Vocational training is intended to pave the way to job security and satisfaction - according to the research group on “Work Force Integration and Reintegration” at the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB). This would imply that initial and continuing vocational training keep abreast of changing occupational requirements and impart knowledge and skills that trainees and workers will be able to utilize for many years to come. It calls for state programme funding to promote such skills, the availability of suitable vocational training curricular material and the provision of appropriate train-the-trainer courses.

The promotion of disadvantaged young people in compliance with Art. 40c of the Labour Promotion Law

Trainees with poor school achievement and/or social problems need special encouragement to begin vocational training and see it through to the end. In Germany, Art. 40c of the Labour Promotion Law provides for such support, supplementing in-company training with parallel assistance programmes and promoting initial vocational training in non-enterprise training facilities.

Since 1994, the new para. 2a of Art. 40c of the Labour Promotion Law has provided an opportunity to continue social and educational assistance to young people who have completed non-enterprise training measures under Art. 40c, para. 2 of the Labour Promotion Law if they need such help to find or secure a job. The new regulation is designed to remove obstacles disadvantaged young people face when transferring from training in non-enterprise training facilities to a job by continuing to give them individual assistance. This help is intended to reduce the risk of unemployment and the accompanying personal and professional development handicaps which some disadvantaged young people encounter even after they have successfully completed training.

Objective of vocational training: integration

“Integration” is used in this context to mean a process or a state which opens up “access to avenues of social prestige”. The problem of integration as such will never be eliminated in an open and changing society. Just as the ladders to social prestige change, so, too, does access to them. Issues of work force integration and reintegration can basically therefore be subdivided according to the:

- “points” where access to the avenues is interrupted (e.g. the first threshold: the transition from school to training; the second threshold: the transition from training to employment, interrupting a career to have children);
- groups affected by the interruption;
- reasons for the interruption;
- measures and concepts to correct the disturbance.

As a general rule any interruption affects the individual’s fundamental right to free development of personality (and other basic rights) and wastes potential talent. Especially in a country such as Germany where primary resources are scarce, developing human resources presents the best opportunity for prosperity and is thus a major focus of policy and research.

A close connection exists between

1) young untrained adults who in the past have remained vocationally unqualified and
2) disadvantaged young people who leave school with the prospects of a lifetime without an occupation.

Both these groups need special attention and special assistance. The most effective way for young untrained adults to acquire vocational qualification is probably through “learning on-the-job as a special element of late vocational training”. In contrast, better preventive vocational training measures need to be developed for school-leavers in danger of becoming “disadvantaged young people”.

* Status lines: positions with higher social recognition.
Federal Institute for Vocational Training records reveal that the vocational training system’s ability to integrate/reintegrate people is limited if it does not manage to differentiate its training offers more effectively to changing training prerequisites and the training needs of its clientele. Our work increasingly poses the question of how groups who have received no training in the past might be reached through more flexible and differentiated forms of training.

Evidence substantiates the hypothesis that many young people and especially those who have no lower secondary school leaving certificate or have attended a special school (for slow learners) will continue to have problems when transferring from school to in-company training (first threshold), even when the situation on the training place market improves. Problems in transferring from vocational training to the work force (second threshold) have not disappeared. Although not so many young people in the west German Länder are affected as was the case in the early 1980s, this does not rule out qualitative breaches between training and employment. Inversely, these problems have intensified in the eastern Länder.

The attractiveness and quality of vocational training, already important issues, are becoming more and more crucial. The quality of the dual system is measured among other things by its ability to integrate disadvantaged young people. Long-lasting vocational integration is only possible if new occupational requirements are addressed in training. The leaders in this area have been the restructured training occupations. Disadvantaged young people must not be excluded from training in these occupations. This would place whole occupational fields in the commercial and trade/technical area beyond the reach of potential trainees among this group of young people, thus narrowing their long-term chances of integration. Training the disadvantaged in demanding occupations is less a problem of this particular group than a challenge to develop suitable qualification concepts.

