the late 1960s and the early 1970s as a result of certain specific events:

a) the student movement in May 1968, breaking out first in France and then in other European countries, highlighting the emergence of new social needs and new actors in European societies (for example the need for a radical reform of the educational system and the launching of a debate on the relations between education and labour market, the demands being put forward by groups such as students, women, etc.);

b) a new and more active role for the unions at both national and international level (for example, the workers' movement that featured in what was dubbed the 'hot autumn' of 1969 in Italy, the decision by certain Communist-inspired unions to be involved in Community moves, the creation in 1973 of the European Trade Union Confederation, etc.) (Gobin, 1997);

c) the economic crisis from which most of

(<sup>7</sup>) Bruxelles Archives de la Commission (BAC), 173/95, 2828, Information note on the work of the Economic and Social Committee, 7.3.1961.

(<sup>8</sup>) See documentation in BAC 173/95, 2828.

(<sup>9</sup>) Official Journal of the European Communities, 3090-3092/63, 30.12.1963.

(<sup>10</sup>) BAC, 173/95, 2849, EEC, The Council - Italian proposal, 9.7.1963; EEC Commission Note for the members of the Commission, 12.11.1963.

(<sup>11</sup>) BAC 125/94, 361, EEC Commission Information note for members of the 'Training of Trainers' Working group of the advisory committee on vocational training, 28.9.1965.

(<sup>12</sup>) BAC 174/95, 1045, EEC Commission's action programmes on a common vocational training policy in general and in agriculture - Commission communication to the Council, 5.5.1965; Advisory Committee on vocational training, Opinion on the draft 'Action programme on a common vocational training policy', 19.3.1965.

(<sup>13</sup>) BAC 174/95, 1045, European Parliament Social Commission, see Note doc V/SEC(65) 1355/fin, A. Sabatini, 21.12.1965.

(<sup>14</sup>) Archives of the Economic and Social Committee (AESC), 1223/1, letter from M. Germozzi to M. Berns, 22.7.1969. On the work of the ESC see in particular the paper by E. Dundovich, 2004.



the countries of Western Europe suffered in the 1970s, in particular after 1973, with the resulting rise in the rate of unemployment;

d) the first enlargement of the EEC to nations such as Ireland and the United Kingdom, characterised by areas of long-standing economic and social backwardness or dramatic de-industrialisation;

e) the fresh efforts by Italy to tackle the question of the Mezzogiorno with the help of the European Community.

One of the first results of those developments was a renewed interest in tripartite forms of social dialogue, not only at national but also at European level. In April 1970 the first tripartite conference was held in Luxembourg, attended by representatives of the unions, employers' associations, the Commission and the Labour Ministers of the 'Six'. On that occasion many delegates put forward the idea of creating a standing committee on employment, and this was in fact set up a few months later. In this context the launching of a European social policy, with the inclusion of vocational training, became an obvious topic of debate within the European Community (Guasconi, 2003).

A little earlier, in summer 1969, an eminent Italian member of the ESC, Marcello Germozzi, had made the suggestion that the ESC should concern itself with the question of vocational training<sup>(15)</sup>. The subject was discussed in February 1970 by the Social Affairs Section of the ESC, and on that occasion some members of the Committee expressed the view that the Community should create a European centre for the study of vocational training. In particular the German union representative, Maria Weber, clearly expounded the reasons for that proposal: '... the Community's activities on the subject of vocational training have not been as intensive or as substantial over the past few years as Community activities in other fields; vocational training, however, is a vital factor, especially in matters of employment. Certainly the Commission recommends harmonisation in matters of training, but it is difficult to harmonise something about which one knows little; it is therefore important to set up a European Institute which, along the lines of what is already being done in certain Member States, ... might help to achieve better coordination among the authorities, workers and employers'<sup>(16)</sup>. Moreover, the

need for detailed research in this sector was now forcefully perceived in many Community countries, since vocational training was seen as an effective solution to many economic and social problems (unemployment, adapting to new technologies, the various relationships between social groups such as young people and women and the labour market). Furthermore, vocational training needed to be linked with the process of reform of the educational systems and tackled scientifically so as to place the emphasis on research and the exchange of information on different experiences. On this subject, it should be pointed out that in 1969 the German Federal Republic had established the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildungsforschung (BBF), which was to become a sort of model in this field<sup>(17)</sup>. For its part the ESC, partly as a result of the initiatives brought about by Marcello Germozzi and Maria Weber, pressed on with its efforts that culminated in the proposal for the creation of a European institute for vocational training<sup>(18)</sup>.

Meanwhile, between November 1970 and July 1971 the Council launched a draft action programme in vocational training with the object of revising the principles drawn up in 1963. Following a decision of the Council, the Commission was officially entrusted with the task of formulating a European policy on vocational training<sup>(19)</sup>. The question was debated, for example, in late May 1971 by the Standing Committee on Employment. Maria Weber, who was a member of this body as well, confirmed that '... the organisation has long hoped to see the creation of a European Institute that might promote research in the domain of training and establish the framework for fruitful collaboration among national institutions. It should be possible to finance the creation of such an Institute out of the Community budget'<sup>(20)</sup>. Although other members of the Committee nursed a more prudent vision, the idea that vocational training should become a subject of research and exchange of information and experience at European level started to become established, as demonstrated by the findings of certain studies promoted by the Commission in the course of 1972. For example, in a report on the activities of a study group set up by the Commission, the French expert on the Committee suggested the creation of a European centre for studies and research on the development of qualifications and educational and vocational training methods<sup>(21)</sup>.

<sup>(15)</sup> AESC, 1223/1, Proceedings of the 52nd meeting of the session on social issues, ECOSOC, 4.2.1970.

<sup>(16)</sup> The creation of the German centre was to be followed in 1970 by the birth of the French Centre d'Etudes et de recherches sur les qualifications (CEREQ) and in 1973 by the Italian Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori (ISPOL) (See Wollschläger, 2000).

<sup>(17)</sup> See the documents in AESC, 1223/2 bis, 1224/4, 1224/5.

<sup>(18)</sup> BAC 64/84, 970, European Community - Council - Note, 9.6.1971.

<sup>(19)</sup> BAC 64/84, 970, Standing Committee on Employment - Draft minutes of the second meeting of the Standing Committee on employment - Brussels, 27 May 1971.

<sup>(20)</sup> BAC 64/84, 970, Commission of the European Communities - Directorate General for Social Affairs - Directorate for Employment, Inventory of priority problems in vocational training research. Group of experts on the development of occupations and on vocational training, 13.4.1972.

<sup>(21)</sup> BAC 64/84, 970, Commission of the European Communities, SEC(72)3450 Final, Preliminary measures with a view to the implementation of a common vocational training policy, 25.10.1972

<sup>(22)</sup> BAC 64/84, 971, European Communities - The Council, Note, 3.1.1973, on a meeting held on 19.12.1972. See also DG XII Action Programme for Division XX-A-2, 30.7.1973.



Despite all this, the Commission seemed to adopt a very cautious attitude and, in an important document produced at the end of October 1972 on preliminary measures with a view to the implementation of a common vocational training policy, the creation of a European studies centre on this theme was indicated as a remote and still vague objective (22).

Pressure for the development of a more effective European social policy came from the Paris Summit held in December 1972. For the first time European Community leaders identified the implementation of a social policy as a major objective, and the Commission was asked to launch a specific social action programme. Vocational training was an important item on the Commission's agenda. The question in general terms, as well as the creation of a European institute, were the responsibility of the Directorate General for Social Affairs and the Directorate General for Research, Science and Education. In practice, the Commission continued to adopt a cautious approach to setting up a European studies centre for vocational training. Some documents pointed out that the publication of a bulletin might be the best way of disseminating information on the subject, and it was stated that a journal of this kind might be published by a national institute and then distributed by the Community (23). Despite this, certain governments - in particular the French and Italian – displayed a growing interest in the creation of a European centre. In December 1973 the work of the Commission, including its work on the suggested European centre for vocational training, was considered by the Council of Ministers for Social Affairs; in the first part of the meeting, the document drawn up by the Commission was strongly criticised by the representatives of certain countries, with the UK delegate going so far as to reject the plan for a European centre. In fact, as explained in a Commission report: 'This position seems to have arisen from a poor drafting of the Commission text ... "A common training policy cannot be implemented by the creation of a Centre". The Centre will provide operational support to the Commission, but it will be the Commission which, together with the Council, will have to implement the common vocational training policy. After a forceful intervention from President Ortoli in favour of the creation of the Centre and a proposal by the President of the Council that the words

"in particular by the creation ..." be replaced by "including by the creation ...", the United Kingdom withdrew its veto'. The Council's intention was certainly not to promote the creation of a body making policy choices; the future centre was merely to provide predominantly 'technical' support for the choices of the Council and Commission. It was not by chance that, on the same occasion, members of the Council pointed out the need to clarify the aims of the Centre, whereas representatives of Germany and Italy expressed the hope that the concept of education would be added to the more restricted concept of vocational training stated in the Commission document (24). At this point the Community Member States, especially in the aftermath of the grave economic crisis triggered off by the Yom Kippur war of October 1973, were determined to devise an effective social policy, and in January 1974 the Council launched its first social action programme, highlighting three basic objectives: full employment, the achievement of better living and working conditions and the involvement of the social actors in Community decisions (Degimbe, 1999; pp. 20-21, 93-116) (25). The creation of a Centre concerned with vocational training obviously followed from these objectives, and the Commission embarked on the drafting of a specific plan. In a document drawn up by DG XII, it was stated that this Centre should be a centralised unit having an operational role in the service of the Commission and be closely linked with the Commission. There were plans for setting up a 'steering committee' made up of representatives of the economic and social forces and governments, but the Directorate General was in favour of appointing a senior Commission official as the head of the Centre. It was argued on this subject that the staff of the Centre would consist of some 20 people (recruited under a contract according to a formula comparable to that of the European Cooperation Association, AEC); Brussels would be the seat of the Centre (26). It is hardly surprising that certain Commission officials hoped that the Centre would not have an independent role, and that aspect was stressed several times (27). It was felt that it should be a 'satellite' of the Commission. Nevertheless, probably because of the widely held opinions in other Commission circles, certain significant new factors were contained in the proposal that was submitted to the Council's attention in late March 1974. The Centre was now conceived 'as a body with its own le-

(24) BAC 64/84, 971, Commission of the European Communities, 'Archives note', 13.12.1973. by Van Hoorebeek.

(25) It should be pointed out that in this climate the European union movement was also being reinforced, with the creation in 1973 of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). See Gobin, 1997; *passim*.

(26) BAC 64/84, 1001, Commission of the European Communities, 'Archive notes', 14.1.1974.

(27) BAC 64/84, 1001, Note for the attention of Mr Shanks by G. Schuster, 18.2.1974.

(28) BAC 64/84, 1001, Commission of the European Communities - Establishment of a European vocational training centre (Proposal from the Commission to the Council) COM(74)352 Final, 27.3.1974.

(29) See also the documentation in AESC, 1260/1 and 1260/2.

(30) BAC 62/86, 8, European Parliament - Revised Draft, rapporteur: F. Pisoni, 12.7.1974.



gal personality, which will still be very closely linked to the Community institutions and particularly to the Commission'. The plan was to create a management board, made up of representatives of the unions, the employers' associations and the Commission, and to establish a Committee consisting of national experts. The document also pointed out that the Director was to be the key element in the structure of the Centre. His terms of employment would be laid down in an ad hoc statute. The Centre would be conceived mainly as a driving force which, *inter alia*, would be required to act as a catalyst for the most innovative guidelines with a view to achieving a harmonious development of vocational training in its widest sense, within the Community. Last but not least, it was hoped that the Centre would come into operation by 1975, and the costs for the first year of its activities were expected to amount to 600 000 units of account, rising to 1 450 000 for 1976 and 1 800 000 for 1977 (28). In this new vision, although continuing to be closely linked to the Commission, the centre would gain a degree of autonomy and would be based on 'tripartite' management.

