CEDEFOP

PANORAMA

Towards a history of vocational education and training (VET) in Europe in a comparative perspective

Proceedings of the first international conference
October 2002, Florence
Volume II

EN

Towards a history of vocational education and training (VET) in Europe in a comparative perspective

Proceedings of the first international conference October 2002, Florence

Volume II

The development of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU and the role of Cedefop

Cedefop Panorama series; 101

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet.

It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004

ISBN 92-896-0315-1
ISSN 1562-6180

Printed in Belgium

The **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training** (Cedefop) is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. We provide information on and analyses of vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice.
Cedefop was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75.

Europe 123
GR-57001 Thessaloniki (Pylea)

Postal Address:
PO Box 22427
GR-55102 Thessaloniki

Tel. (30) 23 10 49 01 11
Fax (30) 23 10 49 00 20
E-mail: info@cedefop.eu.int
Homepage: www.cedefop.eu.int
Interactive website: www.trainingvillage.gr

Edited by:

Cedefop

Prof Antonio Varsori
University of Padua, formerly at University of Florence

Project team in Cedefop:
Mette Beyer Paulsen, Gundula Bock, Annette Cloake, Éric Fries Guggenheim, Anders Nilsson, Sten Pettersson, Marc Willem, Norbert Wollschläger, Marena Zoppi

Published under the responsibility of:
Johan van Rens, Director
Stavros Stavrou, Deputy Director

Preface

There are few long-term studies in which the development of vocational education and training (VET) is placed in a larger societal framework, and those that do exist tend to focus on the development in only one country. In Western Europe the emergence of EC/EU social policies, and more particularly, the inclusion of VET in the treaties, has had consequences for the development of VET in Member States, while at the same time existing education and training systems have influenced the shaping of EC/EU policies.

In January 2000 the European centre for the development of vocational training (Cedefop) launched the project *A European history of vocational education and training.* The project is based on the understanding that knowledge of historical development is necessary for a solid comprehension and interpretation of contemporary events and processes. The purpose of the project is to promote a better understanding of present-day VET by referring to the historical development at national and intra-national levels. The project also sheds light on the role VET has had on European integration and the effects of European policies on national VET systems, and seeks to encourage future research in these areas.

In October 2002 the University of Florence and the European University Institute organised, under the aegis of Cedefop, the first international conference on the *History of vocational education and training in Europe in a comparative perspective.* The first session of that conference dealt with the development of VET systems in one or several European countries. In the second session, the role of VET in EC/EU policy was examined mainly from a historical viewpoint. This publication provides the conference proceedings in two volumes. The present volume deals with the development of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU and the role of Cedefop in that connection. The articles form the basis of a valuable body of knowledge which Cedefop hopes to build on in the future by encouraging further comparative research into the history of VET in Europe and the development of EU policies in VET.

Stavros Stavrou

Deputy Director

Table of contents

Executive summary

Cedefop's mission is to help policy-makers and practitioners of the European Commission, Member States and social partner organisations across Europe make informed choices about vocational training policy. Concerted efforts are made to provide stakeholders with relevant, up-to date information and provide assistance in various on-going processes through the Knowledge Management System concerning issues such as mobility, quality and transparency of qualifications.

Cedefop also supports a deeper understanding of current changes in vocational education and training (VET) by encouraging and supporting theoretical studies, which are disseminated through VET research publications.

The VET history project should be seen in this context. The deposit of Cedefop's archives, and the archives of the former Head of Administration, the so-called 'Fonds Riva', to the European University Institute of Florence University was an occasion for researchers to gather to give presentations on different aspects of VET in Europe at the First international conference on the history of VET in Europe, which took place in October 2002. The presentations concentrated on two main issues: the rise of national VET-systems in a comparative view and the developments of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU, and the role of Cedefop.

This volume contains the contributions from the second day of the conference concentrated on the theme: 'The development of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU and the role of Cedefop'. They do not pretend to give an exhaustive presentation of the development of VET policies in Europe, but provide a few highlights, which will hopefully lead to further investigation into this huge field of research.

Contributions span from the introduction of VET provisions in the European Coal and Steel Community in order to help to alleviate (through support to retraining and to furthering the mobility of labour) the huge structural problems on European labour markets in the aftermath of World War II, through the introduction of the article on VET in the Treaty of Rome, and to the subsequent introduction of 'the 10 principles of VET' and the action programmes of 1965 and 1972. The contribution of the economic and social committee to establishing 'a vocational training policy' in the years 1960–75 is treated, as is the contribution of the European Trade Unions to the creation of a social policy, and in particular a VET policy within the EC of the 1970s, which eventually lead to the creation of Cedefop. An example of national policy, the role of vocational training in Francois Mitterand's idea of a European social space, shows how national policies can influence policy development at the European level. The role of the social partners is described, and a broader perspective is taken in the attempt to look at the importance of VET in shaping a European social policy from the origin to the creation of Cedefop, and the influence of Cedefop has had supporting this policy and its stakeholders.

These contributions do not pretend to give a complete picture of the interaction of national policies, the creation of European Social policies and the role of VET in this respect. They present just a few highlights, and are far from a giving a comprehensive view of the manyfold aspects of the development of VET policies in the EU. A vast field of topics remains to be investigated into, such as the role of the various actors at the European level: the Council, the Social Partners and not least, the Commission. Questions can be asked such as what led to the creation of the rise of the Task Force Human Resources in the late 1980s? When, why and how did various networks and action programmes, from EUROTECNET over PETRA and FORCE to Leonardo da Vinci and PHARE come into being? Which have had a role as test laboratories for policy development at the national and EU-level? It would be interesting to see the results of research into these subjects and others, leading up to present day initiatives dealing with issues such as quality, transparency and credit transfer in VET and validation of non-formal learning. And it would be rewarding to do it while eye-witnesses are still around.

Hopefully the publication of the proceedings of the First international conference on the history of VET in a comparative perspective will give rise to further investigations, debate, and articles.

Mette Beyer Paulsen

1. Introduction

Antonio Varsori

In the 1960s, historians of political thought, the economy and international relations began to display an interest in the emergence, despite many difficulties, of European integration. This interest has strengthened over recent decades, partly because of major events in the European Community (EC): the creation of the European monetary system; the Single European Act; the Maastricht Treaty; the birth of the European Union (EU); and the introduction of the euro. With increased competences of Community bodies and the growing number of policies originating from Brussels, ultimately even sectors excluded from the provisions of the 1957 Treaties of Rome, such as education and culture, were affected. This evolution persuaded the EC – and then the EU – to promote research on integration from various viewpoints: legal, economic, political and historical, as shown in the Jean Monnet project. In many universities, both in the EU and outside, there are now autonomous courses on the history of European integration ([1]).

Even so, for a long time the history of integration was strongly marked by the cultural and disciplinary background of the historians concerned with the process. Scholars focused their attention on a set of specific themes: the theoretical origins of integration and the action of Federalist movements, certain economic factors and the 'European' policies of States involved in European construction. In this setting, there was less interest in the policies expounded by European players such as Community institutions, the European political parties or the economic and social forces. One justification for this trend was the limited availability of archive sources on these phenomena and players, which meant that research was left to the jurists, economists and political scientists who opted for an analysis of contingent phenomena (e.g. Varsori, 2001).

These brief considerations explain why research on the history of Community policies and the bodies involved is so sparse, albeit with a few exceptions such as certain phases of the Common agricultural policy. European social policy is no exception to the rule. To make it even more difficult to study this aspect of integration, there are various theories such as absence of a European social model, belief that Community bodies only recently developed effective action in the social field, or the vagueness of the term 'social policy' itself (Ciampani, 2001) ([2]). This has encouraged lack of interest from the historic viewpoint in the stance assumed by Brussels on vocational training policies.

([1]) On the role of the Jean Monnet Project and the dissemination of European studies, see *Enseignement de troisième cycle …*, 1996 and *Jean Monnet Project Directory,* 1999.

([2]) Among the few exceptions of note is the paper by Degimbe (1999).

The research on vocational education and training (VET), the role that VET has performed in the development of European social policy, the positions adopted on the subject by the various European players, and the organisation that has concerned itself with the question within the Community, Cedefop, have demonstrated the importance of these issues in promoting a broader understanding of integration. Research has revealed a wealth of archive sources and has challenged certain theories ([3]).

First it should be pointed out that interest existed in the social implications of the phenomenon right from the start of integration. As illustrated by Lorenzo Mechi (in this publication), the first European Community, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), developed certain major initiatives in the social field, because the High Authority, as well as the economic and social forces, realised that decisions made in the coal and steel sectors would have significant consequences for workers. Vocational training was one of the spheres in which the ECSC acted, especially to promote the redeployment of workers at risk of losing their jobs following ECSC decisions.

Although launching a social policy was not a concern of those drawing up the Treaties of Rome, the European Economic Community (EEC) – mainly due to pressure from the Italian authorities, out of a conviction that the EEC might help to solve the social problems besetting their country – established instruments that might have promoted the development of a European social policy, such as the European Social Fund. Possible action in the social field, however, was seen as an instrument for the full achievement of a common market rather than as an end in itself. With this in mind, thought was also given to possible intervention in vocational training ([4]).

It is usually argued that social policy remained dormant up to the mid-1970s. However, this publication's paper by Francesco Petrini shows that during the 1960s there were many attempts to launch an effective Community measure in this field. Vocational training proved to be a key factor in these attempts, both because it was linked with the interests of certain countries such as Italy and because it was regarded an important factor in the economic and social events experienced by Western Europe during those years. Also, certain specific sectors of the Community agencies were heavily involved. In this publication Elena Dundovich shows, for example, that from its creation the Economic and Social Committee (ESC) saw the identification of specific criteria and objectives for developing vocational training as a field in which the Community might operate more effectively, and how a coherent European policy in this sector would encourage the emergence of an incisive Community social measure. From the early 1960s, members of the ESC also realised that research on vocational training and the development of new approaches would promote a more harmonious European construction, and therefore supported the idea of establishing a European centre for study and research in

([3]) Of special importance are the sources to be found in the Cedefop archives and at the Historic Archives of the European Communities as well as the archives of the Commission, Council and Economic and Social Committee (Brussels).

([4]) See in particular Articles 128 and 118 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community.

this field ([5]). The ESC was not the only body to show interest in these issues: as pointed out by Maria Eleonora Guasconi (in this publication), on several occasions European trade unions, despite divisions in their ranks up to the 1970s, asked themselves what should be done to ensure that action on vocational training might benefit the workers, helping them to cope first with the changes of the 1960s ([6]) and then with the economic crisis and grave unemployment problems that emerged from the next decade onward.

Partly as a result of the changes experienced in the societies of Western Europe from 1968, the concept of vocational training, hitherto associated with industry, began to become more complex. Such training began to be directed towards new categories of people such as women and young people, and was accompanied by attempts to reform educational systems, which thus became vocational education and training. In the course of the 1970s, moreover, the Community began to regard the development of a European social policy as a prime objective, and in 1974 the first European social action programme was launched ([7]). Over time this trend gathered momentum and, as indicated by Georges Saunier in this publication, an important role was performed by François Mitterrand with his projects concerning European social space. It was no coincidence, therefore, that in the early 1970s, governments, economic and social forces and Community bodies began to concentrate on social policy and also on developing vocational training. Effective Community intervention in VET would help to solve the growing social problems of the time (unemployment, the inclusion of new social strata in the working world, unrest among the younger generations, etc.), and also to meet the challenges created by ever keener competition from advanced nations such as the United States and Japan. The need to promote research, the exchange of information among the Community Member States and the rationalisation of social policies led to the birth of Cedefop. As Varsori describes, (in this publication) the vicissitudes associated with the creation of the Centre, its early activities and its development over the years, are of particular importance. Cedefop was, together with the Dublin Foundation, the first European agency, and it was the pacesetter in an experiment that was to lead to a series of specialist agencies. Through Cedefop it has been possible to reconstruct the changes that have taken place not only in vocational training in Europe and certain aspects of European social policy but also in the interactions between Community institutions, national players and economic and social forces. As pointed out by Vincenzo Romano (in this publication), Cedefop is an example of how a European 'governance' can be created, involving a large number of bodies. VET, as stated by Laura Leonardi (in this publication), is tending to assume an ever more important function in Community affairs. Issues such as 'the learning and information society' or concepts such as 'permanent education', which are regarded as fundamental if the EU is to be able to face the economic and social challenges of the next few years, are closely linked with the EU's capacity to formulate, albeit with due regard for national differences, coherent,

([5]) On the important role performed by the ESC in the efforts to promote a European social policy, see Varsori, 2000.