Despite the wide range of activities that have been undertaken in this field, the problems of vocational integration and reintegration through further training, retraining and continuing training are likewise still far from being solved. On the contrary, high unemployment and the influx of resettlers from Eastern Europe have complicated the problem. The threat of unemployment looms for those who did not undergo training during the years when training places were scarce. These young adults, now aged between 18 and 25 run a high risk of joining the ranks of the unemployed as a result of the loss of jobs for those with “no formal qualifications” (NFQ). If we look at the east German Länder, we see that the disparities are far more evident in an economy overshadowed by massive retrenchment processes and restructuring.

Federal Institute for Vocational Training records reveal that the vocational training system’s ability to integrate/reintegrate people is limited if it does not manage to differentiate its training offers more effectively to changing training prerequisites and the training needs of its clientele. Our work increasingly poses the question of how groups who have received no training in the past might be reached through more flexible and differentiated forms of training.

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Table 1: The Problem and its Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In Germany:</th>
<th>= approx. 13% of any age group</th>
<th>= approx. 130 000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of persons with no vocational qualifications (per year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>of which (assessment):</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disadvantaged young people</td>
<td>= approx. 90 000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- young people who have never commenced training (about 60 000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- dropouts from the dual system (about 30 000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Young people who are hard to train</td>
<td>= approx. 20 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dropouts from universities and other institutions of higher education</td>
<td>= approx. 20 000</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

“(…) in (…) Germany, (…) developing human resources presents the best opportunity for prosperity and is thus a major force of policy and research.”

“Our work increasingly poses the question of how groups who have received no training in the past might be reached through more flexible and differentiated forms of training.”

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**Promotion measures: participation rates and costs**

In 1994, some 49,200 (in 1993: 53,200) persons were admitted for the first time into programmes in the "old" Länder under the promotion of vocational training of disadvantaged trainees clause (Art. 40c Labour Promotion Law). Girls and young women comprised 34% of this figure (in 1993: 32%). Tutoring was given to 42,800 trainees parallel to their training course, 6,400 commenced vocational training in a non-enterprise training facility. Young foreigners and young adults accounted for 22% (10,900) of those assisted. Foreigners constituted 21% (9,000) of those coached during vocational training and

<table>
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<th>Table 2:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The state aids disadvantaged young trainees who need special help because of their poor school performance or social difficulties. The aim is to enable disadvantaged young people to assume, continue and successfully complete vocational training by providing assistance parallel to their training or vocational training in extra-plant facilities. The measures are intended to take the trainees’ special situation into consideration, address language and educational deficits and provide social and educational support. Priority is given to assistance offered parallel to training courses.</td>
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**Groups eligible for assistance**

The Federal Labour Office may support the vocational training of the following groups of persons if - without such aid - the person will not find a training place or is likely to discontinue training.

1. Foreign trainees;

2. Slow learners among German trainees, especially those who have left lower secondary school without obtaining a final certificate and young people who have attended schools for the learning impaired (special schools);

3. Socially disadvantaged German trainees, irrespective of the level of their general education, in particular:
   - Young people with behavioural disorders, as determined by the Psychological Service;
   - Dyslexics;
   - Young people who have been given child care assistance under the Children and Youth Welfare Act provided they are not undergoing training in a shelter for these reasons;
   - Young people who were former drug addicts;
   - Young ex-convicts;
   - Young prisoners, if the measure will enable them to take up vocational training, or if the continuation of vocational training will reduce their sentence or result in a suspended sentence on probation;
   - Young ethnic German resettlers from Eastern Europe who have difficulties with the German language.

4. Trainees likely to fail their in-plant training course if they are not given assistance, judging by their previous training achievements or because of social problems.
Integration of persons as such is no longer in the limelight of the debate, but rather the question of curricular input and further development.