Other European institutions expressed their views of the project. The ESC, for its part, stated that the term 'vocational training' should be interpreted very broadly. As regards the Centre's Management Board, the Committee proposed - contrary to the views of the union representatives - a quadripartite structure, i.e. the representatives of the Commission, four representatives of employers, four representatives of the unions and four representatives of various activities. In particular, it suggested that the President of the Social Affairs Section should be a member. Lastly, the Committee hoped that all its proposals on the Centre's tasks and working methods would be brought to the attention of the Management Board of the Centre (ESC, 1975) (29). The ESC therefore proposed its own structures as a model, in an attempt to find a role for the 'various activities' sector. As far as the European Parliament was concerned, its observations had far more far-reaching implications: one of the points made by the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment of the Strasbourg Assembly was that the Centre should enjoy 'autonomy and the power of initiative'; it should, however, maintain close contact with the Community institutions and should call on existing national centres to avoid overlapping and the dispersion of re-

sources. Furthermore, in the opinion of the Parliament, it would be advisable to increase the number of representatives of social partners, and also of the national experts. Lastly, the European Assembly felt that the estimated budget would prove inadequate and expressed its surprise that the seat of the Centre had not yet been identified (30).

The whole question was reviewed by the Council in the second half of 1974. This body expressed its dissent regarding certain significant aspects of the proposals put forward by the Commission, and the text presented underwent a set of amendments to take account of its criticisms. This intervention reflected the fact that most Member States were keen to limit the powers of the Commission, placing the emphasis on the predominantly intergovernmental nature of European integration. The Council decided on a radical change to the composition of the Management Board. Representatives of national governments were added to those of the economic and social forces and the Commission. The role of the latter was reshaped, the German delegation exerting pressure on the other partners to arrive at a membership of the Board that would make it impossible for the representatives of Member States to be placed in the minority. Under this new scheme, the Committee of Experts was also eliminated. The Council confirmed, on the other hand, that the Centre would enjoy broad autonomy. There was a lively debate among Ministers on the role of the Director, with the French delegation proposing that he should be appointed by the Council, whereas the British delegation preferred him to be nominated by the Management Board. Lastly, no fewer than seven delegations were of the opinion that the Director should be chosen by the Commission from among candidates put forward by the Management Board (31). Meanwhile, the question of the seat of the new body was resolved by the choice of West Berlin. This was clearly a political decision, since it had been suggested by the Bonn Government to demonstrate that the western part of the former capital of Germany was a full part of the West (32). On 1 February 1975 the Council of Ministers was finally able to announce the decision that a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) was to be established (33).

(28) BAC 627/86, 8, European Communities - Council - Doc. R/3101/74 (SOC 253), 6.12.1974.

(29) This decision, one not taken at random, was bitterly criticised by the Soviet authorities as well as by some of the Western Communist-influenced organisations, for example the French trade union CGT.

(30) For a legal analysis of the role of the Agencies in the European context, see E. Chiti, 2002.

(31) BAC 18/86, 754, Cedefop, Annual Report 1976.



## The work of Cedefop

The early stages of Cedefop's life did not prove to be easy. The first meeting of the Management Board did not take place until the end of October 1975, when it was held at the Kongresshalle in Berlin under the chairmanship of Mr Shanks, Director General for Social Affairs at the Commission. It was recorded in the minutes of the meeting that 'As the Centre had not as yet any official facilities, all the preparatory work had been carried out by the Commission in spite of the limited resources at its disposal in the current climate of austerity' (Cedefop, 1975). On this occasion certain preliminary questions were discussed and solutions found. In the first place, the Management Board identified a Dane, Carl Jorgensen, as the most suitable candidate for the office of Director. As for the seat of the Centre, the West Berlin Senate had offered a building at 22 Bundesallee, 'free of charge for a period of 30 years'; the Berlin authorities had also declared that they were prepared to contribute a million marks towards the restructuring of the building. Most of the subsequent year was devoted to drawing up the Centre's regulations and recruiting its staff, as well as drawing up their contracts. In the meantime, work continued on adapting the Bundesallee building to the needs of the new body. In the first few months of 1976 the Director and his two deputies had only a single room in the European Communities information centre, and it was not until March of that year that the first secretary started work. As regards the work of Cedefop, the Director and his immediate staff paid a few visits to several national institutes concerned with vocational training. They also started to establish contacts with officials in this sector in the Member States and to identify the main issues on which Cedefop was to focus, one of the Centre's first concerns being seen as youth unemployment<sup>(33)</sup>. There also still seemed to be some uncertainty as to the tasks of Cedefop. At a meeting of the Management Board, held in July 1976, it was stated that 'the Centre should not duplicate work already being done nor attempt to formulate national policy' and that 'the Centre should not give undue priority to harmonisation but pay regard to the nature and differences which do exist in the various countries' (Cedefop, 1976a). In other words, it was feared that Cedefop was a body that would deprive national governments of powers in sectors over which

States continued to consider that they had full powers. The minutes of the Management Board meetings convey a clear impression that in this initial phase the Management Board and the person to whom he was answerable, Jean Degimbe, Director General at the Commission, played the predominant role. Finally, in a meeting of the Management Board in November 1976 an effective programme of work could be drawn up for 1977. The Centre's main objectives were:

- a) the publication of a bulletin;
- b) 'to collect and process documentation and disseminate existing information';
- c) to launch studies on subjects such as 'youth unemployment, especially in relation to the transition from school to work' - this being chosen as the main priority - 'women, in particular married or older women, wishing to re-enter the labour force', 'continuous education and training', 'drawing up of a multilingual glossary on vocational training', 'establishment of comparative studies on national vocational training systems' (Cedefop, 1976b).

This was a well-judged programme which placed the emphasis on study and research and did not try to influence national policies, nor offer a starting point for independent action by the Commission. In December 1976 Cedefop organised its first study seminar on youth unemployment, which was held at Zandvoort. In March 1977 the Centre made the permanent move to the seat in the Bundesallee<sup>(35)</sup> and in May that year the Centre published the first issue of its Bulletin. Even so, the Centre still seemed far from settling down in terms both of its objectives and its organisation. As regards this latter aspect in particular, there were serious problems with staff recruitment, for example: in early 1977 two experts were forced to withdraw from the Centre's recruitment process, certain positions were still vacant and the availability of two grade A5 posts for translators and one secretarial post was not confirmed. In addition the Director, Carl Jorgensen, decided to tender his resignation, ending a fairly insignificant experience that had lasted about a year and a half (Cedefop, 1977)<sup>(36)</sup>. Last but not least some members of the staff were starting to complain about their status, which was very different from and a good deal less favourable than

<sup>(33)</sup> BAC 64/84, 1009, the official inauguration was held on 9 March 1977.

<sup>(34)</sup> BAC 18/86, 754, letter, C. Jorgensen to R. Jenkins, 23.5.1977

<sup>(35)</sup> BAC, 18/86, 754, the other candidate was John Agnew, representative of the Irish Government on the Management Board.

<sup>(36)</sup> 'European Parliament - Session documents 1979-1980' Doc. 90/79, Report by Mr A. Bertrand, 20.4.1979. In fact some members of the Parliamentary Committee had been more critical about the work of Cedefop and a Committee document recorded, for example, that '... A very negative opinion about the operation of the Berlin Centre (budgetary, inexperienced staff) emerged from the debate, and persuaded the Parliamentary Committee not to shrink from its responsibilities'. On this occasion Jean Degimbe had displayed a less negative attitude and had pointed out that the presence of a new Director was about to open up more positive prospects. On this subject, see BAC 18/86, 754, Commission of the European Communities - Secretariat General SP(79)311, 5.2.1979.

<sup>(37)</sup> BAC 157/87, 112, letter, J. Degimbe to H. Vredeling, 16.2.1979. It may be recalled that we were on the eve of the direct elections to the European Parliament, which were to confer greater legitimacy on the Strasbourg Assembly, and that therefore it was very probable that this was already an expression of Parliament's wish to exert a stronger role as regards Community structures.



the status enjoyed by Community officials. At the meeting of the Management Board held in September 1977, a new Director was appointed in the person of the Frenchman, Roger Faist, and Yves Corpet, the French representative of the employers' associations, took over Jean Degimbe's post as chairman of the Management Board. The appointment of the new Director was an important event because Faist, the former Secretary General of the Confédération Française des Travailleurs (CFDT)<sup>(37)</sup>, had the primary aim of broadening out Cedefop's work. The Centre also decided to continue to focus on the issues selected in 1975, in particular youth unemployment and a comparative analysis of the various national vocational training systems. Further study seminars were arranged, new contacts were made and there were determined efforts to improve the Cedefop Bulletin (Cedefop, 1978a). In spite of this, in the course of 1978 fresh difficulties arose, particularly from the point of view of the Centre's organisation: further protests were made by staff members as to their legal status, the Community tried to impose certain cuts in the Centre's budget and the Management Board expressed reservations as to some of the expenses budgeted for (Cedefop, 1978b; 1978c). It is hardly surprising, then, that the work of Cedefop came under fire from some of the European institutions. In April 1979 a report by the European Parliament listed a series of negative comments, sustaining in particular that '... the Centre's activities led to their first results only after a relative lengthy starting-up period' and '... the choice of Berlin as the Centre's seat that was made by the Council of Ministers, and the large number of members of the Management Board, have had an unfavourable role in this respect'. Furthermore, the Strasbourg Assembly suggested that Cedefop '... should move as far as possible in the direction of activities that might, under the current socio-economic conditions, be of practical value'. It also looked for closer cooperation between Cedefop and international centres with similar interests and with national institutions<sup>(38)</sup>. These criticisms were the result of investigations conducted by the Parliament but, as Degimbe explained in a letter to the Vice President of the European Commission Henk Vredeling: 'from the views expressed by the Parliamentarians, it is apparent that Parliament is very negative towards ESC "satellite" agencies over which it cannot exercise the same control as it does over the work of the Com-

mission'<sup>(39)</sup>. Parliament felt that the agencies were eluding its control; this was an important issue for a body fighting tooth and nail to have its own powers and competences increased. As for Cedefop, as a consequence of these views, the Centre was careful over the next few years to cultivate closer links with the Parliament, as it had already done with the Commission, which in any case could rely on the presence of its officials on the Management Board. Certain criticisms were also made in this same period by the European Court of Auditors which, among other things, stated that in its first few years of activity Cedefop had not been able to make full use of the financial resources placed at its disposal, and that the Bulletin publication costs were seen as too high. The Centre made an effort to deal with these criticisms; for example, emphasis was placed on the publication of a 'newsletter' (Cedefop, 1980a; 1980b).

Despite these difficulties, between 1979 and the early 1980s there was a marked improvement in Cedefop's activities and structures. At this point the Centre could count on a staff of some 35 people, and there was a steady rise in its budget: in 1979 Cedefop had ECU 2 790 808 at its disposal; in 1980 this figure rose to ECU 3 500 000, and in 1981 to ECU 3 736 000 (Cedefop, 1981b; 1983). The year 1982 marked a turning point in the work of the Centre. Because of the prolonged economic crisis and the growing number of unemployed, the European Community attempted to develop more effective action in vocational training, and the Commission therefore focused on two subjects: the link existing between new technologies and vocational training, and the suggestion that a project should be launched that would promote the harmonisation of vocational qualifications. The Director of Cedefop had, moreover, considered the advisability of the Centre expanding its activities over the long term (Cedefop, 1981a; 1982a). In 1982 the Centre drew up a three-year plan attempting to reconcile the new lines of intervention indicated by the Commission with the research that had been launched in the previous years (Cedefop; 1983)<sup>(40)</sup>. This general trend was confirmed in 1983, especially as the suggestions put forward by the Commission were approved by the Council (Cedefop, 1984). Cedefop also aimed to reinforce all the sectors in which it was active, such as the library, information service and publications; in the latter

<sup>(37)</sup> This suggestion had already been made by Roger Faist in 1981.

<sup>(38)</sup> BAC 511/98, 445, Draft Commission decision.