([6]) On the general role of the unions, see Dølvik, 1999.

([7]) Reference is made to Degimbe, 1999.

effective action in VET. This highlights the central role that Cedefop will have to perform. It is hoped that historical thought on the origins and development of VET in Community affairs – something that has just been launched by this research – might contribute to the achievement of such an important objective.

1.1. References

Ciampani, A. La politica sociale nel processo di integrazione europa. *Europa-Europe*, Vol. 10, No 1, 2001, p. 120-134.

Degimbe, J. *La politique sociale européenne: du Traité de Rome au Traité d'Amsterdam*. Brussels: ISE, 1999.

Dølvik, J. E. *An emerging island? ETUC, Social dialogue and the Europeanisation of the trade unions in the 1990s*. Brussels: ETUI, 1999.

Enseignement de troisième cycle sur l'intégration européenne / European Commission. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1996.

Jean Monnet project directory / European Commission – DG for Education and Culture., Brussels: European Commission, 1999.

Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea.* Venice: Marsilio, 2000.

Varsori, A. La storiografia sull'integrazione europea. *Europa-Europe*, Vol. 10, No 1, 2001, p. 69-93.

2. Vocational training from the birth of the ECSC to the early years of the EEC

Lorenzo Mechi

Created primarily in response to the strategic demands of foreign policy and French economic development ([8]), the provisions of the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed on 18 April 1951, related above all to the functioning of the common market in coal and steel products, the central element of the future Community. Except for a few provisions, some of them included on purely economic grounds and with the general objective of improving living conditions for workers, social issues were virtually absent from the document; there was certainly no article specifically devoted to vocational training ([9]). This formal absence, one that was mirrored in the legal analyses of the time ([10]), was from the start offset by the Community's governmental body, the High Authority, which engaged in intensive work on training; indeed, from the very first edition of its annual general report a whole chapter was devoted to related problems ([11]).

In practice, even if these were not put forward as actual Community policies, development and dissemination of vocational training methods were seen as factors necessary both for implementing certain policies and attaining some of the Community's own fundamental objectives. Article 2 of the Treaty, for example, gave the Community the task of contributing to economic expansion by achieving 'the highest possible level of productivity' in the coal and steel industry ([12]). It is an objective that may today seem to be almost taken for granted, but was strongly influenced by the conceptual approach summarised in the word 'productivity' that was spreading from the United States to Europe in line with the aid under the European Recovery Program, of which it was a philosophical basis. In the words of Maria Eleonora Guasconi, 'the Marshall Plan provided not only for the despatch and acquisition of essential goods, assets and machinery for the participant countries but also the transfer to Europe of the American model of the organisation of production ... This was the

---

([8]) On the motivations leading to the creation of the ECSC see Gillingham, 1991; Milward, 1984; Schwabe, 1988; Poidevin and Spierenburg, 1993.

([9]) The original version of the Treaty establishing the ECSC can be found in various 'fonds' of the Historical Archives of the European Communities (HAEC); see the High Authority of the ECSC (CEAB) fonds, sub-fonds 03 (Registry/Central Archives), file 13.

([10]) See the following two books published in the 1960s, in which – although they are devoted to the social aspects of Community law – absolutely no mention is made of the subject of vocational training within the ECSC: Dehove, 1964; Ribos, 1969.

([11]) See European Coal and Steel Community, *1st General report of the High Authority on the activities of the Community*, 10/8/1952-12/4/1953. The section on vocational training problems is consistently included in all the subsequent editions of the Report as well.

([12]) See *Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community*, in HAEC CEAB 03/13.

economic and social component of the European Recovery Plan, the philosophy underlying the sending of aid that took the name of productivity and that, in the opinion of the American officials, would enable the European nations to solve the structural problems of their own economy, renewing the industrial apparatus through the assimilation (or rather the adaptation) of US technological and industrial know-how to the realities of the old continent' (Guasconi, 1999; p. 93).

Besides the various elements relating to industrial modernisation, another vital prerequisite of that strategy was to keep wage demands at a level proportionate to the effective increase in the productivity of labour, a fact that demonstrated the importance of a 'proper use' of the 'labour factor' itself, as pointed out in 1951 by Italian unionist Mario Romani (Guasconi, 1999; p. 101).

The presumption underlying both the factors cited – an increase in the productivity of labour and the 'proper use' of that factor in a context of progressive modernisation of plant – was obviously the adequate preparation of manpower. It was no coincidence that, in the first General Report, the High Authority identified vocational training as a strategic element that, in improving the possibility of workers adapting to technical change, would promote the 'attainment of higher productivity'.

Furthermore, the Luxembourg institution pointed out, its development would also contribute towards increasing workers' pay and improving their job prospects, whereas there was an obvious direct relationship between raising the standards of training and safety at work; this was a vital issue in the coal and steel sectors where hundred of workers were the victims of fatal accidents each year ([13]). To improve vocational training methods would also contribute to the Community's other general objectives, stated in Article 2 of the Treaty; growth in employment and a rise in the standard of living of the workers ([14]).

As regards concrete policies, there were two articles of the Treaty, 56 and 69, in which vocational training performed a fundamental role. Article 69, on freedom of movement for workers throughout the Community, had been advocated during the Paris negotiations, mainly by the Italian delegation, in an effort to secure an outlet for migration by Italy's chronic surplus manpower ([15]). Even though the German delegation supported a similar position, the resistance of the other countries ([16]) had pressurised the negotiators into putting off any

---

([13]) ECSC, *1st General report of the High Authority* … op. cit. In fact the first official Community statistics show that in the first half of the 1950s about 1 000 miners and 250-300 steelworkers a year lost their lives due to industrial accidents in the six ECSC countries as a whole. See Personnel and Administration Division, *Relevé des subsides de la Haute Autorité à l'occasion de catastrophes minières, alluvions, etc.*, 14 February 1955, in HAEC CEAB 1/1699.

([14]) See *Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community.*

([15]) This was a demand put forward at every international gathering by the Italian diplomats of the time. With particular reference to the ECSC Treaty, see Ranieri, 1988; p. 562.

([16]) See *Report on work for the implementation of the Schuman Plan*, 31/8/9/1950, in HAEC CEM 5/1, and *Migrations group: French proposal*, 11 October 1950, and *German delegation: proposed wording of the draft treaty: Article 45*, November 1950, both in HAEC CEM 5/3.

decision on the details of the practical application of freedom of movement, until a future agreement was reached among the Member States. Article 69 merely affirmed a principle, albeit stating that only workers having 'recognised qualifications' in a coalmining or steelmaking occupation could move freely throughout the Community ([17]).

Whereas the link between opening up frontiers and training the work force was already clear, even in the vague wording of Article 69, it was limited by the agreement implementing the provision, an agreement reached by the Member States in December 1954 ([18]). The clear shift by the German Federal Republic towards the positions adopted by the countries importing labour, which left the Italian Government (albeit with the support of the High Authority) as the sole upholder of the idea of a generalised opening ([19]), made it easier to adopt a highly restrictive agreement, guaranteeing freedom of movement only for specialist workers in an extremely limited range of coal and steel occupations ([20]). According to estimates at the time, the agreement covered no more than a quarter of the total number of workers in the Community ([21]): on the one hand, it destroyed all Italy's hopes of real opportunities for the unemployed in the Mezzogiorno to emigrate, and, on the other, it further highlighted the need to develop vocational training programmes.

Article 56 was also desired mainly by the Italian delegation, with the vital support of the Belgian and, to an extent, the Dutch delegations. Having the weakest industries in the continent, benefiting from strong protection or wide-scale government subsidies, Italy and Belgium had raised the problem of their survival at a time when, once the common market mechanisms had been introduced, they found themselves having to face direct competition from German and French producers. After a clash with the delegation of Federal Germany, which opposed the idea of generalised Community funding for all companies in difficulties, a compromise was reached under which the High Authority would give financial aid to help workers becoming redundant if their companies encountered difficulties directly attributable to changing competitive conditions ([22]).

([17]) *Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community,* op. cit., Article 69.

([18]) See *Bilan d'activité de la Communauté*, which can be dated to late 1954, in HAEC CEAB 11/205.

([19]) On the discussions on the agreement implementing Article 69, see Division of Labour Problems, *Note to the Members of the High Authority. Subject: meeting of the Council of Ministers of 27 July on the agreement for the implementation of Article 69 of the Treaty*, 19 July 1954, in HAEC CEAB 1/1649, European Coal and Steel Community: The Council, *Draft minutes of the 18th session of the Council held in Luxembourg on 27 and 28 July 1954*, 2 August 1954, in HAEC CEAB 11/1655, and Division of Labour Problems: *Implementation of Article 69 of the Treaty: chronological review*, 29 September 1954, in HAEC CEAB 11/1655. On the German positions in particular, see *Note for the attention of the Secretariat of the Special Council of Ministers*, 19 June 1954, in HAEC CEAB 1/1650.

([20]) *Bilan d'activité de la Communauté,* op. cit.

([21]) European Coal and Steel Community, *3rd General report of the High Authority on the activities of the Community*, 12/4/1954-10/4/1955.

([22]) See *Chronology of the Paris Conference*, in HAEC CEAB 1/73.

This provision was inserted into the Convention on the Transitional Provisions, the document accompanying the Treaty that was to regulate the Community's activities over the first five years. Article 23 of the Convention provided that, in the event of a reduction in the workforce of coal and steel industries caused by the new economic situation established by the common market, the High Authority would be able to provide non-repayable aid towards:

(a) the payment of 'tide over' allowances to workers pending their reemployment;

(b) the payment of resettlement allowances to workers;

(c) the financing of vocational retraining for workers having to change their employment ([23]).

On the proposal of the Netherlands delegation, similar payments were also provided for in cases of redundancy following the wide-scale introduction, under the general directives of the High Authority, of new technical processes, a provision that became Article 56 of the Treaty ([24]). In both cases, Article 56 and Article 23 of the Convention, ECSC aid was conditional upon payment by the State concerned of a special contribution of not less than the amount of that aid.

The positive experience of the many applications of Article 23 of the Convention during the 1950s persuaded the governments of the Member States, on the expiration of the transitional period, to make this provision permanent, inserting it directly into the Treaty with the addition of a second paragraph to Article 56. Eliminating all causal links with the opening of the common market, its implementation was now extended to any reduction in personnel due to difficulties arising from any 'fundamental changes in market conditions' (Dehove, 1964; pp. 24-25).

It was for these reasons that the High Authority, from the start of its activities, devoted special attention to training problems, beginning with an in-depth study of 'vocational education trends in the various countries' of the Community, availing itself of the cooperation of the International Labour Office, as was the usual practice with all manpower-related issues ([25]). This first survey identified certain general trends that, especially in the coal industry, had started to emerge in all six of the Community Member States: on the one hand 'the growing difficulty of recruiting young people', and on the other the 'contribution of new manpower of widely differing ages and the recruitment for the mines of adult workers of very varied occupational and national origins' ([26]). It was in an effort to restore a balance in that situation,

---

([23]) *Final declaration of the Conference on the Schuman Plan: transitional measures*, 26/2/1951 (in the document cited, these provisions were included in paragraph 21; this later became paragraph 23 in the final version of the Convention on transitional provisions), in HAEC CEM 5/3.

([24]) *Report on work for the implementation of the Schuman Plan*, 31/8-19/9/1950, in HAEC CEM 5/1, and the *Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community,* op. cit., Article 56.