In 1994, 3,300 trainees in the old Länder completed their training in an extra-plant training centre; 3,000 passed the final examination. In the same year, programmes were supported for around 19,100 1st-year participants in the “new” Länder (1993: 15,100). Girls and young women made up 29% of this figure (1993: 33%). In 1994, 10,200 young people received coaching parallel to their training course (1993: 8,800), and 8,900 young people began vocational training in a non-enterprise training facility (1993: 6,300).

The need for internal differentiation has likewise become more acute. This requirement has already become a must in vocational training in general.

The principle of differentiation

The preservation and further development of the dual system depends not least on the extent to which it manages to accommodate the diverse groups of young people.

In addition to the programmes sponsored under Art. 40 - 40c (para. 1 - 3) of the Labour Promotion Law, the new Länder benefited from promotion of vocational training in non-enterprise facilities during a transitional period ending in 1992/1993 in accordance with Art. 40c, para. 4 of the Labour Promotion Law/GDR of 22 June 1990. At the end of December 1994, some 14,400 young people were taking part in a non-enterprise vocational training course in accordance with Art. 40c, para. 4 of the Labour Promotion Law/GDR. They had either been unable to find a training place in an enterprise because of the situation on the training market or they had lost their training place when their company went bankrupt or their plant was closed down.

Approaches in practice

In recent years various strategies for the vocational integration of young people have been developed and put into practice. Preparatory vocational measures, training in non-enterprise facilities and coaching parallel to training courses are typical of some of the approaches for which the basic structures have been consolidated. Consequently, the principal problem is no longer integration as such, but rather the question of curricular input and further development. These aspects are coming to the fore especially since training in non-enterprise facilities is becoming more common in the east German Länder. There these institutions have to enrol not only disadvantaged young people as a priority group. They must also accommodate anyone unable to find an in-company training place, regardless of the level of school education they have reached. This means that more research has to be devoted to means of guaranteeing the necessary practice-orientation. This includes prioritizing training for occupations with a secure future. The need for internal differentiation has likewise become more acute. This requirement has already become a must in vocational training in general.

“To be consistent, the demand for more individualization cannot be restricted solely to enterprise training; vocational schools have an important role to play here too.”
The more we manage to reduce the number of disadvantaged young people (...), the fewer and less severe problems untrained young people will cause in society and in the country as a whole.

A close connection exists between young untrained adults, who in the past have remained vocationally unqualified, and disadvantaged young people who leave school with the prospects of a lifetime without an occupation or a secure future. Both these groups need special attention and special assistance. While the most effective way for young untrained adults to acquire vocational qualification is probably “learning on-the-job as a special element of late vocational training", better preventive vocational training measures need to be developed for school-leavers in danger of becoming “disadvantaged young people” so that they do not drop out in the first place.

### Promotion of initial vocational training for disadvantaged trainees from 1991 to 1994

The problems of training these two target groups are indeed similar. The measures

<table>
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<th>Table 3: Promotion of Disadvantaged Young People</th>
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<tr>
<td>Admission in the year under review</td>
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<tr>
<td>in extra-plant facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>assistance during training</td>
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<tr>
<td>In addition: measures under Art. 40, para 4 of the Labour Promotion Law/GDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrolments at the end of the year under review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition: measures under Art. 40, para 4 of the Labour Promotion Law/GDR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure in million deutschmarks</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Federal Labour Office
can and must be complementary. The more we manage to reduce the number of disadvantaged young people through dedicated vocational training programmes and social and educational assistance, the fewer and less severe problems untrained young people will cause in society and in the country as a whole.

The complex public debate indicates that the general public is well aware of the objectives and problems associated with the late training of young unqualified people and shows increasing interest in new strategies to combat these problems. The promotion of disadvantaged young people, in other words, the younger portion of a larger population without vocational qualifications, is often seen in Germany under the aspect of taking full advantage of the pool of potential skilled workers and the shortage of skilled labour in trade and industry. This view is far too narrow. When improving measures to promote the vocational training of disadvantaged young people, altruism and the costs of social welfare are important, but the emphasis should be on the personal and social aspects.