<sup>(39)</sup> The impact of the Single European Act on the social policies pursued by the Community is highlighted, for example, in Kowalsky, 2000.

<sup>(40)</sup> In 1987 the budget was ECU 6 586 000, a decrease of approximately 10 %.

<sup>(41)</sup> On the meetings held in Brussels, see the documents in the Guerra files, for instance Cedefop, 1987c.



area, in 1984 in addition to its Vocational Training journal and the Cedefop Newsletter it started up the Cedefop Flash. In the same year, the Centre brought out three issues of Vocational Training Journal in a run of 10 000, besides printing 25 000 copies of Cedefop News, which it estimated might reach over 40 000 readers. As part of the information service, in 1984 the Centre also completed a Thesaurus and started to make use of new information technologies. Cedefop was also able to use about 95 % of the financial resources it had been assigned. These results were achieved in spite of the persistence of certain organisational problems: the size of the staff grew at a very slow pace (in 1984 the Centre had a staff of 42), whereas its budget rose at a rate barely sufficient to cope with the inflationary spiral in EEC countries: in 1983 its funding had been ECU 4 210 000, in 1984 ECU 4 560 000 (Cedefop, 1985a). In addition, the legal status of its staff continued to create serious difficulties, as the Community authorities displayed no intention of applying to Cedefop employees the regulations laid down for Community officials, and senior staff at the Centre seemed to be unable to influence the thinking in Brussels on this thorny issue. Lastly, during 1982 organisational problems came to a head and the Staff Committee tendered its resignation in protest against this state of affairs - a symptom of some internal conflict and disquiet among the Centre's staff (Cedefop, 1982c; 1982d).

In 1984 Faist's term of office was coming to an end; the German Ernst Piehl was appointed as the new Director. Piehl, born in 1943, had graduated from the Berlin Free University. From 1969 to 1975 he was a member of the German Trade Union (DGB) research institute in Düsseldorf, before being nominated as Director of the European Youth Centre in the Council of Europe and taking up an important post in the ESC in 1980 (<sup>41</sup>). The arrival of Piehl at the head of Cedefop coincided with certain important developments in the Centre's activities and structures. In June 1984 the European Fontainebleau Summit opened up a new phase in European construction: there was a strengthening of the Franco-German 'couple', and in 1985 Jacques Delors became the President of the Commission. In June of the same year, as a result of the European Council in Milan, the Community launched an intergovernmental conference that was to lead to the signature of the Sin-

gle European Act. In that year Portugal and Spain became full members of the European Community. The growing resources available to the Community budget and the greater emphasis being placed on a series of social policies, the needs in this context highlighted by the enlargement towards Southern Europe and the identification of new areas of intervention by the Community were all additional factors that were to reinforce the role of Cedefop (<sup>42</sup>). In 1986 available resources in the Centre's budget increased by approximately 50 % (from ECU 4 910 000 in 1985 to ECU 7 388 000 in 1986) and the number of employees reached 54. From the point of view of premises as well, the Centre now had new buildings and a new conference room. As regards its activities, in 1985 Cedefop approved a new three-year programme featuring its regular fields of intervention but based on decisions of the Council and the Commission. The Centre would now focus on new issues as well, for example the harmonisation of workers' qualifications in the various Member States and the use of new technologies in vocational training, in particular information technology. The first objective gave rise to a detailed study in which many Cedefop officials were to be involved and which led to closer contacts with the national institutes and government authorities concerned with the promotion of vocational training (Cedefop, 1987) (<sup>43</sup>). The Centre could now claim that it was managing to use almost 99 % of the financial resources allocated (Cedefop, 1988a). It should be borne in mind that the Community began, from 1986 onwards, to pay greater attention to vocational training, for instance by launching a number of new programmes such as Comett. This paved the way for closer contacts between the Commission and Cedefop, in particular with DG V, as can be seen from an interesting exchange of letters between the Director for Education and Training, Hywel C. Jones, and Piehl (see, for instance, Cedefop, 1987b; 1987d) (<sup>44</sup>), and the increasingly frequent meetings between Cedefop's senior staff and Commission officials.

In spite of these positive developments which tended to strengthen the Centre's role, these years were not without their problems and difficulties. At the time of Ernst Piehl's appointment the Staff Committee reiterated that the people working for Cedefop had not yet succeeded in obtaining a contractual sta-



tus similar to that enjoyed by Community officials (Cedefop, 1985b). The Centre embarked on fresh efforts in this direction, and some results were achieved. In late 1988 a serious difference of views arose between Piehl and Corrado Politi, one of the Deputy Directors. This divergence also related to the conduct of Cedefop's activities and, as Politi wrote in a letter to Piehl: '... Over the past three years you have placed the emphasis on the problems of the Centre's image and political contacts; all the departments have worked towards this objective, which has brought us great benefits: a higher budget, new posts, a more functional and comfortable headquarters, etc. This strategy has been developed at the expense of internal restructuring, the strengthening of departments, the development of information technology and the activities of research and quality control and at the price of considerable internal demotivation ... The time has come to restore the balance, otherwise we risk becoming a 'gilded cage', devoid of internal motivation and incapable of facing up to the challenges of 1992. The Centre is increasingly coming to resemble a ministerial cabinet, in which everyone may be called upon to do anything in response to political constraints rather than acting as a specialist European Agency offering high-level development and research services' (Cedefop, 1988b). It is hard to decide whether Politi's affirmations were soundly based or if they were merely an expression of differences of a personal nature. Nevertheless, in the years thereafter Politi continued with his role within Cedefop.

The fall of the Berlin wall, the launching of the political and diplomatic process that was to lead to the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, the renewed emphasis on the objective of economic and social cohesion and, lastly, the launch of major programmes such as Socrates, Petra, Leonardo and Phare all seemed to be factors that would promote the work of Cedefop. In 1989, the Commission set up a 'task force' for human resources, education, training and youth. From the outset, this body endeavoured to forge close ties with Cedefop in order to draw on the competences that the Berlin Centre had acquired (Cedefop, 1990b). While the Commission's main aim was to make use of the experience that Cedefop had acquired in this field, Cedefop was keen to play a real part in shaping the decisions taken by the Community and it would seem that the Cen-

tre was at least partially successful in this respect. This is borne out by a note from Piehl in January 1991 following a series of meetings in Brussels between the Centre's senior staff and the Commission. The note outlines Cedefop's direct involvement in the Community programmes on vocational training; a further task of the Centre was to raise awareness of Community choices in this field among the various national institutions (Cedefop, 1991b). It should nevertheless be borne in mind that, for its part, the Commission reminded Cedefop that the emphasis should be placed on its 'function of direct technical assistance to the Commission', in other words its subordination to Brussels' choices (Cedefop, 1990c). Furthermore, the Centre now represented a consolidated body in the panorama of Community structures. In 1988 Cedefop's budget rose by 11 % over the previous year, by 14 % in 1989, by 7 % in 1990 and by approximately 16 % in 1991. For its part the Centre concentrated on its studies and research activities, which accounted for about 44 % of its total expenditure in 1990, compared to about 18 % for publications and approximately 22 % for translation. This trend continued in 1991, as well as over the subsequent years (Cedefop, 1990; 1991; 1992).

But ultimately German reunification and the Maastricht Treaty had radical and unforeseen consequences for Cedefop. On the occasion of the European Council held in Brussels in October 1993, the leading European body took the decision of moving the seat of the Centre. Germany was now to host the future European Central Bank, and up to this time Greece had no European organisation or institution within its territory. For obvious reasons of establishing a political equilibrium, then, the Council saw it as appropriate for Cedefop to be transferred to Thessaloniki. This sudden decision came like a bolt from the blue for the Centre and its staff. In addition, a few months later Piehl's term of office came to an end and it became necessary to appoint a new Director who would have to cope with the transfer of the Centre over a relatively short time scale. In the spring of 1994 Johan van Rens, a Netherlands union leader, was named the new Director of Cedefop, and Stavros Stavrou, a Greek academic at the University of Thessaloniki, was appointed Deputy Director. The move from Berlin to Thessaloniki created a range of serious problems: new headquarters had to be found and, above all,



many members of the staff were unwilling to consider moving to Greece. At this point the European Union agreed to the idea of drawing up measures to encourage mobility, and those Cedefop officials who were not prepared to transfer to Thessaloniki were offered posts in European institutions elsewhere. It is significant, however, that because of the transfer and the simultaneous enlargement of the EU to three new countries (Austria, Finland and Sweden), the Centre's budget was substantially increased (by approximately 48 %), so that in 1995 it amounted to ECU 16.5 million, levelling off in subsequent years to about ECU 14.5 million. There was also an increase in the number of Cedefop staff members to 79. This was accompanied by a radical change in the staff structure and, as stated in the Annual Report for 1998: 'Since 1995, 14 members of the staff have left for various reasons, 26 members have transferred to the EC Commission and other EC institutions. Two members of staff are on leave on personal grounds' (Cedefop, 1999). In 1998, 75 % of the staff had been with Cedefop for less than three years, and 23 % were Greek nationals. In spite of these significant changes, Cedefop tried to return rapidly to 'business as usual', and in the Annual Report for 1996 the new Director, van Rens, and the Chairman of the Management Board, Tom O'Dwyer, could state with a touch of pride: '... Discussion and debate on realigning the Centre's activities, true to its commitment to do better, culminated in the Management Board approval of medium-term priorities on the basis of the lines indicated by Commissioner Cresson. The medium-term priorities set the course for the future targeted action to respond effectively to the needs for information, research and cooperation at European level in the sphere of vocational education and training. As the following report demonstrates, the Centre's activities during 1996 reflects this transition, focusing on three main areas of work: trends in qualifications, analysis of vocational training systems and the Centre's role as an agent for information and communication' (Cedefop, 1997). Particularly significant was Cedefop's obvious keenness to forge closer ties with the various Community institutions, in particular the Commission, as stressed in all the Annual

Reports. This also paved the way for Cedefop's joint involvement in a series of Commission initiatives, particularly with the Directorate-General for Education and Culture (see, for instance, Cedefop, 1999, p. 15; Cedefop, 2000, p. 9).

In 1999, partly due to the efforts of the Greek authorities, Cedefop could count on a new and modern building on the outskirts of Thessaloniki. The next year marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its creation (Cedefop, 2001): together with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions based in Dublin, Cedefop had been the first European agency. Set up in the mid-1970s as a result of the Community's increasing interest in social policy, the Centre's first years were difficult, not just because of obstacles of an organisational nature, but also because of difficulties in defining its role and its relations with Community institutions. The relationship with the Commission was crucial here and, on more than one occasion, although Brussels seemed to see Cedefop as little more than a 'satellite' to be called upon for studies and research, the Centre managed to gain margins of autonomy; its intention was not just to offer its own competences, but to forge autonomous relations with the social partners, national governments and Community bodies themselves, especially as regards the formulation of policies on vocational training. After the mid-1980s, Cedefop was able to take advantage not just of the extension of Community competences; as regards vocational training and the launch of a series of Community programmes, but also of the increasingly close link that had been forged between vocational training and education, and the proliferation of information tools and the demand for information, exchanges and cooperation in these fields within Europe. Nor should the trend in the European Union towards the creation of an increasing number of agencies be forgotten. Nowadays, therefore, Cedefop is a consolidated component of the EU panorama and, within its institutional limits, manages to play an autonomous role in European policies on vocational education and training, both nationally and at Community level.



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## Key words

History,  
European Union,  
Cedefop,  
vocational training,  
social policy,  
social dialogue



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# The place of vocational training in François Mitterrand's idea of a European social space (1981-1984)

## The issue, the period and the sources

The purpose of this article is to explore two closely related questions:

- How did the theme of vocational training come to form part of François Mitterrand's idea of a European social space between 1981 and 1984?
- Over this same period, what factors made vocational training - for young people in particular - a priority of French European social policy?

Why the focus on the period 1981-1984? Is this decision justified?