([25]) Division of Labour Problems, *Note communiquée aux membres de la Commission des Affaires Sociaux de l'Assemblée commune*, 4 April 1953, in HAEC CEAB 11/27.

([26]) Division of Labour Problems, *Note communiquée aux membres de la Commission des Affaires Sociaux de l'Assemblée commune*, 4 April 1953, in HAEC CEAB 11/27.

the source of serious workforce management difficulties for employers, that Member States started to pay particular attention to training issues, aiming above all at an 'improvement in the apprenticeship systems'. The trend spread, to replacing the traditional instruction provided in the course of work by 'systematic preparation, consisting of a period of pre-initiation and guidance, followed by a phase of theoretical and practical learning attested by certificates or diplomas and finally by more advanced courses'. By giving apprentices 'a very sound qualification', this would offer 'these young people an opportunity to follow a full career' ([27]).

Based on the findings of these preliminary surveys, supplemented in early May 1953 by a series of meetings with experts of the six governments and the trade organisations ([28]), the High Authority launched a broad-ranging action programme designed to encourage the new training trends. This covered:

(a) the compilation, dissemination and availability to all parties concerned of specific, detailed documentation on vocational training in the six Member States, to be kept constantly updated with the help of an official for each country and for each of the two industries;

(b) compiling and making available training materials of various kinds used in the Community;

(c) the periodic convening of technical meetings, to be held in various locations with vocational training experts and local officials, to study in greater depth the achievements and methods of individual countries and industrial areas of the Community.

All this was to be administered by means of the establishment, within the High Authority, of a Standing Committee on Vocational Training, made up of qualified representatives of the trade unions and employers, split into two sub-Committees, one for coal and the other for steel ([29]).

In 1953 and 1954, the documentation working groups of the two sub-committees published two monographs on vocational training, one for mining and the other for steelworking, containing a detailed survey of the existing situation in the Member States. An analytical bibliography was also issued of all the documents on vocational training in the Community's possession, held in a documentation centre set up at the High Authority ([30]). This was the beginning of the

---

([27]) Division of Labour Problems, *Note communiquée aux membres de la Commission des Affaires Sociaux de l'Assemblée commune*, 4 April 1953, in HAEC CEAB 11/27.

([28]) Division of Labour Problems, *Note communiquée aux membres de la Commission des Affaires Sociaux de l'Assemblée commune*, 4 April 1953, in HAEC CEAB 11/27.

([29]) Division of Labour Problems, *Note aux membres de la Haute Autorité; Objet: résultats des consultations d'experts en formation professionnelle*, 19 May 1953, HAEC CEAB 1/1718.

([30]) Division of Labour Problems, *Activités de la Haute Autorité en matière de formation professionnelle*, 18 June 1954, HAEC CEAB 11/29.

Community's vocational training publication activities, and it continued steadily over the following years so that, after a decade, it had over 20 volumes to its credit ([31]).

A second working group within the two sub-committees embarked on the compilation of teaching and training instruments, with particular reference to audiovisual materials. Each film was examined and detailed on a pedagogical analysis card setting out the comments of the group of experts. The films were then translated into the four Community languages so that they could be disseminated in all the Member States ([32]). Similar work was also done later on materials of other kinds. By the middle of 1957 the High Authority's pedagogical exchange service had 160 films (60 animated and 100 standard films), 100 slides, 130 posters, 500 reproductions of teaching slides, 400 photographs of teaching models and 32 technical manuals. All the materials were at the disposal of interested parties, but the High Authority also undertook to encourage the circulation of teaching aids that it did not directly own but that could be found in the Community Member States ([33]).

Unfortunately, for some time the circulation of the materials came up against a serious obstacle in the shape of the customs formalities between the six Community States. Obviously the rules of the coal and steel common market were not applicable to teaching aids, even if they related to coal and steel. In the first 10 years of the ECSC's life, appeals by the High Authority (and also those of the Common Assembly, the Community's advisory body consisting of representatives of the national Parliaments) ([34]) to Member States to relax customs regulations for teaching materials were on the agenda, but it was not until the early 1960s that a partial solution was achieved through the work of an ad hoc group of experts in customs matters, which suggested that special documentation be produced for each individual teaching aid that would help to streamline the customs formalities ([35]).

In October 1953, with the first meetings of Community experts set up under the High Authority programme, held in the Ruhr and Limburg in the Netherlands, a preliminary idea

---

([31]) For a list of the publications of the High Authority on the subject of vocational training from 1957 to 1961 see European Coal and Steel Community, *L'activité de la Haute Autorité dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle depuis janvier 1957*, Luxembourg, January 1961, in HAEC, EEC Commission fonds (BAC), file 237/1980-291. The publication activities of the Luxembourg body were however recorded in the various editions of the *General Reports*.

([32]) For a list of the publications of the High Authority on the subject of vocational training from 1957 to 1961 see European Coal and Steel Community, *L'activité de la Haute Autorité dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle depuis janvier 1957*, Luxembourg, January 1961, in HAEC, EEC Commission fonds (BAC), file 237/1980-291. The publication activities of the Luxembourg body were however recorded in the various editions of the *General Reports*.

([33]) High Authority, *Projet de mémorandum sur les problèmes relatifs à la Formation Professionnelle des travailleurs des industries de la Communauté*, 1 June 1957, HAEC CEAB 13/166.

([34]) Common Assembly, *Résolution relatif aux questions sociales ...* June 1955.

([35]) High Authority, *Projet de mémorandum sur les problèmes relatifs à la Formation Professionnelle ...* op. cit., and also European Coal and Steel Community, *L'activité de la Haute Autorité dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle depuis janvier 1957...* op. cit., and European Coal and Steel Community, *6th General report of the High Authority on the activities of the Community*, 14/4/1957-13/4/1958.

was acquired of the extent of the issues that the Community would be called upon to study. They ranged from questions more closely linked with production, such as the impact of technical progress on workforce training, to problems of organising and funding training activity, and health and safety in the workplace ([36]). Apart from the individual subjects, what is of interest is the fact that, from the start, meetings were regularly attended not only by national representatives of the employers and unions but also by members of the International Labour Office as well as Government representatives and representatives of the unions in the United Kingdom ([37]), a country that in January 1954 signed a Treaty of Association with the ECSC. Another point of note was the consistent attention directed towards achievements in training in the coal and steel industries in what was then a more advanced country, the US, where in 1956 Community experts were also sent to study experience 'in the prevention of accidents and, more particularly, in the instruction and training of workers' ([38]).

As with most of the ECSC's other social policies, considerable impetus was given by the Common Assembly of the Community, which from the beginning demonstrated its support for the High Authority's action programme on vocational training. In the years that followed, the Assembly's Social Affairs Committee often ultimately came into conflict with the Community's government body, generally accusing it of being too timorous in implementing social policies (Leuvrey, 1990) and exhorting it, in particular, to step up its efforts to improve vocational training programmes ([39]).

Besides the activities described, the most telling indicator of the attention paid by ECSC leaders to vocational training from the very early years is the set of practical procedures for implementing the measures set out in Article 56 of the Treaty and Article 23 of the Convention on Transitional Provisions. To be brought into practice, these required a formal request from the government concerned to the High Authority, followed by negotiations between the two sides to decide on aspects such as distribution of funds among individual workers, duration of payments and similar details. As a result, applications of Article 56 ultimately differed in various ways: the duration of the monthly 'tide over' allowances (a sort of special redundancy indemnity) ranged from 12 to 30 months ([40]); the amount of the allowances differed

---

([36]) See Division of Labour Problems, *Activités de la Haute Autorité en matière de formation professionnelle …* op. cit.

([37]) See European Coal and Steel Community, *2nd General report of the High Authority on the activities of the Community*, 13/4/1953-11/4/1954, and Division of Labour Problems, *Activités de la Haute Autorité*… op. cit.

([38]) See European Coal and Steel Community, *4th General report of the High Authority on the Activities of the Community*, 11/4/1955-8/4/1956.

([39]) Common Assembly, *Resolution on social questions …* Common Assembly, *Relazione presentata dall'Onorevole Vanrullen a nome della Commissione Affari Sociali sul capitolo VII della Quarta Relazione Generale sull'attività della Comunità (11 April 1955 – 8 April 1956)*, June 1956, HAEC CEAB 11/34 Common Assembly, *Resolution on social questions*, 22 June 1956, HAEC CEAB 1/1828

([40]) To cite a few examples: a 1955 intervention pursuant to Article 23 of the Convention in support of 1 000 French steelworkers provided for 'tide over' allowances equivalent to decreasing percentages of the wages previously received, over a period of 12 months; 10 years later, pursuant to Article 56, a group of Dutch workers were allocated the same type of allowance for a period of 2½ years. See respectively European Coal

depending on the number of family members, but there were instances of the same flat-rate allowance being paid to all; the types of expenditure covered by ECSC funding varied from one operation to another, on occasion including or excluding the cost of moving, travel expenses of various kinds or even daily travel costs incurred in reaching a new job, if the new workplace was considerably further away from the workers' homes than the previous one ([41]).

In such a widely varying situation, one of the few constants in every application of Article 56 of the Treaty and Article 23 of the Convention was the cover provided for the cost of organising vocational retraining courses for the workforce. In addition, such operations were always organised to motivate redundant workers to attend the courses. One example is the procedures for a 'retraining' scheme in 1956-57 in favour of a group of miners in the Borinage coal-mining basin in Belgium: whereas the 'tide over' allowance started at 100 % of their previous pay over the first four months after they had been made redundant, falling to 80 % in the second four months and 60 % in the third, a guaranteed allowance of 100 % of their previous pay was paid throughout the 12 months of the operation to those workers agreeing to take training courses ([42]).

The growing attention paid to vocational training issues in the 1950s was not exclusive to the top levels of the ECSC, but was a trend that spread to varying degrees within each individual European country. Around the mid-1950s, both as a consequence of modernisation occurring in the whole European economy and as a response to the requirements created by the launching of that process of development that would shortly affect the continent as a whole, in the six ECSC countries there was a proliferation of training courses, together with a raising of the quality and level of their specialisation. In countries with less advanced training, such as Belgium and Italy, a start was made on building centres specialising in training for the iron and steel industry. Many courses were launched for these two sectors in the Community, directed both towards the training of apprentices and to the updating of specialist workers' skills. Even in countries already having effective systems such as Germany and France, the provision of training was very much reinforced and extended.

Trends were apparent in every country: the general attention being paid to the 'training of trainers' within individual enterprises, a sign of a growing awareness of the importance of training; the commitment to accident prevention methods, an evident consequence of strong pressures exerted by the unions; and the increasing thought being given to the specific needs of migrant workers, especially in the coal industry. On the final point, for example, Germany

---

and Steel Community, *4th General report* … op. cit., and Diebold, 1959; p. 423-425 for the first case mentioned; and European Coal and Steel Community, *14th General Report by the High Authority on Community activities*, 1/2/1965-31/1/1966, for the second case.

([41]) See the various editions of the High Authority's *General Report*, summarising the procedures for the application of individual ECSC adaptation schemes. A detailed analysis of the earlier cases of the implementation of Article 23, between 1953 and 1957, is contained in Mechi, 1997/98.

([42]) See Division of Labour Problems, *Note d'information aux membres de la Commission des Affaires Sociales*, 17 January 1957, in HAEC CEAB 11/4985. The scheme in question is reconstructed in detail in Mechi, 1997/98.

introduced basic courses in the German language, while in Belgium and France a start was made on preparing and distributing learning materials with the most common terms given in the various languages spoken by the immigrants. In the German steel industry, besides specialist courses in various trades in the sector, many companies organised their own courses to offer all workers a basic training in every aspect of production ([43]).

The various training activities launched by ECSC leaders and the widespread attention given to those teams both in the Community and in individual Member States, naturally influenced discussions on the European Economic Community, within which great emphasis was placed on training in the wording of its founding Treaty.