Despite the wealth of individual studies and measures, no single coherent strategy has been conceived so far to attack the problem. Basically two contradictory concepts dominate the arena today:

- The first concept attempts to solve the problem by continuing to improve and perfect the means available to assist disadvantaged young people within the limitations of the system of existing training occupations and criteria of the German Vocational Training Act.

- The other concept, which is propagated principally by the Federal Government, favours - likewise within the framework of the Vocational Training Act - the creation of new and special training occupations which are particularly suitable for disadvantaged young people. These occupations should be better matched than the standard training occupations to the practical skills of disadvantaged young people. Training for these occupations should have less theory and be shorter if necessary.

**Training slow learners**

Those responsible for and involved in vocational training unanimously agree that considerable efforts have been made in the past to implement educational policy principles and give all young people qualified and recognised vocational training. The consequences of young people having no training, and the related employment, social and economic risks are considered serious. In view of the shrinking demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, these problems and their impact will become even more acute unless countermeasures are taken. For this reason, there is wholehearted agreement that those responsible for vocational training and especially vocational training for disadvantaged young people should continue and expand their programmes. These measures will help this particular group to acquire training in state-recognised training occupations under the Vocational Training Act.

Arguments supporting assisted vocational training for slow learners show that lower and intermediate-level vocational training qualifications are better than no qualifications at all, if this is the only way that

<table>
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<th>Table 4: Examinations</th>
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<tr>
<td>✓ additional oral examination to balance out marks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ longer processing time for theoretical examination.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ easier forms of written examination.</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ recognition of the passed practical examination as partial qualification with a certificate if the trainee did not pass the theoretical examination.</td>
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</table>
disadvantaged young people can be integrated or reintegrated into the work force. But additional paths into the vocational training system should be reserved for this particular group of young people only. In this context it makes sense to replace the theoretical parts of training and examinations by certification of additional practical training.

Training occupations which are considered inferior are unable to fulfil their integrative function adequately. There is a danger that training courses with less theory will limit the occupational mobility and flexibility of course graduates. Training occupations which are not based first and foremost on demand but on the handicaps of the target group involved run the risk of discrimination of the very group we are trying to help. Training occupations with less examinable theory should only be offered to those young people who would otherwise acquire no vocational certification at all. Having a certificate which is considered inferior is preferable in such cases to the stigma of being unskilled. Assistance programmes which enable slow learners to complete their training successfully within the existing training regulations merit priority, however. New training occupations should be admitted only in areas where the prospects of future job security are at least as good as in the majority of currently recognised training occupations.

Training the Unskilled

The combination of work and initial vocational training is a sensible and necessary strategy for the special group of unskilled 20 to 30-year-olds. This measure should complement other preventive activities aimed at increasing the training rate of young people. A concept to assist the late training of young adults must emphasise on-the-job learning for two reasons:

1. From a curricular and educational viewpoint, on-the-job learning is a particularly suitable method for this group of people to acquire vocational qualifications because the personal learning situation of the individual, which often includes rejection of school learning as a form, can be taken into consideration.

2. On-the-job learning - acquiring qualifications with concurrent employment - is also a necessary element of late vocational training because the living conditions of 20-year-olds who have never begun or completed vocational training and for whom retraining is no alternative favour job-related training.

Qualification Criteria

Consequently, the qualification strategy proposed here is based on the following criteria:

1. Achieving recognised training qualifications in compliance with the Vocational Training Act/Craft Trades Code;

2. Dividing current job profiles into partial qualifications/modules and developing adult training curricula;

3. Linking job/contract learning and courses in cooperation between enterprises and non-enterprise/extra-plant training facilities;

4. Raising the level of earnings in keeping with the increase in qualifications;

5. Providing constant vocational counseling.

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