In 1981 the left came to power in France. After being out of government for more than 20 years, this event was in itself a significant political turning point (Berstein, 1998). And 1984, although of lesser importance, was also a turning point since François Mitterrand carried out a major change in government following a serious social crisis centred on the conflict in education (Bertinotti, 2001). On 17 July 1984, Laurent Fabius replaced Pierre Mauroy as Prime Minister, opening a new chapter in the history of the left.

And in the European Community, the years 1981-1984 were those of the 'agricultural budget' crisis, that is to say, the negotiations that began with the publication in June 1981 by the new Thorn Commission of the report on the 30 May mandate (¹), and ended temporarily, three years later, at the Fontainebleau European Council (²).

As regards European social policy - which obviously had to be used to cover vocational

training - these years coincided with the negotiations on the reform of the European Social Fund (ESF), 1984 being the first year in which the new directions agreed by the Ten were implemented under French and Irish presidencies. We should also remember that it was in 1981 that the issues of education and vocational training were brought together under the authority of a single Commissioner (³) - Mr Ivor Richard, who exercised this responsibility until 1984. The Community thus combined in a single portfolio the issues of employment, social affairs and the whole range of matters relating to education.

The sources that we have used to examine these three years are primarily a large number of contemporary French and European public documents, the abundant 'grey' literature on the period and these issues, and lastly - especially - the French Presidential Archives. These written sources have been supplemented by interviews with French figures active at the time.

## 1981-84: a difficult situation within the Community

The development of European social policy, and hence of vocational training projects, was largely governed by the situation within the Community. The first half of the 1980s was marked by a serious crisis in the Community. As a result of a number of challenges - enlargement, economic crisis and a whole range of reforms - Europe was in danger of bankruptcy. Its own funds were all but exhausted while the United Kingdom of Margaret Thatcher sought - successfully - to reduce that country's contribution to the budget. This situation led the Ten to ex-



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**Between 1981 and 1984, during the budgetary crisis of the European Community, significant negotiations were held between the Ten in connection with the reform of the European Social Fund. At the same time, there was a major political change in France: the left - led by François Mitterrand - came to power. In the social field, François Mitterrand had a wide-ranging programme to propose to his European partners, which he summarised as the 'European social space'. The essence of this concept was: concerted reflation for economic activity (by increasing public deficits) and an attempt to make reduction of working time a priority for Europe.**

**Faced with the hostility of other Member States, this plan for a European social space had to be modified. However, this led to the inclusion of the notion of European vocational training. Finally, after several months of negotiation, the French became ardent defenders of European vocational training plans.**

(¹) EC Bull., 6-1981, 1.2.1.

(²) EC 18th Gen. Rep., p. 22-23.

(³) EC 15th Gen. Rep., 543, p. 228.



tend the budgetary rigour that they practised at home to the whole of the Community budget. Savings were made in the Common Agricultural Policy - which then accounted for almost 70 % of expenditure by Brussels - and in the other policy areas of the EEC, including social policy and therefore vocational training. The financial situation gave little scope for strengthening initiatives in these fields, let alone launching new ones. On the contrary, most of the discussions then conducted were aimed at rationalisation, that is, at deciding on priorities for the actions to be taken.

It was the Europe of 'tiny steps', the Europe of successive failures of European Councils - such as that of Athens in December 1983. The Europe of decisions continually postponed. The Europe of the British cheque and Mrs Thatcher's famous 'I want my money back'. It was also a Europe in which the Franco-German double act also suffered its own vicissitudes: the Giscard-Schmidt double act was succeeded by the Mitterrand-Kohl double act.

When the French left came to power, it was therefore faced with a situation within the Community that was in turmoil, to say the least. Nevertheless, it became responsible for French policy on Europe and for managing the social portfolios covered by this.

### **The socialist project and the notion of a European social space**

If the programme documents published in the late 1970s and early 1980s are to be believed (Parti Socialiste et al, 1973; Parti Socialiste, 1978 and 1980), the French Socialists had an ambitious plan for Europe. At the heart of this project was the creation of a huge social programme.

This aim was heavily ideological. For the French Socialists, those around François Mitterrand and the man himself, the better established the social dimension of the European Community, the more easily could the Socialists' political aims be achieved in France. In many respects, this attitude can be summed up in the phrase: 'Communitising the common programme' (Saunier, 2001). In other words, transferring the substance of the programme adopted by the Socialist Party and its Communist ally in the early 1970s to the European level.

(<sup>4</sup>) National Archives, 5AC4-2231: Résumé écrit de l'intervention de M. Delors au cours du conseil conjoint Eco Fin Social du 11 juin 1981, 11 June 1981; National Archives, 5AG4-2231: Texte non officiel de l'intervention de M. Auroux au conseil Eco Fin Social du 11 juin 1981, 11 June 1981; National Archives, AA64-12581: Conférence de presse de M. François Mitterrand, Président de la République Française, l'issue du conseil européen de Luxembourg, Présidence de la République, Service de presse, 30 June 1981; EC Bull. 6-1981, 1.1.5.

(<sup>5</sup>) 'The extension to all European workers of the opportunity for vocational training, where this is necessary in order to pursue their activity, and in particular for their promotion.' (*Manifeste socialiste pour l'élection européenne ...*, 1978; p. 4.)

(<sup>6</sup>) EC Bull. 11-1981, 3.5.1.

In concrete terms, these social proposals had three clear priorities: making a concerted effort at Keynesian reflation; pushing for a reduction in the working week to 35 hours at the European level; and encouraging social dialogue at all Community levels, in particular relaunching the tripartite conferences that were much discussed at that time as a way of improving the working conditions of European employees through framework agreements signed by the social partners.

These three points formed the heart of the social Europe project of the French left at the time it came to power. François Mitterrand meant nothing less when he suggested to his partners, in June 1981, just a few days after he took over the Élysée Palace as French President, that what he termed a 'European social space' (<sup>4</sup>) should be created.

In reality, vocational training accounted for very little in this European social space.

The programme statements of the Socialists remained practically silent on this field. The manifesto adopted by the Socialist Party in preparation for the first elections to the European Parliament in 1979 contained only four lines on the subject, which was accorded no priority (<sup>5</sup>). Although the French memorandum which Paris put before the Ten in the negotiations of October 1981 was supposed to be very specific, it contained few references to vocational training: barely six lines, while the section on social policy comprised some 80 lines. From these six lines it appears that efforts were to be focused on the long-term unemployed and training in the new technologies (<sup>6</sup>). This last point, as will be seen, was nonetheless important.

However, while it was only just present in European documentation, the subject of vocational training was highly visible in domestic Socialist proposals and in the field of national education. The Socialist Plan for National Education (Mitterrand, 1978) adopted in 1978, for example, made vocational training a major element of the far-reaching reform of national education which the left intended to carry out. Given the deteriorating labour market situation, this document set out a number of tasks for vocational training: enhancing competence in the new technologies; making state expenditure active rather than passive (it was better to pay more



for workers' successful retraining than to shell out unemployment benefits); and finally allowing every young person to have a better chance of getting a good first job. These emphases were important because they were to crop up again later at the European level.

For a long time the French left had been concerned with educational matters. Many of its activists and its elected members were teachers. The opposition to the Government of François Mitterrand had great fun denouncing the 'Teachers' Republic'. However, despite this marked interest in vocational training, schools remained in the eyes of the Socialists in the early 1980s the crucible in which citizens and, by extension, workers, were largely moulded. Vocational training was regarded with suspicion: sending pupils and students on training courses when they had finished their education, or even during their education, meant bringing business into schools, something which the French left viewed as alien. This fear partly explains the typical French distinction between 'vocational training' and 'vocational education', that is, between courses for workers (continuing education) and vocational courses for pupils and students (initial education).

### **Evolution of the project: increasing emphasis on vocational training for young people**

Reflation, 35 hours and social dialogue were the three priorities of the French negotiators and the main topics of Socialist statements on the Community in summer 1981. Only rarely did the question of vocational training appear as such. In fact the left-wing Government only addressed this question through industrial restructuring. Although Jacques Attali (1) – the special adviser to the President of the Republic, a sort of Elysée think tank – did refer to the matter on occasion, it has to be said that vocational training is more or less absent from archive documents for this period.

Given this obvious lack of interest, how did it come about that French diplomacy made the issue of vocational training one of its key positions?

Three factors can provide an explanation.

Firstly, and most importantly, there was the failure of the European social space as pro-

posed initially by François Mitterrand. A general reduction in working hours, and even concerted reflation of the economy, made no sense at that time to Margaret Thatcher or Helmut Schmidt. These policies might even be counter-productive at a time when they felt that priority should be given to combating inflation. Social dialogue was also not on the agenda. Thatcher's United Kingdom was even then engaged on a fierce battle with the trade unions, while the German Government wanted negotiations to remain at the national level. In short, in autumn 1981, the French Government could already see that it was a failure and realised that it had to adapt its approach and review its positions. This review was to have two major consequences:

- On the one hand, former priorities were either abandoned or adapted to the political power relationships of the day (Saunier, 2001). A reduction in working hours thus became an adjustment in working hours. In other words, the reduction in the working week to 35 hours was no longer a priority, and the French now agreed to discuss other measures - part-time working, early retirement, etc.;
- On the other, the French negotiators sought to build on what already existed in the Community, the *acquis communautaire*, that is to say, on what stood some chance of being accepted by all the Ten. In the case of social policy, vocational training was the obvious choice. At that time, the Commission was in fact already running several pilot projects in the field and was used to dealing with such issues under the ECSC (2).

The failure of the 'communitisation' of the common left-wing programme thus helped – paradoxically – to promote vocational training at the European level since the French Government changed its priorities and chose to champion it.

The second factor which can provide an explanation was an internal French matter. The idea was that action by the European Community could be a useful adjunct to the urgent need for vocational training which the Government was then deciding to address and resolve. This too was a remarkable change. The Socialist Government's policy of reflation, which was restricted in scope and effect, quickly reached its limits. As early as autumn 1981, it became ap-

(1) Jacques Attali devised a number of detailed projects for the President of the Republic for greater European integration. One point was devoted to setting up an aggressive, innovative industrial policy, which would not seek merely to preserve along the lines of the action taken in the case of the European iron and steel industry. The special adviser suggested that such a policy should include a vocational training programme for new technologies. National Archives, 5AG4-2231: Attali, Jacques. Conseil européen du Luxembourg (29-30 juin 81), 29 June 1981.

(2) Pierre Morel - adviser to François Mitterrand on Community matters - suggested in a note of November 1981 that documents prepared for the Commission should be used to get Europe moving, i.e. to start concrete discussions. Projects therefore needed to be split into medium and long-term. The European social space, which the other partners rejected, could only be a long-term project. On the other hand, it was possible to move in the right direction by using short-term projects. Pierre Morel suggested support for the employment of young people, which the Commission regarded as involving vocational training. National Archives, 5AG4-2232: Morel, Pierre, Préparation du Conseil européen de Londres (26-27 novembre): entretien avec Monsieur Thorn, Présidence de la République, 7 November 1981.

(3) On the economic aspects of the policy of the French Socialists see the following articles: Asselain, 2001; Saunier, 2002.

(4) The number of people unemployed doubled in the EEC between 1978 and 1982. The phenomenon primarily affected young people. In 1982, almost 17 % of French young people in the labour force were unemployed, and the rate was 40 % in the whole of the Community of 10.



<sup>(1)</sup> Bertrand Schwartz studied at the Ecole Polytechnique and was an engineer in the Mining Corps. He was commissioned by the Prime Minister in May 1981 to prepare a report on the social and occupational integration of young people in difficulty. This report was the basis for most occupational integration policies in the early 1980s.

<sup>(2)</sup> Order No 82-273 of 26 March 1982, on measures to provide 16-to-18-year-olds with vocational training and to facilitate their social integration. Available from Internet: [http://www.legislation.cnv.fr/textes/ord/TL-R-ORD\\_82273\\_26031982.htm](http://www.legislation.cnv.fr/textes/ord/TL-R-ORD_82273_26031982.htm).