As the European Commission pointed out in 1961, the development of vocational training was one of the main instruments 'for creating a social situation in harmony with a policy of full employment', a declared objective in Article 104 of the Treaty. As was noted with regard to the ECSC, the freedom of movement essential in bringing about full employment in the Community could not 'be fully achieved as provided by the Treaty without a common action by the Member States in the sector of vocational training'. Serious commitment to this, according to the EEC government body, was an essential foundation for the realisation of Articles 49 and 50. Article 49 provided for 'setting up appropriate machinery to bring offers of employment into touch with applications for employment' throughout the Community, whereas Article 50 gave Member States the task of encouraging 'the exchange of young workers'. In the section of the Treaty devoted to agricultural matters, Article 41 also stated that, to enable the objectives of the Common Agricultural Policy to be attained, there should be 'effective coordination of efforts in the sphere of vocational training'. In the part on 'social policy' Article 118 included vocational training among the matters for which the Commission had 'the task of promoting close cooperation between Member States' ([44]). Looking beyond the various articles mentioned, at least in the early years the history of vocational training in the European Economic Community was, above all, the history of the European Social Fund.

Along the same lines as the ECSC rules on re-employment, the 'Spaak report' – the document approved by the Conference of Foreign Ministers which formed the base for negotiations on the Treaty of Rome – looked to the creation of a 'retraining fund' that would take over at least part of the costs associated with periods of redundancy for workers in the Community. The difference, however, from the ECSC, was that the report proposed a Community contribution limited to covering resettlement allowances if 'the unemployed workers have been forced to change their home' and towards the cost of vocational training if they have been forced to find a new occupation. The 'tide over' allowance was, according to the Spaak report, to be provided only for workers whose employment is temporarily suspended as a result of the

([43]) European Coal and Steel Community, *4th* and *6th General Report* … op. cit.

([44]) See European Economic Community, *General principles for the implementation of a common vocational training policy: Commission proposal to the Council*, 26 September 1961, in HAEC, European Commission Fonds (BAC), file 173/95 2824

conversion of their undertaking to other production ([45]). At the time when the latter funding option was challenged, especially by the German delegation, in the course of the negotiations ([46]), with agreement being reached only on the other two cases, the fund provisionally took the name of the European fund for vocational training and the mobility of labour ([47]).

The marked divergences between delegations as regards the workings of the fund meant that an agreement could not be reached until a few weeks before the signing of the EEC Treaty ([48]). Its final version was clearly influenced by German pressure, designed to limit as far as possible the risk of paying out aid that was expected to be mainly to the advantage of Italian unemployed workers ([49]). In particular, according to Article 125 of the Treaty, assistance with vocational retraining of the workforce could be granted only as a reimbursement of the cost, and 'only if the unemployed workers could not be found employment except in a new occupation and only if they have been in productive employment for at least six months in the occupation for which they have been retrained' ([50]). Compared with the proposals set out in the Spaak Report, this was undoubtedly a restriction of the sphere of application of aid from the fund, although it was partially offset by the provision of Article 128 to the effect that 'the Council, acting on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee, [would] lay down 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' ([51]). Even for Italy, the country that had most vigorously supported the activation of the Social Fund, it was far more politic to give up the more extensive interpretation of its attributes in exchange for a provision such as Article 128, on the basis of which a process of harmonisation of occupational qualifications could be launched that would, in turn, make a greater contribution to real freedom of movement for workers.

([45]) See *Extract from the Spaak Report of 21 April 1956*, in HAEC, Treaties of Rome negotiations Fonds (CM3NEGO), file 246.

([46]) See Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom, *Note sur les dispositions du traité relative à the réadaptation que le Président du Groupe du Marché Commun propose comme base de discussion lors de la deuxième lecture*, 5 November 1956, in HAEC CM3NEGO/246.

([47]) See Intergovernmental Conference on the Common Market and Euratom, *Projet d'articles relatifs au Fonds Européen pour the Formation Professionnelle et la Mobilité de la Main-d'œuvre*, 20 November 1956, in HAEC CM3NEGO/246.

([48]) Symbolic of the difficulties arising in discussions on the fund is the fact that the provisional name was retained right up to early February, in other words only a few weeks before the Treaty was signed, when the name 'European Social Fund' was adopted. See the two *Extracts from the Draft Treaty establishing the EEC* of 5 and 11 March 1957, both in HAEC CM3NEGO/246.

([49]) In fact, at least over the period from the entry into force of the European Social Fund, in 1960, until its first reform in 1972, this expectation proved to be misguided, since in the event the Germans were the main beneficiaries of aid from the European Social Fund. See Le Morvan, 1981, pp. 17 and 112.

([50]) See *Extract from EEC Treaty, Article 125*, in HAEC CM3NEGO/246.

([51]) *Extract from EEC Treaty, Article 128*, in HAEC CM3NEGO/246.

In reality, as explained in greater detail in the report by Francesco Petrini, the principles laid down in Article 128, which with some difficulty were finally adopted in 1963, were a disappointment from this point of view, since many governments refused to relinquish their sovereignty in what was regarded as a very delicate field, and continued to be tied to their individual national approaches. The fact that a genuine common vocational training policy was not ultimately adopted did not mean, however, that even in those years the Community authority did not continue to pour funds into the programmes set up on the basis of individual national policies.

Although the final version of the Treaty reinserted the grants towards 'tide over' allowances in cases of conversion to other forms of production, and despite the fact that the funding of vocational training was subject to the conditions described above, the regulations for the administration of the Fund, published in 1960, placed priority on vocational training. A good example is the list of the various expenses that could be refunded to Member States as a contribution to individual training courses. According to Article 5 of the regulations, these included:

(a) a *per diem* allowance, accommodation and travel costs, the costs of full continuation of social security rights and family allowances, redundancy allowances and all the other benefits granted to workers being retrained during their period of retraining;

(b) the pay and social security contributions of staff at the training centres in question;

(c) the cost of equipment materials of various kinds;

(d) administrative costs, insurance, rental, heating and lighting of the training premises;

(e) depreciation costs ([52]).

Equally indicative of the attention devoted to vocational training problems within the EEC is the breakdown of European Social Fund during the 1960s. In late 1968, after seven and a half years' operation, of the total of 80 258 895.73 units of account disbursed, no less than 73 962 508.41, i.e. 92.15 %, consisted of grants towards vocational retraining ([53]).

In conclusion it may be stated that the development and dissemination of vocational training methods constituted a central aspect in the work of the Community authority both in the ECSC and in the first 10 years of the life of the EEC; with the developments in subsequent decades, above all the creation of Cedefop in 1975, vocational training seems to have consistently retained its central role, to such an extent that a concern for training problems can be said to be one of the few social issues that has consistently been on the agenda for the leaders of the Community throughout the process of European integration.

([52]) European Economic Community: The Council, *Regulation 9 on the European Social Fund*, 31 May 1960, in HAEC BAC 26/1969 146.

([53]) See ECSC-EEC-EAEC: Commission, *Second General Report on the Activities of the Community, 1968*, February 1969.

2.1. References

Dehove, G. *Les aspects sociaux de la CECA et de la CEE.* Heule: UGA, 1964.

Diebold, W. *The Schuman Plan.* New York: F. A. Praeger, 1959.

Gillingham, J. *Coal, steel, and the rebirth of Europe, 1945-1955: the Germans and the French from Ruhr conflict to Economic Community.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Guasconi, M. E. *L'altra faccia della medaglia. Guerra psicologica e diplomazia sindacale nelle relazioni Italia-Stati Uniti durante la prima fase della guerra fredda (1947-1955)*, Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 1999.

Le Morvan, Y. *Le Fonds Social Européen.* Rennes: Université de Rennes I, 1981.

Leuvrey, B. Quelle politique sociale pour l'Europe du Plan Schuman?: critiques et propositions de l'Assemblée Commune de la ECSC (1952-1955). *Lettre d'informations des historiens de l'Europe contemporaine*, Vol. 5, June 1990.

Mechi, L. Il ricollocamento degli operai licenziati nei primi anni di attività della CECA. *Annali della Fondazione Giulio Pastore*, Vol. 26-27, 1997-1998.

Milward, A. S. *The reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-1951.* London: Methuen, 1984.

Poidevin, R.; Spierenburg, D. *Histoire de la haute autorité de la CECA.* Brussels: Bruylant, 1993.

Ranieri, R. L'Italia e i negoziati del Piano Schuman. In Di Nolfo, E.; Rainero, R. H.; Vigezzi, B. (eds) *L'Italia e la politica di potenza in Europa, 1945-1950.* Milan: Marzorati, 1988.

Ribos, J. J. *La politique sociale des communautés européennes.* Paris: Eurolibri, Dalloz and Sirey, 1969.

Schwabe, K. (ed.) *Die Anfange des Schuman-Plans: 1950-1951.* Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 1988.

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

Francesco Petrini

3.1. 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, 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' ([54]). 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 vocational training ([55]).

So, the EEC Treaty provided a solid legal base for a Commission initiative on establishing a common policy on vocational training for the workers of the Member States. Such measures were a practical response to the demands of those countries with the most pressing economic and social problems. Italy, in particular, hoped to find in the Community assistance in solving its structural problems. Foremost among those problems was apparently endemic unemployment in the less economically advanced areas of the country ([56]). A common vocational training policy could have great value in facilitating job integration and retraining of a significant proportion of the unemployed, especially as Italian training was not so highly

([54]) 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.

([55]) 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.

([56]) On the Italian position on European integration, see Varsori, 1999.

developed as in some of the other Member States. The economic and social interests of one of the Member States, together with the concern of the newly-created Commission to establish itself as a driving force for integration, encouraged the 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' ([57]).

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

3.2. The 10 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 ([58]). 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 ([59]), succeeded in laying down the content of the general principles on training, as required by Article 128, setting their number at 10 ([60]). 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 of the Commission's action guidelines, and we shall then analyse the reactions in the Community.

The general objective of a common social policy was, for the Commission, not only higher productivity and greater economic integration but also the moral and material advancement of

---

([57]) 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.

([58]) 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.

([59]) 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'.

([60]) 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.

workers, 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 ([61]). In a situation of chronic shortage of skilled labour and technicians, side by side with persistent high unemployment rates in certain regions of the Community, the importance of vocational training in improving workers' living conditions represented 'a link between demographic and technological development' ([62]). 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' ([63]).

In this context, 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' ([64]).

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 ([65]).

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, each country in the light of its own priorities, which would have rendered the very idea of a common policy meaningless.

([61]) *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, 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'.

([62]) *Idem*.

([63]) *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.

([64]) *Idem*.

([65]) *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.

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 that would bring the Member States to a common level of vocational training ([66]). This gradual harmonisation of training called for 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 that would reduce these [the Commission's] powers, proposals that would probably compromise the very implementation of the common policy' ([67]).

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' ([68]).

The Community executive could formulate common study and research programmes and 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 ([69]). 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.

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 realising a common policy ([70]). This wording disappeared in subsequent versions, in which the Commission itself absorbed *en bloc* the functions that had been assigned to the European centre for vocational training.

([66]) *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.

([67]) *Idem*.

([68]) *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.

([69]) *Idem*.

([70]) *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, op. cit.

The Commission had lofty ambitions, and they 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) ([71]), some of the Parliamentarians raised the problem of respecting specific national educational characteristics of, stating that 'the EEC cannot go further than permitted by the established structures in the Member States' ([72]). 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 to the risk that 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' ([73]).

Despite the doubts generated by certain aspects of the proposal, 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 ([74]). 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' ([75]).

([71]) See ASCE, CM2/1961 57. *Procès verbal de la 53^{e} 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 underestimating 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.

([72]) 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.

([73]) See as regards the debate in the ESC: ASCE, BAC 7/1986, 1618. *Compte-rendu des délibérations XX^{e} 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.

([74]) 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.

([75]) 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

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, to include its right of initiative.

Reactions from the governments were very different. Almost a year after the European Parliament had given its opinion, a delay that was found surprising in Community circles ([76]), the Council finally examined the draft principles at a meeting on 21 February 1963 ([77]). 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, 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.' ([78]).

In addition to their views on 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.

---

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.

([76]) 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.

([77]) 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.