<sup>(3)</sup> 25 October 1982, speech to the International Council for Adult Education. Available from Internet: [http://www.discours-mitterrand.org/rep\\_file/821025.htm](http://www.discours-mitterrand.org/rep_file/821025.htm) [cited 11.5.2004]. 14 November 1984, meeting on the social and occupational integration of young people. Available from Internet: [http://www.discours-mitterrand.org/rep\\_file/831114.htm](http://www.discours-mitterrand.org/rep_file/831114.htm) [cited 11.5.2004]. There are references to Europe in these speeches. On 25 October 1982, for example, he declared: 'I should like the actions of France [in the field of training for women and men] and some others to be integrated into action on a European Community scale.'

<sup>(4)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-21PM: 'Intérêts vitaux' de la France en matière européenne, 6 June 1983.

<sup>(5)</sup> In late 1982, a note from the Secretariat General of the Interministerial Committee - the French body responsible for coordination between Ministries in Community matters - summed up perfectly the French attitude in this respect. It pointed out that the priority given to vocational training was shared by several Member States which, like France, believed in the goal of giving each young entrant into the labour market vocational training or initial experience of work. This priority should be supported by the ESF, the statutes of which should be modified to allow for this new role, and some resources should be redeployed. National Archives, 5AG4-2236: Action en faveur de l'emploi des jeunes, SGCI, 24 November 1982.

<sup>(6)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-24PM: Une nouvelle étape pour l'Europe: un espace de l'industrie et de la recherche, 12 September 1983.

<sup>(7)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-27PM: Espace social européen. (Schéma d'intervention: Matignon), 23 June 1984.

<sup>(8)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-2233: Delors, Jacques, Tentative de définition d'une position commune franco-allemande sur les problèmes européens, Ministère de l'Economie et des finances, Le ministre, 29 octobre 1981;  
National Archives, 5AG4-2233: Comptrendu des conversations franco-allemandes du 4 novembre 1981, Ministère de l'Economie et des finances, Dir. du Trésor - Serv. des Affaires internationales - Sous-Dir. des Affaires multilatérales, 4 November 1981.

<sup>(9)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-2232: Réforme du règlement du fonds social européen, SGCI, Secrétariat Général, 13 November 1981.

<sup>(10)</sup> National Archives, 5AG4-2391: The economic and social situation in the Community (Commission Communication to the Brussels European Council, 29 and

parent that stimulation of demand in an open European market largely benefited foreign rather than French goods <sup>(9)</sup>. The result was obvious: a growing gap in the balance of trade, leading to weakening of the franc and a number of devaluations. The French authorities then set out to tackle the fact that European, and particularly French, industry was outdated, incapable of meeting increased demand and outstripped by its main competitors, notably the United States and Japan. There was significant obsolescence both in traditional sectors of the economy - coal, steel, shipbuilding, textiles, etc. - and in the new technologies, from information technology to robotics by way of biotechnologies. In the former case, the solution was painful industrial restructuring, while in the latter, what was needed was more investment and above all a better-trained workforce.

Increased unemployment, especially among young people <sup>(10)</sup>, was closely linked to this finding on the state of the European industrial fabric, despite macroeconomic measures taken by the Socialist Government, and also led to some rethinking. The crisis in the economy was not due to temporary factors. It was structural.

This twofold finding - youth unemployment and the need to modernise French production - led the Government to strengthen and develop the vocational training policies introduced in the 1970s (Cedefop, 1999; p. 29 et seq.), with particular emphasis on the new technologies. This policy took several forms:

- the creation of 'local missions' in 1982 - following the publication of the major report by Bertrand Schwartz <sup>(11)</sup> - the purpose of which was to provide young people with better information about the range of vocational training available to them <sup>(12)</sup>;

- the IT for All plan, launched in 1983, one of the aims of which was to provide each French schoolchild with a computer to help their transition to working life; and an IT programme for the young unemployed, also adopted in 1983;

- various inter-occupational agreements, especially those of September 1982 and October 1983. The former revised the arrangements for funding vocational training, and the latter introduced specific measures for

the block release training of young people - skills contracts, retraining contracts, relief from social security contributions, etc. All of this gave rise in February 1984 to the adoption of a significant piece of framework legislation which reshaped the entire structure of vocational training in France;

- lastly, the Socialist Government took steps to encourage training within companies. Within three years, between 1981 and 1983, the number of in-company training courses rose from a few thousand to almost a hundred thousand. This was a minor revolution in the Socialist framework of the time.

With this set of measures the Government set out on a huge plan of action to promote vocational training. In 1982 and 1983, François Mitterrand also gave a number of speeches on the topic <sup>(13)</sup>. The proclaimed objective was very simple: no young person should leave the education system without suitable vocational training. The view taken by the team surrounding François Mitterrand was that the European Community could play a role in this field. Pierre Morel, the technical adviser responsible for Community matters, pointed out, for example, that it was in the vital interest of France to use European support to modernise French industry; this modernisation should in his opinion include the strengthening of vocational training policies on a European scale <sup>(14)</sup>. However, it was still necessary to persuade the other partners and to adopt the requisite regulations within the ESF <sup>(15)</sup>. Europe should act as a lever to strengthen domestic policies.

The third and final factor explaining the French shift towards support for vocational training largely derives from the previous one and can be summed up as the proclaimed goal of stopping the 'decline' in European industry. The Socialist Government, in both its statements and its proposals, therefore set about highlighting the structural obsolescence of the economy of Europe by comparison with its main competitors. This obsolescence was revealed by successive oil crises and placed Europe in danger of missing out on what was widely called the Third Industrial Revolution, that of information. Paris therefore suggested that its partners should act voluntarily to establish an audacious common industrial policy <sup>(16)</sup>. This idea was shared by the Commission and several Member States, notably Italy. Self-evi-



dently, the emphasis was on vocational training for young people, who were the future workforce of modernised European industry: 'The race that has begun puts on the line the ability of our education and training system to adapt rapidly to the technological and economic changes that are taking place' (17).

Having gone through a political and economic modernisation in the early 1980s, the French Socialists clearly chose the arena in which this race would be run. It would be Europe.

### The negotiations

Three factors pushed the French to make vocational training one of the sticking points of their proposal to relaunch European integration. These were the need to adapt to Community power relationships, the need to take account of national goals, and the desire to stop the economic decline of Europe.

The negotiations turned out as follows.

In the winter of 1981-82, the French representatives started discussions with their German partners. Although the Germans were reluctant to develop new policies - which were likely to prove costly - they stated that they were prepared to examine, one after the other, the reform of the ESF and of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (18). This was a first step. France then drew up a number of proposals aimed at these reforms, in which vocational training and the new technologies figured prominently (19). Although the French suggestions were initially approved by the Commission (20), this body was slow to draft concrete proposals. It was not until autumn 1982 that Brussels published a first set of measures, some of which were very far-reaching (21).

This delay may explain why the first major agreement on policy was reached directly between the Ten at a European Council meeting, in Brussels in March 1982. The Heads of State and Government made a commitment to give each young person, within five years, vocational training suited to the new conditions in the labour market (22). Nevertheless, despite this political impetus from the highest level, it was another year before it was translated into concrete decisions on the ESF. In the meantime, this commitment had come up against the thorny prob-

lem of the budget, which was not at all easily resolved: given the crisis throughout the Community in the resources available to it, how could new policies be introduced? How, while every effort was being made to restrain European expenditure, could a large-scale Community social policy be implemented? This was the background to the negotiations that began within the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Council of Ministers. The 'European compromise machine' was not slow in linking reform of the ESF with that of the ERDF. Eventually, a compromise was reached between Paris and Bonn, which then had the presidency of the Community (23). France agreed to abandon quota management of the ERDF but succeeded in return in not having the ESF regionalised and in having its expenditure concentrated on an objective rather than an area. It was this compromise that allowed the Council of Ministers in June 1983 to reach an initial agreement, confirmed in October 1983, after consultation with the European Parliament (24). The first large-scale reform of the ESF was introduced, under the terms of which almost 75 % of the funds were concentrated on three types of action for the young unemployed, specifically:

- education in the new technologies;
- use of the new technologies in vocational training;
- funding of specific action to promote the occupational integration of young people.

Thus, while retaining budgetary discipline - the agreement allowed for no major increase in the Fund - the concentration of ESF resources on vocational training went in the direction of French demands. Paris, which immediately asked the ESF to support a number of initiatives for the occupational integration of young people in the national territory, saw this as the first step - albeit timid - towards the establishment of a true European social space, that is to say, a Europe capable of supporting the jointly defined social policies of Member States.

Although it is possible to regard these negotiations as a French victory in that Paris succeeded in having some of its priorities taken up at the European level, it can also be argued that European thinking influenced the French left. This was true in many fields, including vocational training and social af-

30 March 1982), EEC, Commission, 22 March 1982.

(21) Especially the idea of a social guarantee of jobs for young people. National Archives, 5AG4-2236: Volet social de la session conjointe du Conseil (15 et 16 novembre 1982), 24 November 1982.

(22) EC Bull. 3-1982, 1.3.5.

(23) National Archives, 5AG4-21PM: Compte rendu succinct du Conseil Affaires Sociales du 2 juin 1983 - Réforme du Fonds Social Européen (FSE), Ministère de l'Economie et des finances, Dir. du Trésor - Serv. des Affaires internationales - Sous-Dir. des Affaires multilatérales, 3 June 1983.

(24) 17th Gen. Rep., 305, p. 142.

(25) EC Bull. 3-1982, 1.3.5.

(26) National Archives, 5AG4-21PM: Compte rendu succinct du Conseil Affaires Sociales du 2 juin 1983 - Réforme du Fonds Social Européen (FSE), Ministère de l'Economie et des finances, Dir. du Trésor - Serv. des Affaires internationales - Sous-Dir. des Affaires multilatérales, 3 June 1983.

(27) 17th Gen. Rep., 305, p. 142.



fairs. A good indication of this change is to be found in the programme document published by the Socialist Party for the 1984 European elections. By comparison with the document published in 1979, vocational training occupied a far more prominent place (Parti socialiste, 1984).

From 1984, the ESF was thus devoted entirely to its new priorities, confirming an orientation introduced a few years earlier.

### Conclusions

Given their desire to create an ambitious Community social policy, the French Socialists quickly came to see vocational training in the early 1980s as an absolute necessity, even though it was far removed from their initial concerns. This observation also applied to other closely related fields, such as the mutual recognition of qualifications.

What can be concluded from these developments in the context of the broader history of vocational training on a European scale?

Using the categories drawn up by Professor Wolf-Dietrich Greinert to distinguish between the different types of vocational training system used in Europe (Greinert, 2003, 2004), we can clearly see where the French example described above fits in. It is a normative model in which the state plays an unquestioned regulatory and stimulatory role - except, perhaps in the case of agricultural vocational training. It should be noted that the existence of alternative vocational training models appears to play no part in the implementation of Community decisions in

the French case. As far as Paris is concerned, although the goal of vocational training deserves to be common, its implementation is a matter for Member States, although it may be desirable for professionals in different countries to exchange 'ideas'.

It would seem that a normative framework is therefore insufficient to explain some Community developments, since Member States do not directly take it into account in establishing their positions - although this may change in the course of negotiations. On the other hand, if we focus - as we have done in this article - on a study of decision-making, the notion of a 'horizon of expectations' appears more appropriate. Despite having training models that are necessarily distinct, the Ten - and now the Twenty-five - have succeeded in arriving at common objectives and methods. These little everyday miracles of Europe - to borrow the expression of an American journalist - may seem surprising (Pond, 1990). In reality, the explanation lies in the tension between diversity and necessity. Although European 'diversity' might be thought irremediably problematic, it fades - without entirely disappearing - in the face of 'necessity'. In the example discussed here, it can be seen how the notions of 'decline' and competition between blocs, which are often called upon in the context of the building of Europe, have been the driving force behind the definition of common objectives for vocational training. In this field, as in others, the capacity of Europe to integrate lies above all in the definition of common interests. Convergence, and in particular the convergence of education systems, is merely one consequence of this.