([78]) *Idem.*

The Commission's project also found supporters within the Council. The firmest support for the arguments put forward by the Commissioners came from Italy, for reasons that can readily be understood. Italy had the greatest interest in the creation of a genuinely common policy on vocational training, especially the prospect of harmonisation of national training standards for workers in employment, a prerequisite for the free movement of workers in the common market. This was one of Italy's main objectives in taking part in European integration ([79]). 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 place 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 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.

3.3. The 1965 action programme

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 ([80]). The Committee consisted of 36 members, i.e. two government representatives, two union representatives and two 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 ([81]).

According to the Vice President of the Commission, the common training policy was to be the outcome of a concerted measure of Member States and Community institutions based on the general principles. The first step would be to lay down guidelines for Community

([79]) On the relations between European integration and emigration policies in Italian politics, see Romero, 1991 and 1993.

([80]) See the documentation in ASCE, BAC 64/1984, 969 and BAC 6/1977, 679.

([81]) 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.

interventions, setting an order of priority in the 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' ([82]). 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. This would promote pooling of experience from various national vocational training programmes. Above all, according to the Italian Commissioner, the aim of the Community action should be to develop 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 ([83]), 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 in order 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' ([84]).

To achieve that objective, in 1964 the Commission drafted 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 defined objective of the common action was to establish a system offering 'all young people of the Community, and when necessary adults, an appropriate opportunity for training' ([85]). 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' ([86]).

([82]) *Idem*.

([83]) 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 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], 25/9/1964.

([84]) 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.

([85]) *Idem*.

([86]) 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*]*, undated.

Under the short-term measures the aim was essentially to promote, through training and retraining, the use of manpower resources of 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 developing and improving 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 workforce, so that there could be an adequate response to the demands created by technological advances.

Another priority indicated in the document was harmonisation of training standards, a result that was 'one of the fundamental objectives of the common policy', in the words of Levi Sandri ([87]), 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 ([88]). The Parliament gave its favourable opinion in March 1966 ([89]). In May that year one of the working groups of the Council of Ministers, the Group on social questions, examined the document ([90]). 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 funding, 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

---

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

([88]) 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.

([89]) See the documentation in ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. The Parliament's favourable opinion was issued on 11 March 1966.

([90]) ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. Working Party on Social Questions, *Note-Programmes d'action établis par la Commission* [Note-Action programmes established by the Commission], 9/5/1966.

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 both the need to maintain an overall vision of the vocational training initiatives and 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 ([91]). 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 ([92]). 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 the first place there was 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 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. Second, 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, concerning implementing an accelerated vocational training programme ([93]). 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

---

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

([92]) 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.

([93]) 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.

Italy, in contrast, 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' ([94]).

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 4th and 10th 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 to eliminating existing imbalances in 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' ([95]). 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 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 for the programme was to be charged against the Community budget ([96]).

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 ([97]). 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

---

([94]) *Idem*.

([95]) 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.

([96]) 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.c. for 1965, the balance to be spent in 1966.

([97]) See ASCE, BAC 26/1969, 469. Council, *Note-Proposition de décision du Conseil* [Note-Proposed Council decision], 3/5/1966.

would be the first concrete Community measure in vocational training to be implemented by common funding, establishing a significant precedent ([98]). 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 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 ([99]).

Faced with such opposition, the proposal foundered and was replaced by a series of intergovernmental agreements. This represented a complete failure of the Commission's attempt to propose itself as motive 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 harmonising 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 ([100]). 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 *Monographie professionnelle pour la formation des ouvriers spécialisés sur machines-outils [Occupational monograph for the training of skilled machine tool workers]*.

([98]) *Idem.*

([99]) 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.

([100]) See ASCE, CM/AI 31457, Council. *Nota-Formazione professionale: ravvicinamento 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.

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 under-valuation 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' ([101]).

Because of the French opposition, the work of the Commission was suspended in July 1968 by a Council decision, until such time as a working method could be established that was accepted by all the delegations ([102]). As a result the Community action ultimately came to a true impasse at the end of the decade.

3.4. 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 labour market situation 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 ([103]). There was a consensus among the Ministers on the importance of vocational training in maintaining a qualitative and quantitative equilibrium in the labour market, and they stated 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

---

([101]) 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.

([102]) See ASCE, CM/AI 31457. *Extrait du procès verbal de la 44^{e} 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.

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

Member States ([104]). 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 ([105]). 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.

Finally, 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.).

([104]) 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.

([105]) 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.

The other delegations received the French proposals favourably ([106]). The German delegation agreed fully with the negative assessment of the general principles of 1963 and the initiatives that ensued and, rather than sheltering behind the generic criticism of their abstract nature, ultimately acknowledged the true reason for their failure: 'ESC principles attempt to define above all a number of competences and convey the 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' ([107]).

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 ([108]). 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 light in October 1972 ([109]). It should be noted how the decision-making process had been reversed compared to the past: now the Commission followed on, 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 ([110]). 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 ([111]).

In a few months the sociopolitical 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; many accepted findings were being

---

([106]) See the debate within the Group for Social Questions in ASCE, CM/AI 31389, *Note-Travaux dans the domaine of the formation professionnelle* [Note-Work in the field of vocational training], 11/1/1971.

([107]) *Idem*. See also ASCE, CM/AI 31459, *Note-Avis de la délégation allemande concernant les travaux dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle* [Note-Opinion of the German delegation on the work in the field of vocational training], 24/2/1971.

([108]) ASCE, CM/AI 30661. *Orientamenti generali per l'elaborazione di un programma di attività a livello comunitario in materia di formazione professionale* [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.

([109]) ASCE, CM/AI 31416. *Prime misure per l'attuazione di una politica comune di formazione professionale* [First measures for the implementation of a common vocational training policy], 25/10/1972.

([110]) ASCE, CM/AI 31419. *European Parliament, Report drawn up on behalf of the Committee on social affairs and employment*, 5/6/1973.

([111]) *Idem*.

challenged again. This new and difficult situation forced Member States to reflect and 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.

3.5. 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 in the succession of events over the period in consideration. There was opposition from Member States 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. There was a measure of imprudence on the part of the Commission, which was unable to keep overly integrationist pressures under control and thus aroused hostility among the Governments towards projects judged to be too 'audacious'. And 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, is that the same forces were in play in vocational training as 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 dialectic between intergovernmental momentum and supranational pressures. 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 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 social 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 burden of restoring a social balance for Italy or to relinquish their sovereignty in 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.

3.6. References

Gerbet, P. *La construction de l'Europe.* Paris: Imprimerie Nationale Éditions, 1994.

Romero, F. *Emigrazione e integrazione europea 1945-1973.* Rome: Edizioni del Lavoro, 1991.

Romero, F. Migration as an issue in European interdependence and integration: the case of Italy. In Milward, A. S. (ed.) *The frontier of national sovereignty.* London: Routledge, 1993.

Varsori, A. L'europeismo nella politica estera italiana. In Tosi, L. (ed.) *Italia e le organizzazioni internazionali.* Padua: Cedam, 1999.

4. The Economic and Social Committee's contribution to establishing a vocational training policy 1960-75

Elena Dundovich

4.1. Phase one: 1960-61

The Economic and Social Committee's (ESC) work towards establishing a common policy on vocational training can be divided into three main phases: the period from 1960 to 1961, the years from 1965 to 1967, and finally from 1969 to 1974. Over each of these three periods the ESC applied itself with steadfastness and determination to the issue of vocational training at a time when, in the early 1960s, both the Council and the Commission were proving utterly indifferent to this aspect of community life. For this reason it can be said that in many respects the ESC is the putative father of Cedefop itself.

On 30 November 1960, the President of the ESC, Mr Rosenberg, addressed a letter to the Commission and Council, in which he informed them of the proposal from the Bureau of the Section for Social Questions 'to conduct studies into the problems of vocational training […], a study which' as the letter states 'should clearly underscore those tasks which are incumbent upon the Commission in this important sector' ([112]). As it turned out, the letter was not welcomed with any great enthusiasm, neither by the Commission nor by the Council. The latter objected to what it saw as an excessively bold initiative, and not merely because it placed emphasis directly on the community institutions' controlling role in vocational training. During the early 1960s, but then also in later years, the relationship between the ESC and the Commission and Council was troubled. The Committee felt that it did not have enough independence, and all of its Presidents, starting with the German trade union leader, Ludwig Rosenberg, constantly strove to increase the organisation's influence (Varsori, 2000, p. 8; Dundovich, 2000).

The Council's Committee of Permanent Representatives examined Rosenberg's letter in a meeting on 9 December 1960, where the Italians were alone in welcoming the ESC proposal. For their part, however, both the Luxembourgish and Dutch delegations rejected the idea that the Committee should become involved in vocational training before the Commission had

([112]) Brussels, Commission Archives (hereafter referred to as BAC), 173/95 2822. *Lettre de L. Rosenberg à M. W. Hallstein*, 29.11.1960 [no official English translation].

tabled its proposals ([113]). Yet again, it was Italy which proved to be the most sensitive to any initiative pertaining to social policy ([114]).

Consequently, on 20 December 1960, the Commission and the Council provided their response to the Rosenberg proposal, which was as polite as it was clear: 'President Hallstein would like to inform you that the Commission does not object to the Committee conducting such studies. He obviously felt his duty to indicate the Commission's intention to submit proposals to Council in early 1961 on the general rules for developing a common policy in the vocational training field […], in accordance with Article 128 […]. Under these circumstances, President Hallstein believed it likely that the President would prefer the Committee not to undertake its own work until such time as the proposals under consideration could be provided as a basis.' In the meeting at which this reply was drawn up it was also stressed that 'moreover, it will be specified that the aim of the ESC's work should be to identify the main opinions in the Committee on these issues, rather than establishing what tasks would be incumbent upon the Commission in this sector' ([115]). In fact, Committee consultation on the 'general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy' was only to take place some months later, on the basis of a letter of invitation from the EEC Council of Ministers, dated 24 October 1961 ([116]).

Rosenberg endeavoured to react by sidestepping the obstacle, and on 22 February 1961 responded with great diplomacy: '[…] I learned with great interest from your letter that in principle there is nothing to prevent the ESC from holding an exchange of views within the Sections concerned, even before the Commission's proposals are received. It is my honour to inform you that, during its last meeting, the Bureau of the Committee decided to entrust the Section for Social Questions with a preparatory study on the issue. At a later stage this Section will be primarily responsible for drawing up an opinion on such proposals as the Commission and Council shall submit to us in due time' ([117]).

Thus it was not until after October 1961 that the ESC officially began to deal with vocational training. Three sections were entrusted with the task of conducting research and drawing up study reports on the subject: the Section for Social Questions, which became the main

---

([113]) BAC, 173/95 2822, *Note introductive*, 12.12.1960.

([114]) For the origins and development of European social policy see Degimbe, 1999; Ciampani, 2001; *Le politiche sociali …*, 1999; Varsori, 2002.

([115]) BAC, 173/95 2822. *Procès verbal de la 128^{e} réunion de la Commission des 14 et 15 décembre 1960*.

([116]) It was during the meeting on 31 January 1961, that the ESC Bureau decided to entrust the Section for Social Questions with the task of drawing up a draft opinion on the 'general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy', although it was not until the following October that the section officially began its work. BAC 26/1969 140, *Note introductive à l'intention des membres de la Section spécialisée pour les questions sociales concernant la demande d'avis du Conseil de la C.E.E. en date du 24.10.1961 sur les 'Propositions de la Commission de la C.E.E. relative a l'établissement de principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'*. Brussels, 30.10.1961.

([117]) BAC, 173/95, 2822. *L. Rosenberg à M. Wigny, Président du Conseil des Ministres de la CEE,* 22.2.1961 [No official English translation].

incumbent, and the Sections for Self-employed activities and Services ([118]), and for Economic Questions ([119]) which, unlike the former, were expected to make suggestions on more specific aspects of vocational training. The former section was invited to express its opinion in particular on the 'specific aspects of vocational training and advanced training from the point of view of accessing and exercising an independent profession', and to suggest ways in which it would be possible to overcome the problem of 'harmonising final examinations, certificates, and qualifications and the mutual recognition […] of diplomas, certificates, and other qualifications' ([120]). These were two issues of particular importance, given how closely they were tied to the removal of restrictions on the freedom of movement and residence for citizens of the European Community Member States, governed by Article 54 of the Treaty.