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### Key words

Mitterrand,  
European social space,  
reform of the European Social Fund, French left



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# Reading

This section has been prepared by

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and the Documentation Service with the help of the members of the European network of reference and expertise (ReferNet).



**This section lists the most important and recent publications on developments in training and qualifications at an international and European level. Giving preference to comparative works, it also lists national studies carried out as part of international and European programmes, analyses of the impact of Community action on the Member States and national studies seen from an external perspective.**

## Europe International

### Information, comparative studies

**Arbeitsbeziehungen in Mittelosteuropa: Transformation und Integration: die acht EU-Beitrittsländer im Vergleich / Heribert Kohl und Hans-Wolfgang Platzer.**

**[Labour relations in Central and Eastern Europe: transformation and integration: comparison of the eight candidate countries.]**

Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlags-Gesellschaft, 2003, 326 p.  
ISBN 3-8329-0093-4

On the basis of comparable country surveys and expert hearings in the accession countries, this study analyses the transformation in industrial relations and records the current status. By comparing the bases and practice of labour laws at corporate, sectoral and national level, a contoured outline of industrial relations in Central Europe is presented. The transformation is oriented to Western Europe, but the development follows different socio-cultural paths. At the same time structural characteristics appear which show a kind of industrial relations typical for societies undergoing transformation. The main characteristics are specific structural deficits and innovative forms of corporate participation and inter-corporate concertation and distribution policy. In an East-West comparison of the basic models and transnational trends of industrial relations in the former EU, central labour and wage issues in the enlarged Union and the current challenges facing the 'European social model' are presented. Dr. Heribert Kohl is a freelance consultant and author with an office for scientific journalism and policy guidance (BwP) in Erkrath. Prof. Dr. Hans-Wolfgang Platzer is working in the Faculty of Social and Cultural Sciences in the Fachhochschule (Technical College of Higher Education) in Fulda.

### Career guidance and public policy: bridging the gap.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD  
Paris: OECD, 2004, 160 p.  
ISBN 92-64-10564-6 (en)

OECD countries are attaching rising importance to lifelong learning and active employment policies as tools of economic growth and social equity. Effective information and guidance systems are essential to support the implementation of these policies, and all citizens need to develop the skills to self-manage their careers. Yet there are large gaps between these policy goals and the capacity of national career guidance systems. Access to services is limited, particularly for adults. Too often services fail to develop people's career management skills, but focus upon immediate decisions. Training and qualification systems for those who provide services are often inadequate or inappropriate. Co-ordination between key ministries and stakeholders is poor. The evidence base is insufficient to allow proper steering of services by policy makers, with inadequate data being available on costs, benefits, client characteristics or outcomes. And in delivering services insufficient use is made of ICT and other cost-effective ways to meet client needs more flexibly. Based upon a review conducted in 14 OECD countries, the publication explores how the gap between career guidance services and public policy might be narrowed. It advocates improved national coordination arrangements and greater attention to research and data collection to inform policy makers. It also promotes the development of improved and more specialised training programmes for practitioners and the creation of more specialised career guidance organisations for the delivery of services.

### Completing the foundation for lifelong learning: an OECD survey of upper secondary schools.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD  
Paris: OECD, 2004, 172 p.  
ISBN 92-64-10372-4

Changing economic and social conditions are giving education a central role in the success of individuals and nations. As the final stage of formal education for the majority of students in OECD countries, upper secondary education is a crucial link. How successful are upper secondary schools in meeting the demands of modern societies?



What are the main obstacles that they perceive in preparing young adults for life and a longer and increasingly complex transition from education to employment? This report provides, for the first time, internationally comparable data from schools on these issues. It sheds light on how upper secondary schools are managed and financed, on their approaches to and difficulties in securing qualified teachers, and their efforts to support the professional development of teachers. It also compares student admission policies and how upper secondary schools support students in their transition to the working world. The extent to which schools are successful in integrating information and communication technologies into the instructional process is also examined. The report is based on OECD's International Survey of Upper Secondary Schools that was conducted in 2001 in Belgium (Fl), Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

**Die gestaltende Region: Fallstudien zum Handlungsfeld beruflicher Bildung in Spanien und Grossbritannien / Ute Lanzen-dorf.**

**[Regional policies: case studies of vocational education in Spain and the United Kingdom.]**

Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlags-Gesellschaft, 2003, 456 p.

(Gesellschaft und Bildung, 15)

ISBN 3-8329-0016-0

Until now regional bodies either undertook regional self-help measures or carried out public tasks. Today the region is once again being discovered in Europe as a social problem-solving level which combines these two roles: in the course of the regionalisation projects self-organised regions undertake partial tasks in a generally supra-regional field of action. This study analyses processes of regionalisation, taking the example of initial vocational training. At first it deals with the establishment of Autonomous Communities in Spain and the Training and Enterprise Councils in the United Kingdom. On the basis of case studies it shows that new regional bodies are able to make the practical expertise of local actors available for central reform projects of the State. These findings are interesting for political decision makers and regional players, for educational, regional and policy research, and for all per-

sons who are involved in shaping social issues. The author works as a geographer in international educational research.

**Education, training and labour market outcomes in Europe / Daniele Checchi, Claudio Lucifora.**

London, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, 240 p.

ISBN 140392080X

This volume takes a fresh look at the traditional debate on education, training and labour market outcomes. It provides empirical evidence on these themes, including data specifically relating to Italy and the UK. The contributions collected in this volume take a fresh look at the traditional debate on education, training and labour market outcomes. The quality of education is difficult to measure in the education market and does not always find clear recognition in the labour market. This book provides empirical evidence on these themes, including data specifically relating to Italy and the UK.

**High skills: globalization, competitive-ness, and skill formation / Phillip Brown, Andy Green and Hugh Lauder.**

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 250 p.

ISBN 0-19-924418-9

A major contribution to current debates about the future of skill formation in a context of economic globalisation, rapid technological innovation, and change within education, training, and the labour market. It represents a major theoretical advance in its holistic approach to the political economy of high skills, and has implications that stand at the core of firm strategies and government policy in Europe, North America, and Asia.

**Institutional approaches to teacher education within higher education in Europe: current models and new developments / edited by Leland Conley Barrows.**

UNESCO - CEPES

[Paris]: UNESCO, 2003, 343 p.

(Studies on higher education)

ISBN 92-9069-173-X

This volume, with its fourteen national studies and the concluding comparative analysis, is the principal outcome of the project



that comprised a rigorous selection process to identify experts to write the studies and the holding of two meetings. The objective of the first meeting was to present and to discuss the guidelines that UNESCO-CEPES had proposed for the elaboration of the national case studies so as to elaborate a definitive outline based on the suggestions of the participants. The second meeting, a seminar, was the occasion for the authors to present and to discuss the drafts of their studies and to comment on a presentation of the comparative analysis of the studies before preparing their final versions. The volume, the principal outcome of the project on teacher education, reveals many of the common factors influencing teacher education in the region. It identifies both innovating developments and new trends in the design of institutional models of teacher education. It provides additional information with regard to future policies and possible common lines of action in teacher education and training, aimed at improving the performance and the status of teachers, and of assisting them in coping with a series of new developments in education in general, and higher education in particular, that include the continued evolution of the "Bologna Process" that is expected to give rise to a European Higher Education Area by 2010, the assimilation of the information and communication technologies into all the areas of endeavour, and the linear emphasis on periodic in-service training for all teachers.

<http://www.cepes.ro/publications/pdf/teacher.pdf>

### **International review of curriculum and assessment frameworks: comparative tables and factual summaries: 2004 / Sharon O'Donnell.**

National Foundation for Educational Research - NFER  
Qualifications and Curriculum Authority - QCA  
12th ed.. Slough: NFER, 2004, 51 p.

This is one of a series of studies conducted as part of the International review of curriculum and assessment framework (INCA) project. This report summarises the provision of primary education in the 18 countries of the INCA Archive. These countries are: Australia, Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the USA and Wales. The report draws on the information in the

Archive along with oral contributions from participants at an invitational seminar held on 19-21 February 2003 (see Annex 2). Following this introduction, the report includes a summary of trends emerging from the study. Section 3 summarises policy and provision in the 18 countries, based on the thematic probe, Primary Education: an International Perspective, 6 and on the contributions and documentation provided by seminar participants, under six headings: control; structure and organisation; curriculum; assessing, recording and reporting progress; teaching methodologies; teaching and learning materials. Information on Northern Ireland has not been included, because the curriculum in that country is currently in the midst of a major reform. For details, see <http://www.ccea.org.uk/curreview.htm>. Section 4 of the report focuses on the international seminar held as part of this study. It specifically reflects the views of the seminar participants on the key priorities in their country, the issues surrounding the above aspects of provision and their vision for the future.

<http://www.inca.org.uk/pdf/comparative.pdf>

### **Learners for life: student approaches to learning: results from PISA 2000 / Cordula Artelt [et al.]**

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD  
Paris: OECD, 2003, 136 p.  
ISBN 92-64-10390-2

What are students like as learners as they near the end of compulsory education? The answer matters greatly, not only because those with stronger approaches to learning get better results at school but also because young adults who are able to set learning goals and manage their own learning are much more likely to take up further study and become lifelong learners. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which surveys 15-year-olds in OECD countries on a three-yearly basis, provides a unique opportunity to look at how students approach learning and how well they perform in terms of reading literacy. This report analyses the results, focusing on students' motivation, self-beliefs and use of various learning strategies. In particular, it looks at those characteristics that together make it more likely that a student will become a confident and self-managed learner. The results confirm strong links between student approaches to learning and meas-



urable student outcomes. For example, students who demonstrate a strong interest in reading and are more confident of their ability to solve problems that they find difficult are more likely to perform well. The report also shows particularly strong links between students' tendency to control their own learning, by consciously monitoring progress towards personal goals, and their motivation and self-beliefs. This suggests that effective learning cannot simply be taught as a skill, but also depends heavily on developing positive attitudes. The report offers policy makers a fine-grained analysis of which particular learner characteristics are prevalent in different countries. It also identifies differences between the approaches to learning of various groups, including male and female students, and those from more and less advantaged social backgrounds. The results point to ways in which education systems can focus efforts to help different groups of students become more effective learners.

[http://www.pisa.oecd.org/Docs/download/  
LearnersForLife.pdf](http://www.pisa.oecd.org/Docs/download/LearnersForLife.pdf)

### **Lifelong learning in the global economy: challenges for developing countries / World Bank.**

World Bank  
Washington D. C.: World Bank, 2003, 172 p.  
ISBN 9586824837

The global knowledge economy is transforming the demands of the labour market in economies world-wide. It is placing new demands on citizens, who need more skills and knowledge to function in their day-to-day lives than can be acquired in formal education systems alone. Lifelong learning—from early childhood to retirement—is education for the knowledge economy, and it is as crucial in transition and developing economies as it is in the developed world. A roadmap for policymakers in developing countries to the key issues and challenges of education in a knowledge economy, this book explores the ways in which lifelong learning systems encourage growth. The authors discuss the changing nature of learning and the expanding role of the private sector in education and training world-wide. In a detailed and practical way, they consider the policy and financing options available to governments seeking to meet the lifelong needs of their learners.

### **Managing education for lifelong learning / Júlia Sapsál (ed.).**

**National Institute of Public Education**  
OECD / Hungary Seminar. Budapest. 2001  
Budapest: National Institute of Public Education, 2003

The publication contains the two-day seminar "Managing Schools for Lifelong Learning organised by OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) and the Ministry of Education of Hungary in Budapest in December 2001. The participants were prominent members of the community of experts in international educational policy, who were extremely active in discussing the issues of educational management and governance. The international experts invited by OECD Directorate for Education and the Ministry of Education of Hungary, the international and Hungarian delegates of the respective ministries of several OECD member states reviewed and discussed the challenges facing school management and national governance of educational systems. The 14 talks given at the seminar were discussed in three consecutive, thematic sessions by 23 international and 23 Hungarian experts. The seminar centred around three major goals: (1) to contribute to national and international dissemination of a comparative analysis of new school management approaches carried out by OECD CERI and also to put this reflection on management at institutional level into a wider perspective of system-wide governance; (2) to start off joint reflection on the role that educational management could play in realising key educational priorities of OECD countries; and (3) to familiarise the international community with educational management initiatives in Hungary and to get relevant international feedback on them from this community.