The first, and also the most interesting, report presented on 24 January 1962, was drawn up by Italian Manlio Germozzi, who was working in the Section for Economic Questions. According to Germozzi 'The economy is (was) showing unprecedented expansionist dynamism in the direction of industry', thanks to the rapid technological development of recent years. Yet that very technical progress raised many 'problems in certain industrialised countries, in other words a lack of technically and culturally prepared manpower and a surplus of untrained manpower'. And all this at precisely the moment when the overall picture of economic development should have allowed for 'increased employment prospects for specialised manpower, guaranteeing higher levels of income'. Thus, technological development had reached such levels that 'the education system as a whole, at all levels and according to all methods, bore the responsibility and the task of preparing the population, the active workforce in particular'. That was why, according to Germozzi, vocational training was daily becoming an objective which it was increasingly essential to reach. Moreover, Germozzi went on, 'a vocational training policy could also make a positive contribution towards reducing if not eliminating any social distortion created by the often considerable differences which are appearing in the different Community countries between supply and demand in the labour field […]. Indeed, the imbalances which currently exist on the Community labour market are largely attributable to the problem of vocational qualification; the experience of the last few years in fact proves that those job offers which do exist tend to be related to skilled activities, whilst conversely most job demand is generated by unskilled workers or people who are very poorly qualified. The unemployment problem in Italy, for example, presents some very specific features: […] there is a great mass of unskilled people, who would be

---

([118]) BAC, 26/1969 141. Rollinger, R.; Genton, J. *Avis complémentaire de la Section spécialisée pour les activités non salariées et services sur la proposition de la Commission concernant les 'principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'*. 26.1.1962 [No official English translation].

([119]) BAC, 26/1969, 141. Falkenheim, E.; Genton, J. *Avis complémentaire de la Section spécialisée pour les questions économiques sur la Proposition de la Commission concernant les 'principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'*. 24.1.1962 [No official English translation].

([120]) BAC, 173/95 2829. *Rapport de la Section spécialisée pour les activités non salariées et services concernant les principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle.* Rapporteur: Mr Gingembre. 26.1.1962 [No official English translation].

hard-pushed to qualify […]. Moreover, in Italy as in all other EEC countries, there is a growing need for trained and highly qualified experts, whose training of necessity does not keep pace with the development of industry and technological progress' ([121]). On the basis of these considerations – Germozzi concluded – the ESC should have conducted a 'projected survey on manpower requirements, which could provide valuable elements for indicating vocational training needs […]. This should go hand in hand with a survey of the labour market, highlighting in particular the qualitative and quantitative shortcomings which had become apparent over the two years preceding the forecast year. The survey should cover the following points: level of training within the workforce, organisations which should be entrusted with creating and coordinating data at community level, the period over which the survey should extend (this could stretch as far as 1970 for the overall forecasts, with a five year limit for the analytical ones)' ([122]).

Two days later, the Section for self-employed activities and services, with Gingembre as rapporteur, followed on 17 February by Mrs Maria Weber for the Section for Social Questions ([123]), tabled their respective conclusions. But since the sections had been strictly mandated only to consider the principles which were on the Commission's drawing-board, the three opinions were destined to be nothing but general. Nonetheless, the ESC met in Brussels on 1 May 1962 to discuss them in plenary session in the presence of Italian Levi Sandri ([124]), representing the Commission. The meeting drew the following conclusions ([125]):

(a) vocational training and Community social policy were closely linked;

(b) training was of relevance to the agricultural sector, 'which even at that time was facing a growing problem of qualification and specialisation. In this sector of the economy in particular, vocational training could be of great importance in the retraining and vocational guidance of agricultural workers who, as in fact was happening in the early 1960s, would be forced to move into other sectors in their millions'.

([121]) [Unofficial English translation] On the problem of unemployment in Italy, see Petri, 2002.

([122]) Historical Archives of the European Communities (hereafter referred to as HAEC), BAC 26/1969 141. *Report from the Section for Economic Questions, mandated to draw up a supplementary opinion on the Commission's proposal on the 'General principles for implementing a common policy on vocational training'*. Rapporteur Mr Germozzi. 24.1.1962 [Unofficial English translation].

([123]) BAC, 173/95 2829. *Rapport de la Section spécialisée pour les questions sociales sur la 'Proposition de la Commission de la Communauté Economique Européenne relative à l'établissement de principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'.* Rapporteur Mrs Weber, 17.2.1962; and BAC 26/1969 141 *Avis de la Section spécialisée pour les questions sociales relatif au 'Projet d'arrêté concernant l'établissement des Principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle',* 17.2.1962.

([124]) BAC 173/95 2829 *Compte-rendu des délibérations du Comité Économique et Social relatives à l'élaboration d'un Avis sur le 'Projet d'arrêté concernant l'établissement des Principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'* 01.3.1962.

([125]) BAC, 26/1969 142. *Avis du Comité Économique et Sociale relatif au 'projet d'arrêté concernant l'établissement des Principes généraux pour la mise en œuvre d'une politique commune de formation professionnelle'* 1.3.1962 [No official English translation].

There was nothing unusual in the fact that the ESC should highlight these two specific aspects: first because by virtue of its very statute the ESC was expected to deal with issues related to social policy; and second because at this time the 'agriculture' theme was clearly the focus of all Community interests ([126]).

4.2. Phase two: 1965-67

It was not until April 1963 that the Council finally drew up a set of extremely vague and general principles on vocational training. A further step was taken late the same year, when a 36-member consultative committee was set up to deal with the matter. Two years later there was new input into the task with a fresh Commission project for establishing a common policy in the vocational training field, with particular emphasis on the agricultural sector ([127]). Once again, a minor squabble arose between the ESC and the Commission. As had been the case in 1960, the ESC President, this time Piero Giustiniani, tried to carve out a role which went beyond the purely advisory one which the Commission had planned for the ESC (and indeed not only on the vocational training issue) ([128]). Once the squabbles had been settled, the ESC once again set about examining the Commission's latest proposals. On the basis of the studies and reports presented over the following months, in particular the report from Italian Germozzi, who in the meantime had moved to the Section for Social Questions, on 15 December 1967 the ESC presented its own opinion on the *Programme d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionelle en général et dans l'agriculture*. Attention in this document focused on the Community's delay in taking action on vocational training, 'as compared with Community action in the economic field and on the free movement of workers'; […] on the 'need to gradually achieve equivalence between the training systems in force in the different Member States'; […] and on 'organising a method for the skilled worker's continuous adaptation within the company', etc. The ESC made some specific suggestions on vocational training in agriculture, standardisation of levels of study and the recognition of qualifications, vocational retraining for the unemployed, and the harmonisation of professions among transport workers ([129]).

Community policy on vocational training made no headway during these years, apart from producing some general theories, and despite the ESC's efforts to give more specific content to the choices to be made.

([126]) On this aspect, see Fanfani, 1996; and regarding Italy, Laschi, 1999.

([127]) BAC, 26/69 468. *Annexe de la Note Introductive sur le 'Projet de Recommandation de la Commission tendant à développer l'orientation professionnelle'* 1.9.1965.

([128]) BAC, 26/1969, 469. *Lettre de W. Hallstein à M. Piero Giustiniani,* 22.1.1966.

([129]) BAC, 173/1995, 2840. *Étude de la Section spécialisée pour les questions sociales sur les 'Programmes d'action en matière de politique commune de formation professionnelle en général et dans l'agriculture'* Rapporteur Mr Germozzi, 11.9. 1967.

4.3. Phase three: 1969-74

The subject of vocational training was revived by the social, political and economic changes which took place in the early 1970s. Again, it was the ESC which took the initiative as early as 1969, proving once more that it was at the cutting-edge on such issues compared with the other Community institutions; again, thanks especially to the contribution made by Italian, Manlio Germozzi. On 11 March 1970, in accordance with the decision of the Bureau of the Committee, the Section for Social Questions decided to set up a specific study group on vocational training ([130]). In the same year, the group first proposed setting up a European Centre to study vocational training in the Community. ESC documentation in the early 1970s clearly shows the change in perspective and also the methods used to analyse vocational training. Gone were the discussions about principle and the vague theories, replaced by detailed studies of the national State education systems, to better understand and compare the various structures ([131]). In 1973, for example, the ESC prepared its *Study of the training and vocational training systems in the European Communities*, which examined the various school education systems country by country, their origins, and how they had changed over time, how each country regulated apprenticeship, and how vocational training courses were structured within the country context. The conclusions drawn by the study were rather critical of what the Community had, or rather had not, done until then: 'Finally the level of vocational training can be considered and appreciated only in the framework of general education. The demands formulated in the Community concerning free movement of labour, recognition of diplomas, etc., will be intractable as long as the harmonisation of educational content and objectives has not become a reality […]. Present methods of working and the results achieved thanks to them have often not resulted in any harmonisation; their application has been on an isolated basis and consequently irrational […] and has thus not borne fruit'.

To get around these difficulties, the report concluded, the ESC was repeating the request it made on 4 February 1970, in other words the creation of a European institute for the scientific study of vocational training: 'Only a central institution along these lines will be able to collect the basic scientific material needed to enable the advisory bodies and decision-taking powers to draw the necessary conclusions' ([132]).

Between 1973 and 1975, the ESC continued to work intensively on vocational training issue. Fresh, highly complex studies were conducted by Mrs Weber on the training systems in the three new Member States: Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom ([133]). But in particular,

---

([130]) Archives of the Economic and Social Committee (hereafter referred to as ESC), 1223/1. Germozzi was the chairman of this group, and Mrs Weber its rapporteur.

([131]) ESC, 1223/2 bis. *Schéma d'études des systèmes de formation et de formation professionnelle dans la Communauté Européenne*, 1.4.1975.

([132]) ESC, 1224/4. *Avant-projet d'étude des systèmes de formation et de formation professionnelle dans la Communauté Européenne*, 19.1.1973.

([133]) ESC. *Minutes of the discussions concerning the Economic and Social Committee's Study on general education and vocational training in the six countries of the European Communities*, 16.1.1974.

between 1974 and 1975 most of the sections in the ESC were involved in drawing up studies and opinions on what was to become the future European centre for vocational training. Obviously the proposal which the Commission made to this end in January 1974 was welcomed most warmly and enthusiastically by all ESC members. As the Committee pointed out in a document from July 1974, the ESC 'welcomed with particular approval this Commission proposal, for it is to a large extent, as the Commission acknowledges, the fruit of the efforts made by the Economic and Social Committee' ([134]).

([134]) ESC 1260/3. Section for Social Questions, *Opinion on the establishment of a European Vocational Training Centre*, 15.7.1974.

4.4. References

Ciampani, A. La politica sociale nel processo di integrazione europa. *Europa-Europe*, 2001 Vol. 10, No 1, p. 120-134.

Degimbe, J. *La politique sociale européenne: du Traité de Rome au Traité d'Amsterdam.* Brussels: ISE, 1999.

Dundovich, E. I Presidenti del Comitato economico e sociale: personalità e orientamenti. In Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea.* Venice: Marsilio Editore, 2000, p. 89-100.

Fanfani, R. *Lo sviluppo della politica agricola comunitaria.* Rome: NIS, 1996;

Laschi, G. *L'agricoltura italiana e l'integrazione europea.* Bern: Peter Lang, 1999.

Le politiche sociali in Europa. CEPR – Centre for Economic Policy Research. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999.

Petri, R. *Storia economica d'Italia. Dalla Grande Guerra al miracolo economico, 1918-1963.* Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002.

Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea.* Venice: Marsilio Editore, 2000.

Varsori, A. La questione europea nella politica italiana. *Studi Storici*, IV, 2002, p. 995-971.