### **Review of career guidance policies in 11 acceding and candidate countries: synthesis report: July 2003.**

**Sultana, Ronald G.; Zelloth, Helmut**  
European Training Foundation - ETF  
Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2002  
ISBN 92-9157-349-3;

The provision of career information and guidance throughout a citizen's life has become an issue of great importance worldwide, as societies prepare themselves to meet the challenges that the transition to knowledge-



based economies represents. An unprecedented research effort has in fact been initiated by the OECD, which has distributed a dedicated questionnaire to 14 countries internationally in order to create a baseline of information on the current state of policy development in career guidance. That same survey instrument has been used by Cedefop to gather data on the remaining EU countries, and by the ETF in relation to 11 ACCs. The World Bank has initiated a parallel review in a number of middle-income countries, again using the OECD questionnaire. The thematic review by these key partners will lead to the development of the most extensive harmonised international database ever on guidance policy and practice. This synthesis report summarises the state of play in the development of career information and guidance in both the education and labor market sectors in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Experts from each of these countries have written a report, structured around the OECD survey and on the basis of their own knowledge of the field, often following extensive consultation with key partners. The broad purpose of this exercise is, first of all, to provide an account of the most recent and most significant developments, trends, challenges and major issues, as well as the strengths and weaknesses, of national career information and guidance systems and policies, in such a way as to render the data susceptible to comparative analysis. Secondly, the synthesis report aims to facilitate the generation of benchmarks, enabling the countries that participated in the review to gauge how well they are doing in career information and guidance provision in relation to other comparable countries.

[http://www.etf.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/0/C63B14262A11C92CC1256DB100455C70/SFILE/ENLCareer+guidance-0703\\_EN.pdf](http://www.etf.eu.int/WebSite.nsf/0/C63B14262A11C92CC1256DB100455C70/SFILE/ENLCareer+guidance-0703_EN.pdf)

### **Student engagement at school: a sense of belonging and participation: results from PISA 2000 / Jon Douglas Willms.**

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - OECD

Paris: OECD, 2003, 84 p.

ISBN 92-64-01892-1

How widespread is student disaffection with school in different education systems? What policies and practices are most effective in fostering students' sense of belonging and participation in school? These questions are of great concern to educators in many countries, not only because of the interrelationship between student engagement at school and learning outcomes, but also because student engagement represents a valued outcome in itself. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) offers an opportunity to study student engagement within an internationally comparative framework as students approach the end of compulsory schooling. PISA provides not only information on students' literacy skills, but also on their attitudes and values, their social backgrounds, and on important features of the schools they attend. This report examines several aspects of student engagement at school. The results indicate that the prevalence of disaffected students varies considerably both within and among schools in most countries, and that this variation is not attributable solely to students' family backgrounds. The analyses also identify some of the school factors related to student engagement and provide evidence that achieving strong student engagement at school does not have to be at the expense of academic performance.

## **European Union: policies, programmes, participants**

### **Continuing training in enterprises in Europe: results of the second European Continuing Vocational Training Survey in enterprises.**

European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture

Brussels: European Commission, 2003, 137 p.

This publication presents important results from the second Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2), carried out in 2000/2001.



CVTS is the first and only community survey to provide comparable data at European level on investment in human resources in companies. It is therefore one of the major tools of the European Union for the establishment of indicators in the area of lifelong learning.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2/cvts/cvts\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2/cvts/cvts_en.pdf)

### **Cross-country statistical analysis of acceding and candidate countries: synthesis of challenges in the fields of employment and human resource development.**

European Training Foundation - ETF

Turin: ETF, 2004, 27 p.

All the acceding and candidate countries (ACCs) have human capital development needs in order to reach the levels of provision and labour market responsiveness of EU Member States in one or more following areas of intervention: Active labour market measures (mainly for the unemployed), capacity-building of the public employment services, continuous vocational training (mainly for the employed), education and initial vocational education and training (VET). In many of the countries examined, among the highest - though not necessarily the most expensive - needs to address are active labour market measures and associated capacity - building of the PES administration. However, in virtually all cases, the most expensive need - and in several cases also the highest need - to be addressed is support to the education and initial VET systems. Also in continuing vocational training (CVT) the ACCs have to catch up with EU levels.

### **European Union-supported educational research: 1995-2003: briefing papers for policy makers / Angelos S. Agalianos. European Commission, Directorate General for Research**

Luxembourg: EUR-OP, 2004, 204 p.  
(Report, EUR 20791)

ISBN 92-894-5770-8; Cat.No. KI-NA-20-791-EN-C

"Research in relation to education challenges in Europe is an integral part of the European Union's programme of research in the social sciences and the humanities. The projects address a wide range of issues that include: the challenges for future ed-

ucation and training policies in Europe; the dynamics of education and employment; issues of teacher education; issues of higher education; the use of ICTs in learning; issues of education for citizenship; issues of education and social exclusion; lifelong learning strategies; issues of competence development and learning in organisations; innovative pedagogies and school improvement. The research results demonstrate that in a world of rapid social, political and economic changes, education and training are inextricably linked to concerns that include citizenship and democratic participation, inequalities and social justice, cultural diversity and quality of life. Research shows that questions of education and training should be carefully taken into account in the formation of policies on housing, health, welfare, youth, employment and migration. "

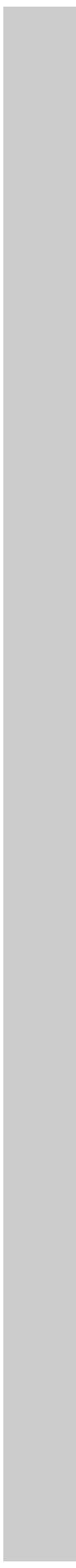
[http://www.mennt.net/files/%7B6a0d18ed-346f-44f1-9053-050564f5e365%7D\\_european%20union%20supported%20educaitonal%20research%201995%20-%202003.pdf](http://www.mennt.net/files/%7B6a0d18ed-346f-44f1-9053-050564f5e365%7D_european%20union%20supported%20educaitonal%20research%201995%20-%202003.pdf)

### **Report on an information and communication strategy for the European Union (2002/2205(INI)) / European Parliament - Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport.**

**Bayona de Perogordo, Juan José**

European Parliament  
Session document, A5-0053/2003  
Luxembourg: European Parliament, 2003, 31 p.  
European Parliament, Bâtiment Schuman,  
Place de l'Europe, L-2929 Luxembourg, Tel.:  
(352) 430022597, Fax: (352) 430022457, URL:  
<http://www.europarl.eu.int/>

The distance between European citizens and the institutions is a serious problem for the institutions. If it wants to reduce the problem the European Union must give greater weight and character to its own information policy. For this purpose it is desirable and important to strengthen cooperation between the European institutions, and/or the individual Member States to actively contribute to the success of the Community priority information campaigns. The European Union's information policy must manage to combine in a creative and effective manner the assertion of its common values, such as democracy, pluralism, cultural and linguistic diversity, cohesion and solidarity with the prac-



tical advantages deriving from membership of the Union.

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/eprep/2003\\_0053\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/eprep/2003_0053_en.pdf)

**Report on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council adopting a multi-annual programme (2004-2006) for the effective integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe (eLearning Programme (COM(22002) 751 - C-0630/2002 - 2002/0303(COD)) / European Parliament - Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport / Mauro, Mario**

European Parliament

Session document, A5-0080/2003

Luxembourg: European Parliament, 2003, 30 p.

European Parliament, Bâtiment Schuman, Place de l'Europe, L-2929 Luxembourg, Tel.: (352) 430022597, Fax: (352) 430022457, URL: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/>

The e-Learning Programme is a multi-annual programme for the effective integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education and training systems in Europe. Content: this proposal concerns the adoption of a financial support programme. The overall objective is to improve the quality and accessibility of European education and training systems through the effective integration of new technologies (e-learning), supporting and complementing the actions of Member States in this field.

[http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/eprep/2003\\_0080\\_en.pdf](http://libserver.cedefop.eu.int/vetelib/eu/leg/eprep/2003_0080_en.pdf)

**Strengthening the local dimension of the European employment strategy: feasibility study on indicators for the regional and local level and social economy / Jacques Dahan.**

European Commission, Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs;

Brussels: European Commission, 2004, 110 p.

The objective of the study, finalised in 2004 was to identify whether reliable and comparable data already exists to measure employment performance at local level and in the social economy and to develop and propose a set of common quantitative and qualitative indicators which could be used

by stakeholders. The study is expected to contribute in raising awareness and stimulate the discussion at national and sub-national levels about using indicators and data on local employment development. It will serve as a methodological instrument for possible use by interested actors at national, regional and local level.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/local\\_employment/publications/ees\\_local\\_fr.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/local_employment/publications/ees_local_fr.pdf)

**VQT-dialogue: vocational qualifications within the framework of social dialogue: presentation of the results, final conclusions and recommendations / Esperanza Roquero [et al.].**

European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture; Madrid: Forcem, 2003, 45 p.

The studies carried out to date have analysed new qualifications needs in diverse sectors, but have not concentrated particularly on the aspects of qualifications bargaining or professional classification systems arising out of collective labour agreements and, on a wider level, within Social Partnership processes. This research project is therefore unique, insofar as it aims to study and reconstruct in detail, by sector and area of bargaining, the practical concerns of the agents involved in social partnership processes, such as qualification criteria, continuous training, skills and so on. The objective is thus to illustrate, on the basis of direct field-work, the realities prevailing at country, regional and sector level, as well as the concerns and actions of social partners (e.g. their negotiating criteria, the "concept" of training, etc. The basis for the study is, of course, a European comparison, which is in itself a first step towards achieving clarity with regard to differences between qualification from one country to another and between sectors. The particular contribution of the project is that it will concentrate on the reality on the ground, approaching as close as possible to social processes.'

[http://vqt-dialogue.nuov.cz/vicenik/vqt-dialogue/studies/Final\\_report-VQT-czech.doc](http://vqt-dialogue.nuov.cz/vicenik/vqt-dialogue/studies/Final_report-VQT-czech.doc)



# From the Member States

## AT AMS-Qualifikations-Barometer. [AMS qualification barometer.]

Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich - AMS

Vienna: AMS, 2003-

The AMS qualification barometer is the first comprehensive Austria-wide online information system on qualification trends. The AMS qualification barometer is addressed to AMS clients and employees, journalists and responsible actors in politics and industry, and to persons who have to take a decision on their future careers. Given the abundance of the data it contains, its up-to-date status, its forecasting function and, last but not least, the clear and well-arranged presentation, it is an indispensable tool for all those who - for private or professional reasons - are interested in developments affecting the labour market and qualification requirements. The AMS qualification barometer is divided into three levels: occupational areas; occupational fields; occupations. Labour market and qualification trends are described in detail at the 'occupational area' and 'occupational field' levels. Here specific regional characteristics are taken into consideration and, for the first time, a micro-level assessment (occupations) is undertaken. In addition to this, the AMS qualification barometer also has a glossary on more than 1,000 qualifications. Links to background information ('Additional information') on about 700 detailed occupational profiles and some 500 references to sources round off this comprehensive and well-arranged presentation. The assessment of occupations and occupational groups is based on the evaluation of experts and on data from analysis of vacancies which, up to now, were not accessible to a broader public. For the first time this information is being made available online in a clear and detailed form.

[http://www.ams.or.at/b\\_info/indexqb.htm](http://www.ams.or.at/b_info/indexqb.htm)

## DK 10 år med PIU: ti eksempler på god praksis / Lars Møller Bentsen [et al]

[10 years with practical training abroad:  
ten examples of good practice.]