5. The European trade unions and Cedefop: an analysis of labour's approach to vocational education and training in the 1970s

Maria Eleonora Guasconi

5.1. Introduction

An analysis of the role of the unions in vocational training may offer a useful insight into the reasons that led the European Governments to promote the development of social policy in the early 1970s, when unemployment and protracted economic crisis were sounding alarm bells for the Community on the eve of its first enlargement. It will reflect on how long was 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 chief practical 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 social policy for employment and vocational training.

This research, conducted at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) of Amsterdam ([135]), has concentrated mainly on the 1970s. From the Hague Summit of 1969 and, in particular, the drafting of the Werner Plan in 1970 on the creation of an economic and monetary union, dialogue with the social partners was promoted. Formerly it had been relegated to a few advisory committees associated with the Commission but now many employment and vocational training initiatives were adopted ([136]).

5.2. The origins of European social policy

The founding Treaty of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) contained a number of articles devoted to the welfare of workers and their reemployment following the restructuring of enterprises; this gave unions representation within the High Authority and the Advisory Committee (Mechi, 1994). Other than this, 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

---

([135]) The author thanks Lorenzo Mechi of the University of Padua and Francesco Petrini of the University of Florence for the documents found at IISH of Amsterdam.

([136]) 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, 1984.

market than a goal to be pursued in its own right (Ciampani, 1995a and 2001; Degimbe, 1999). 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. Those representatives hoped, by establishing the principle of the movement of workers within Europe, to solve the grave unemployment problems afflicting the Mezzogiorno. Apart from this, the European Governments had preferred to maintain control and to administer the social effects of economic integration nationally. The Treaty made no provision for political intervention: 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 (Dølvik, 1999, p. 99).

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 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 institutionalised was a permanent system of *do ut des* – 'give so that you may receive'. 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. For the first 10 years of its life the European Social Fund, which was active from 1960, had just ECU 420 million at its disposal, 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 Hague Summit and 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 Val Duchesse negotiations, despite the constant and urgent requests to take part (IISH et al., 1955; Barnouin, 1986; Ciampani, 1995b; Dølvik, 1999; Pasture, 2001), and in the role of the body given the task of acting as spokesman for the social partners in Brussels: the ESC, an advisory body, 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) ([137]), reiterated his firm opposition to institutionalising cooperation with the union movement, preferring what he saw as more fruitful informal contacts ([138]). 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: besides 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 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 a fear of a deterioration in working conditions and of coming down to Italian levels.

Neither the Christian unions, the Communist organisations, the CGIL nor the 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) ([139]). In particular, 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 ([140]). In addition, 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 from the creation of the ECSC (Delaney, 2002).

([137]) ETUS was created in 1958 by the ICFTU. It came into being as a result of the demand of 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, given that no representatives of the working world had taken part in the negotiations leading up to the Treaties of Rome. It was later renamed the European Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ECFTU) in the European Community, and was joined by the Scandinavian and British trade unions. In 1974, with the affiliation of Christian trade union and the Italian Communist union, CGIL, it became the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

([138]) The meeting between Sicco Mansholt and the unionists is cited in Guasconi, 1998/1999, p. 249.

([139]) 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.

([140]) On the position of the CGIL towards European construction see Galante, 1988; Maggiorani, 1998.

Besides these many different voices, there was a relative lack of interest from employers in closer cooperation with the unions. Up to 1967 the Union of Industrial and Employers' 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 channels, 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 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, constituting a process of 'European' training, and because it gave them the opportunity for contact with influential Europeans such as Jean Monnet, who hoped to see many unionists taking part in his Action Committee.

5.3. The relaunching of social policy in 1969

The Hague Summit of 1969, and in particular the 1970 Werner Plan for economic and monetary union, represented a turning point for the interests of the social partners and the progress of social policy ([141]).

The conference that marked Europe's passage from the 'six' to the 'nine', on the entry of Denmark, Ireland and the United Kingdom into the EEC, sanctioned the first attempt to bring about 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 dialogue with the social partners as a prerequisite for the effective creation of monetary union ([142]).

The first reform of the European Social Fund came in 1971 and, in the following year, the Heads of State and Government, meeting at the Paris Summit, solemnly affirmed that they regarded vigorous social action as being as important as the realisation of 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.

([141]) On the Hague Summit see Bitsch, 2001; Guasconi, forthcoming.

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

What were the reasons for the renewed interest among the institutions and European Governments in promoting dialogue with social forces and in developing 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 (for example, the need for a reform of the school system) and new forces of society;

(b) the growing economic crisis that, especially with the oil embargo and price rises following on 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 home the problems associated with unemployment, persuading 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 Southern Italy;

(e) finally, 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 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 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).

5.4. The first tripartite conference on employment and the problem of vocational training

One of the first results of the renewed interest in the social dimension of European integration was the promotion of social dialogue on a tripartite basis. 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 European 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 is 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 ([143]) 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, debate focused on the need for a change in the Community's approach to, and policy on, employment. The results of the policy based solely on free movement for workers had been unsatisfactory, creating regional imbalances, as shown in the case of the Mezzogiorno in Italy ([144]). From the time of signing the Treaty establishing the ECSC, the Italian Government had seen the European market as a safety valve for the problem of unemployment, which was particularly acute in the South, and had sought to use the right of free access to the labour markets of other European partners as an instrument for encouraging emigration. Over the medium term, however, this strategy had proved unworkable because the 'five' partners had kept a tight rein over policies associated with the working world, preferring to sign bilateral agreements rather than developing a Community-wide policy on employment. The Community did not place an obligation on its members to give priority to unemployed workers from European countries, and the Council of Ministers had rejected Italy's repeated requests to promote a European employment policy. During the Conference there was a convergence between the Italian requests and the demands of the unions on European social policy. The Italian Labour Minister, Carlo Donat Cattin, gave firm support to the proposal put forward by the European trade unions: to promote a European employment policy directed not

([143]) 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).

([144]) On the debate during the Conference on employment, see Guasconi, 2003.

only towards the movement of workers but also towards guaranteeing a Community preference, which would reduce the existing regional imbalances (Varsori, 1999 and 2001).

In the course of the Conference 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 an instrument that was needed to bring about economic growth and to improve the prospects 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, which was seen as an instrument that would contribute towards developing an effective policy on employment and 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 1971 and became one of the first centres of the European social dialogue, the body through which the social partners tried to influence Community decision-making. At its first meeting, held in Brussels on 18 March 1971, the German union DGB highlighted the importance of vocational training as one of the Committee's priorities, proposing the creation of a European institute for coordination, research and the production of technical and teaching methods studies in 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 to go 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).

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. This 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 with 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).

5.5. The European unions and the creation of Cedefop

The Paris Summit of October 1972 was another milestone in the development of 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. Its objectives would include establishing a common vocational training policy, with a view to the step-by-step achievement of its objectives and, in particular, harmonisation of vocational training standards, especially by creating a European vocational training centre (IISH, 1974a), something regarded as of the utmost importance.

In June 1972 the ECFTU presented a memorandum explicitly calling on 'the Community governments and institutions to give practical support to the creation of a European labour institute to train and prepare union leaders for their task of representing workers in face of the European dimension'. On vocational training it stated that 'permanent training is not just a generous idea but a fundamental requirement in our time' (IISH, 1972). Despite this new call for action, the Council and Commission were to regard many aspects of this programme, such as the creation 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. 'On the governmental side,' the Unions wrote, 'reservations have been expressed 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 to avoid the debate, as has been 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 inertia by putting forward numerous proposals, including holding a social conference in May 1973. This new forum for debate with the Commission and Governments had the objective to implement genuine consultation with the social partners, jointly setting 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 to reduce 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 a heated debate in July 1974 at a meeting of the Council of Ministers social group, the UK delegation stated strong reservations about the creation of Cedefop and 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 on procedures for nominating representatives of the social partners, 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 regulating 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 staff recruitment and drawing up the 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. The members of the staff complained of their terms of recruitment, which they saw as less advantageous than those of Community staff. The first Director, Karl Jörgensen, 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), who was proposed by ETUC following a unanimous vote. This was the outcome of an informal agreement reached with the employers' union, UNICE, which, in return, 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).

5.6. Conclusions

Maria Weber, the German unionist belonging to the DGB and, as a member of the ESC, an active promoter of Cedefop, and its President in 1979, in the course of a meeting of the union representatives of Cedefop and the Dublin Foundation in Düsseldorf in June 1978, stressed the commitment of the European unions to promoting a Community social dialogue, both generally and in vocational training. 'What I would like to say,' she declared, '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 has become increasingly apparent that the administration of the European Communities was not in a position to perform the necessary tasks as effectively and as successfully as was wished in the various social domains; this has

been due to its structure and its organisation, of course, but also to the fact that its staffing at the level of social affairs has been progressively eroded, despite the merging of Euratom-ECSC and the EEC and despite the enlargement of EEC to nine Member States.' (IISH, 1978)

Even though the social policy results achieved in the 1970s still seemed to be in the embryonic stage, these first few steps should not be underestimated, as they were to be the starting point for the broader programme promoted by Jacques Delors in the 1980s, which was to make social policy one of the main items on the European agenda. In this context, the creation of Cedefop and the issues of European vocational training were to be used by the unions as a means of promoting dialogue with Community institutions. This allowed a broader debate on aspects of European integration such as employment, the right to work, social security, working conditions and freedom of movement for workers, which up to that time had been the exclusive domain of the governments in the national context.

5.7. References

Antonioli, M. et al. (ed.) *Le scissioni sindacali in Europe.* Pisa: Franco Serantini Edizioni, 1999.

Archives Nationales. *Final declaration. Paris Summit, 19-21 October 1972*. Paris: Archives Nationales, 1972 (Georges Pompidou papers, Carton AG/53127).

Barnouin, B. *The European labour movement and European integration*. London: Frances Pinter, 1986.

Bitsch, M. T. Le sommet de la Haye. La mise en route de la relance de 1969. In Loth, W. (ed.) *Crises and Compromises: the European Project 1963-1969.* Brussels: Peter Lang, 2001, p. 323-343.

Bossuat, G. Le président Georges Pompidou et les tentatives d'Union économique et monétaire. In Bernard J. R. et al. *Georges Pompidou et l'Europe. Proceedings of the Colloquium held at the CNRS on 25-26 November 1993*. Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1995, p. 405-447.

Carew A. et al. (eds). *The International Confederation of Free Trade Union.* Bern: Peter Lang, 2000.

Carew A. *Labour under the Marshall Plan.* Manchester: University Press, 1987.

Ciampani, A. Il dilemma dell'Europa sindacale tra cooperazione e integrazione europea: l'Organizzazione Regionale Europea della Confederazione internazionale dei sindacati liberi. In Ciampani, A. (ed.) *L'altra via per l'Europa. Forze sociali e organizzazione degli interessi nell'integrazione europea (1945-1957)*. Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995.

Ciampani, A. (ed.) *L'altra via per l'Europa. Forze sociali e organizzazione degli interessi nell'integrazione europea (1945-1957)*. Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995.

Ciampani, A. La politica sociale nel processo di integrazione europea. *Europa/Europe*, No 1, 2001, p. 120-134;

Degimbe, J. *La politique sociale européenne du Traité de Rome au Traité d'Amsterdam*. Brussels: ISE, 1999.

Delaney, E. The Labour Party's changing relationship to Europe. *Journal of European Integration History,* 2002, Vol. 8, No 1, p. 121-138.

Dølvik, J. E. *An emerging island?: ETUC: social dialogue and the Europeanisation of the Trade Unions in the 1990s*. Brussels: ETUI, 1999.

European Council of Ministers. *The Council's conclusions on adult vocational training as one of the means of an active employment policy: Annex II,* (Archives Folder 30541).

European Council of Ministers. *Extract from the draft minutes of the Tripartite Conference on the problems of employment, Luxembourg,* 27-28.4.1970 (Archives Folder 30566).

European Council of Ministers. *Tripartite Conference on Employment:* e*xtract from draft minutes of the 113th meeting of the Council held in Brussels on 25-26.5.1970*, p. 8-9. (Archives Folder 30567-a)

European Council of Ministers. *Tripartite Conference on Employment. ECFTU's proposals and observations for the Conference on problems of employment*, p. 5. (Archives Folder 30567-b)

Frank, R. Pompidou, le franc et l'Europe. In: Bernard J. R. et al. *Georges Pompidou et l'Europe. Proceedings of the Colloquium held at the CNRS on 25-26 November 1993*. Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1995, p. 339-369.