Møller Bentsen, Lars

Cirius

Copenhagen: Cirius, 2003, 40 p. ISBN 87-90021-88-6; Cirius, Fiolstræde 44, DK-1171

Copenhagen K, Tel.: (45-33) 957000, Fax: (45-33) 957001, E-mail: cirius@ciriusmail.dk, URL: <http://www.ciriusonline.dk>

In 1992, the Danish Parliament adopted a scheme which made it possible for VET trainees to spend part of their practical training periods abroad (*Praktik i Udlændet* - PIU). The motives behind the scheme were partly the major problems providing practical training places for trainees in Denmark, partly the desire to make VET more attractive. This publication describes the first 10 years with the PIU scheme and provides ten examples of good practices from vocational colleges and enterprises in Denmark. Over the ten years, the PIU scheme has become an important part of the efforts to internationalise the Danish VET system.

[http://www.ciriusonline.dk/download/PIU\\_tiaar\\_2848.pdf](http://www.ciriusonline.dk/download/PIU_tiaar_2848.pdf)

**Almen voksenuddannelse 2003-2004: avu - om dansk, matematik og alle andre fag / red. af Kirsten Preisler og Iben Svensson.**

**[General adult education 2003-2004: adult learning, continuing education etc..]**

Preisler, Kirsten; Svensson, Iben Rådet for Uddannelses- og Erhvervsvejledning - RUE 14th ed.

Copenhagen: RUE, 2003, 26 p. ISBN 87-7773-442-4; RUE, Vester Voldgade 123, DK-1552

Copenhagen V, Tel.: (45-33) 955300, Fax: (45-33) 955349, E-mail: r-u-e@r-u-e.dk, URL: <http://www.r-u-e.dk>

This pamphlet describes the scheme for general adult education (almenvoksenuddannelse - AVU) in Denmark. AVU aims at offering adults the possibility to improve or upgrade their general qualifications. The programme is organised as single-subject education qualifying for an examination. The examinations are equivalent to the examinations after 9 or 10 years of basic schooling (folkeskole). The courses are organised in a way which makes it possible for the participants to take a course which fits into their planning (day or evening classes). AVU takes place at the adult education centres (voksenuddannelsescentre - VUC). In the pamphlet all subjects on offer under AVU are described in detail.

<http://www.r-u-e.dk/avu/>



**EE** Access to adult learning in Estonia / Talvi Märja. Märja, Talvi  
**Adult learning: for employment and citizenship: international conference.**  
 Kaunas. 2003 Kaunas: VMU, 2003, 6 p.

As Estonia became a full Community Member in 2004, the most important task is to acknowledge the new educational paradigm which has been worked out by the European Commission and mostly emphasises: lifelong learning as a new possibility for all; the need to widen access to learning, especially to adult learning; the importance of building a new learning area. The Estonian Minister of Education initiated the process of elaborating a strategy for lifelong learning by calling outstanding persons from different fields of activities to work out the White Paper on Lifelong Learning in Estonia. To provide the work group members with better background for their work, some surveys were initiated for collecting the necessary data. The paper discusses the results of surveys on adult learning, also the possibilities and state of building the area of lifelong learning in Estonia. Last visit to page: 10/2003. [http://www.vdu.lt/alearning2003/I%20Dalis/Talvi%20Marja\\_en.doc](http://www.vdu.lt/alearning2003/I%20Dalis/Talvi%20Marja_en.doc)

**FI** Towards closer European cooperation in vocational education and training: the Leonardo da Vinci programme supporting the Copenhagen Declaration: case Finland / Paula Rouhiainen and Sonja Valjus.

Helsinki: CIMO, 2004, 44 p  
 Centre for International Mobility - CIMO, Leonardo unit, URL: [www.cimo.fi](http://www.cimo.fi)

"This report deals with the role of the Leonardo da Vinci programme in relation to the discourse concerning vocational education in Europe. More specifically, the report is linked to the so-called Copenhagen process, which aims at a closer cooperation in vocational training, improving the attractiveness of training and promoting mobility. The report is a summary of a survey carried out in the summer of 2003. The purpose of this survey was to find examples of Leonardo projects that support the Copenhagen process."

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/leonardo/new/leonardo2/studies/finland.pdf>

**FR** Accord sur la formation: plusieurs partenaires sociaux soulignent l'avancée du dialogue social / Philippe Grandin.

[**Agreement on training: several social partners underline the progress of social dialogue**]

Inffo Flash, No 622 (Octobre 2003), p. 4  
 Saint-Denis-La Plaine: Centre INFFO, 2003  
 ISSN 0397-3301

During the conference on training held on 23 September 2003, the CGT-FO (Confédération Générale du Travail - Force Ouvrière), the CFDT (Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail) and MEDEF (Mouvement des Entreprises de France) underlined the innovative nature of the agreement on vocational training, in particular the new provision on the individual right to training which allows the employee to design his or her own training. The position of the (Confédération Générale du Travail) which decided to sign the agreement on 20 September 2003 is shown separately.

**Apprendre autrement au 3ème millénaire: la cyberformation / Stéphane Héroult, Laurence Le Bars.**

[**New ways of learning in the 3rd millennium: cyber-training**]

Saint-Denis-La Plaine: Centre INFFO, 2003, 372 p.  
 (Dossier documentaire)  
 ISBN 2-84821-014-1

The last few years have seen the development of new distance learning practices using information and communication technologies. Irrespective of the terms used: e-training, e-learning, electronic learning or cyber-training, these training modes have now become an integral part of the education and training landscape. The abundant literature on the subject reflects the multiplicity and diversity of constantly evolving experiences and practices. This dossier has the ambitious aim of compiling all the work done on the subject and identifying the main sources of information. It contains almost 900 bibliographic references and is illustrated by about thirty selected items (specialised press articles and extracts from works), a webography of some hundred sites, specialised journals either online or on paper, and a list of events in 2003/2004 dealing with open and distance learning and e-learning.



## **D**E The OECD-Projekt 'The role of qualifications systems in promoting lifelong learning': country report: Germany / Georg Hanf, Jochen Reuling.

BIBB; Bielefeld: W. Bertelsmann Verlag, 2004, 104 p.

ISBN 3-7639-1012-3

The national Country Report is part of an OECD Project of the same name. Country reports were produced by the member states participating in the project on how the national qualifications systems influence the patterns and the quality of lifelong learning and what actions have been taken to promote lifelong learning. In the first part of the report the most important qualifications subsystems in Germany after upper secondary education are described. Then, on the basis of available research findings, the influence of qualifications systems on learning is analysed. This is followed by documentation and analysis of the principal reforms in the vocational qualifications subsystems in the past few years and their effects on mechanisms that may be of importance for lifelong learning. Finally, with the help of examples, the connection between qualifications systems and learning at the level of providers and users of teaching and learning programmes is examined.

## **G**R Οι φροντιστές της γης: Η Αμερικανική Γεωργική Σχολή και η Ελλάδα στον 20ό αιώνα.

**Stewards of the land: the American Farm School and Greece in the 20th Century / Marder, Brenda L.**

Macon: Mercer University Press, 2004, 496 p.  
ISBN 0-86554-8498

A history of the American Farm School in Thessaloniki.

## **I**E Report of a discussion forum on the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Enhanced European Co-operation in Vocational Education and Training / National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, Further Education and Training Awards Council.

Dublin: NQAI, 2004, 10 p.

NQAI, 4th Floor, 6-9 Trinity Street, IRL-Dublin 2., Tel.: (353-1) 6127080, Fax: (353-1) 6127095, E-mail: info@nqai.ie, URL: <http://www.nqai.ie/>

The aim of the discussion forum was to update Irish stakeholders in Irish vocational education and training on developments in Europe in relation to the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and on the linkage with developments in Ireland. It was hosted by FETAC-Further Education and Training Awards Council and the NQAI-National Qualifications Authority. It was attended by a range of participants engaged in education and training, including state agencies, ministerial bodies, awarding agencies and providers. The forum heard that significant progress had been made in advancing the key areas of quality assurance, transparency and credit transfer. The biggest obstacle to a European knowledge area and labour market, a Ministry spokesman said, was the cumbersome recognition process which inhibits free movement between countries, sectors, jobs and institutions. The implementation process for the Copenhagen Declaration in Ireland was described in terms of the working groups and technical groups set up, the progress of which could be followed on the virtual communities that have been established for each one. The work of the groups in the areas of quality assurance, credit accumulation and transfer, transparency of qualifications is described in detail. Links to related websites are provided at the end of the conference report.

<http://www.nqai.ie/copenhagenforum.pdf>

## **M**T Lifelong guidance and the European challenge: issues for Malta / Ronald G. Sultana.

**Sultana, Ronald G.**

Malta: Government Printing Press, 2003, 144 p.  
ISBN 99932-666-0-4

The book provides a state-of-the-art review of where guidance is at in Malta, in comparison to other countries in Europe and beyond, along with a set of criteria and dimensions that have been used internationally to assess the field. In doing so, it moves on from describing what is taking place, to identifying key gaps in provision as well as challenges that the service has to face.



## **ES Derecho del trabajo y formación / Mario Garmendia Arigón.**

**[Right to work and training]**

Montevideo: Cinterfor, 2003, 179 p.

(Herramientas para la transformación, 19)

ISBN 92-9088-155-0

This study looks at the right of vocational training in general and in particular in Uruguay. Different aspects are analysed in relation to the different types of work contract, selection process, training legislation, youth training legislation, salary standards, working hours, unemployment benefits, dismissal, and collective bargaining.

*[http://www.cinterfor.org.uy/public/spanish/region/ampro/cinterfor/publ/gar\\_dtra/index.htm](http://www.cinterfor.org.uy/public/spanish/region/ampro/cinterfor/publ/gar_dtra/index.htm)*

## **Trabajo, calificación y formación: comprender el fenómeno de la formación / Raquel de la Fuente Anuncibay.**

**[Training: why, how and for what:]**

Burgos: Universidad de Burgos, 2002, 686 p. (Estudios y monografías, 22)

ISBN 84-95211-60-2;

Servicio de Publicaciones, Universidad de Burgos, Plaza de la Infanta doña Elena, s/n, 09001 Burgos

This is a comprehensive study dealing with the many issues surrounding the difficult topic of vocational training in Spain. Firstly referring to the socio-economic background it details with the complexity of the training system and its variants. Then it presents the development of an empirical study on trainees in the training centres and the needs and demands of training for companies in the city of Burgos. It closes with an interpretation of the results, the conclusions to be drawn and the aspects to be improved.

*<http://www.cinterfor.org.uy/public/spanish/region/ampro/cinterfor/publ/arte/leite/index.htm>*

## **UK The assessment of prior experiential learning in Europe: radical challenges to the idea of a university / Pat Davies.**

**DfES Research Conference 2003, 'Learning by comparison: International experiences in education and training'. London. 2003**

Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 2003, 10 p.  
University of Sheffield, Elmfield Lodge,  
Northumberland Road, UK-Sheffield S10 2TY,  
URL: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/>

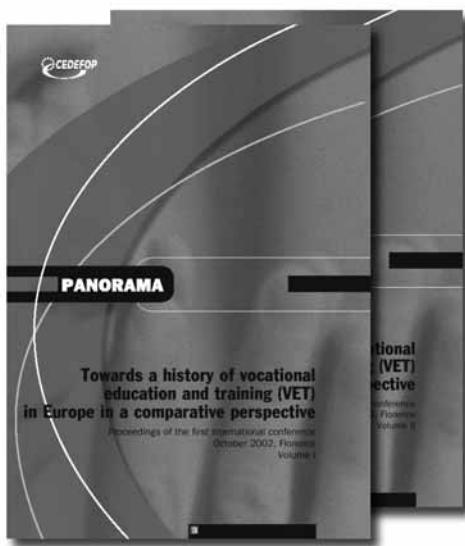
Examines the policy implications in the UK for the adoption of a system of the assessment of prior experiential learning (APEL) such as the French have recently introduced. Specifically focuses on the implications for higher education.

## **The UK education system: an international perspective / Dr. Anna Vignoles. DfES Research Conference 2003, 'Learning by comparison: International experiences in education and training'. London. 2003**

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