Galante, S. *Il partito comunista italiano e l'integrazione europea. Il decennio del rifiuto.* Padua: CEDAM, 1988

Geyer, R. *Exploring European social policy: an explanation*. Malden: Blackwell, 2000.

Girault, R.; Poidevin, R. (ed.). *Le rôle des ministères des Finances et des ministères de l'Economie dans la construction européenne (1957-1978)*: *actes du colloque tenu à Bercy les 26, 27 et 28 mai 1999*. Paris: CHEFF, 2002.

Guasconi, M. E. Il sindacato e l'Europa: la politica della CISL e della UIL nei confronti del processo di integrazione europea attraverso le carte del Segretariato Sindacale Europeo (1958-1964). *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, 1998/2, 1999/1, p. 233-250.

Guasconi, M. E. *Il Vertice dell'Aja del 1969 e il rilancio della costruzione europea.* Firenze: Polistampa, 2003.

Guasconi, M. E. Paving the way for a European social dialogue: Italy, the trade unions and the shaping of a European social policy after the Hague Conference of 1969. *Journal of European Integration History*, 2003, Vol. 9, No 1, p. 87-110.

Hantrais, L. *Social policy in the European unions*. London: Macmillan, 2000.

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Critical note on government papers presented by the governments to the Conference on employment problems*, 15.4.1970 (ETUC Papers).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *DGB union report on the first meeting of the Committee on Employment.* Brussels, 18.3.1971a (ETUC File 1817).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Letter from J. Kulakowski, Secretary of ETUC, to all member organisations*, 18.11.1974b (ETUC File 1476).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Letter from J. Kulakowski, secretary of ETUC, to all the member organisations*, 3.9.1975 (ETUC Papers).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Letter from P. Calderara and G. Meroni to Victor Feather*, 21.6.1973b (ETUC File 1268).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Meeting of the Executive Committee.* Brussels, 9.7.1971b (ETUC File 1816).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Meeting of the Working Party on social questions. Proposed Council regulation setting up a European Centre for the development of vocational training*, 3.7.1974a (ETUC Papers).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Memorandum on the European Social Fund*, 29.10.1969 (ETUC File 1492).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Preliminary report on problems of European social integration*, 4-5.1.1955 (ICFTU Papers, ERO, File 1300).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Preparation of the ECFTU position on the summit meeting.* Brussels, 28.6.1972 (ETUC File 1817).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Social conference, introductory notes*, 16.2.1973a (ETUC File 1879).

IISH International Institute of Social History. *Working meeting of union representatives*, Brussels, 1-2.6.1978 (ETUC Papers).

Ivor, R.; Springer, B. *Social policy in the European Union: between harmonization and national autonomy*. Boulder: Lynne Riener, 2001.

Kleinman, M. *A European welfare state?: European Union social policy in context*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Kowalsky, W. *Focus on European social policy.* Brussels: ETUI, 2000.

Ludlow, P. *The making of the European monetary system.* London: Routledge, 1982.

Macshane, D. *International labour and the origins of the Cold War.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Maggiorani, M. *L'Europa degli altri: comunisti italiani e integrazione europea (1957-1969).* Rome: Carocci, 1998.

Mechi, L. Una vocazione sociale?: L'azione dell'Alta Autorità della CECA a favore dei lavoratori sotto le presidenze di Jean Monnet e di René Mayer. *Storia delle Relazioni Internazionali*, 1994/1995, Vol. 10-11, No 2, p. 147-183.

Pasture, P. The flight of the Robins: European trade unionism at the beginnings of the European integration process. In de Wilde, B. (ed.) *The past and future of international trade unionism*. Ghent: 2001, p. 80-103.

Segreto, L. Gli imprenditori europei e il CES. In Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea*. Venice: Marsilio editori, 2000, p. 139-154.

Vandamme, J. *Pour une nouvelle politique sociale en Europe*. Paris: Economica, 1984.

Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea*. Venice: Marsilio editori, 2000.

Varsori, A. *L'Italia nelle relazioni internazionali dal 1943 al 1992*. Rome-Bari: Laterza, 1997.

Varsori, A. La questione europea nella politica italiana. *Studi Storici*, 2001, Vol. 4, p. 955-971

Verdun, A. The political economy of the Werner and Delors Report. In Magnusson, L.; Strath, B. (eds) *From the Werner Plan to the EMU: in search of a political economy for Europe.* Brussels: Peter Lang, 2001, p. 73-82.

Werner, P. *Union économique et monétaire. Les avatars du rapport Werner.* Brussels: Editions Saint Paul, 1991.

Wilkens, A. Ostpolitik, Westpolitik and the project of the economic and monetary union. *Journal of European Integration History*, 1999, Vol. 5, No 1, p. 73-102.

6. The place of vocational training in François Mitterrand's idea of a European social space (1981-84)

Georges Saunier

6.1. The issue, the period and the sources

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

(a) 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?

(b) what were the main considerations over the same period in French European social policy on vocational training, especially for young people?

Why the focus on the period 1981-84? 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.

In the European Community, the years 1981-84 were those of the 'agricultural budget' crisis, that is to say, the negotiations that began with the publication in June by the new Thorn Commission of the report on the 30 May mandate ([145]), and ended temporarily, three years later, at the Fontainebleau European Council meeting ([146]).

As regards European social policy – 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 ([147]), Mr Ivor Richard, who exercised this responsibility until 1984. At that time, the Community

([145]) EC Bull., 6-1981, 1.2.1.

([146]) EC 18th Gen. Rep., p. 22-23.

([147]) EC 15th Gen. Rep., 543, p. 228.

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, in particular, the French Presidential Archives. These written sources have been supplemented by interviews with French figures active at the time.

6.2. From 1981 to 1984: 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 several 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 extend 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 Council meetings, such as that of Athens in December 1983. The Europe of decisions was continually postponed. It was 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 partnership also suffered its own vicissitudes: the Giscard-Schmidt partnership was succeeded by Mitterrand-Kohl.

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

6.3. 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 (*Programme commun de gouvernement,* 1973.; Manifeste socialiste pour l'élection européenne, 1978.; *Pour la France des années 80,* 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 essential programme adopted by the Socialist Party and its Communist ally in the early 1970s to the European level.

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 across Europe; and encouraging social dialogue at all Community levels. In particular this last element involved 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 when 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' ([148]) 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 matter. 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 ([149]). 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

---

([148]) National Archives, 5AG4-2231: *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.

([149]) '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.).

unemployed and training in the new technologies ([150]). This last point, as will be seen, was important.

However, while it was only just present in European documentation, vocational training was highly visible in domestic Socialist proposals and in 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 several 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 hand out unemployment benefits); and 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 European level.

For a long time the French left had been concerned with education. Many of its militants 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).

6.4. 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 ([151]) – the special adviser to the President of the Republic, a sort of Elysée think tank –referred to the matter on occasion, vocational training is more or less absent from archive documents for this period.

([150]) EC Bull. 11-1981, 3.5.1.

([151]) 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 the European 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.

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.

First, and most important, there was the failure of the European social space as proposed 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: the United Kingdom of Mrs Thatcher was even then engaged in a fierce battle with the trade unions, while the German Government wanted negotiations to remain at 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 revision 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 such as part-time working and early retirement.

At the same time, 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 already running several pilot projects in the field and was used to dealing with such issues under the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) ([152]).

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

The second factor 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 apparent that stimulation of demand in

([152]) 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*.

an open European market largely benefited foreign rather than French goods ([153]). The result was obvious: a growing gap in the balance of trade, leading to weakening of the franc and several 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 and including 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 ([154]), was closely linked to this aspect, despite macro-economic measures taken by the Socialist Government, and also led to some rethinking. The crisis in the economy was not caused by 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 took several forms:

(a) the creation of 'local missions' in 1982 – following the publication of the major report by Bertrand Schwartz ([155]) – the purpose of which was to provide young people with better information about the range of vocational training available to them ([156]);

(b) 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;

(c) 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

---

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

([154]) 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.

([155]) 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.

([156]) 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.cnav.fr/textes/ord/TLR-ORD_82273_26031982.htm [cited 17.9.2003].

this gave rise in February 1984 to the adoption of a significant piece of outline legislation which reshaped the entire structure of vocational training in France;

(d) 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 several speeches on the topic ([157]). The proclaimed objective was very simple: no young person should leave education 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 ([158]). However, it was still necessary to persuade the other partners and to adopt the requisite regulations within the ESF ([159]). 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 ([160]). This idea was

---

([157])25 October 1982, speech to the International Council for Adult Education. Available from Internet: http://www.discours-mitterrand.org/rep_file/821025.htm [cited 17.9.2003].

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 [cited 17.9.2003].

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.'

([158]) National Archives, 5AG4-21PM: *'Intérêts vitaux' de la France en matière européenne*, 6 June 1983.

([159]) 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.

([160]) National Archives, 5AG4-24PM: *Une nouvelle étape pour l'Europe: un espace de l'industrie et de la recherche*, 12 September 1983.

shared by the Commission and several Member States, notably Italy. 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' ([161]).

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

6.5. The negotiations

Three factors pushed the French to make vocational training one of the key 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, 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) ([162]). This was a first step. France then drew up several proposals aimed at these reforms, in which vocational training and the new technologies figured prominently ([163]). Although the French suggestions were initially approved by the Commission ([164]), 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 ([165]).

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

---

([161]) National Archives, 5AG4-27PM: *Espace social européen. (Schéma d'intervention: Matignon),* 23 June 1984.

([162]) 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: *Compte-rendu 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.

([163]) National Archives, 5AG4-2232: *Réforme du règlement du fonds social européen*, SGCI, Secrétariat Général, 13 November 1981.

([164]) National Archives, 5AG4-2391: *The economic and social situation in the Community* (Commission Communication to the Brussels European Council, 29 and 30 March 1982), EEC, Commission, 22 March 1982.

([165]) 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.

government made a commitment to give each young person, within five years, vocational training suited to the new conditions in the labour market ([166]). 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 problem 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 ([167]). 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 ([168]). 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:

(a) education in new technologies;

(b) use of new technologies in vocational training;

(c) 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 several initiatives for the occupational integration of young people in the national territory, saw this as the first step – albeit timid – towards establishing a true European social space, that is 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 in reverse that European thinking influenced the French left. This was true in many fields, including vocational training and social affairs. 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

([166]) EC Bull. 3-1982, 1.3.5.

([167]) 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.

([168]) 17th Gen. Rep., 305, p. 142.

comparison with the document published in 1979, vocational training occupied a far more prominent place (Manifeste du Parti socialiste pour l'élection européenne …, 1984).

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

6.6. 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 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), 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 implementing Community decisions in the French case. Although the goal of vocational training deserves to be common, Paris sees its implementation as a matter for Member States. However, it may be desirable for professionals in different countries to exchange 'ideas'.

It would seem that a normative framework is 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. However, 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 Fifteen – 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 evaporates – 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.

6.7. References

Asselain, J.-C. L'expérience socialiste face à la contrainte extérieure. In Berstein, S.; Milza, P.; Bianco, J.-L. (eds). *Les années Mitterrand, les années du changement (1981-1984): actes du colloque 'Changer la vie, les années Mitterrand 1981-1984', 14-16 janvier 1999, organisé par l'Institut François Mitterrand et le Centre d'histoire de l'Europe du XX^e siècle*, Paris: Perrin, 2001.

Berstein, S. The crisis of the left and the renaissance of the republican model, 1981-1995. In Maclean, M. (ed.) *The Mitterrand years: legacy and evaluation.* London: Macmillan, 1998, p. 46-66.

Bertinotti, D. Réformes et tentatives de réforme de l'Éducation nationale. In Berstein, S.; Milza, P.; Bianco, J.-L. (eds). *Les années Mitterrand, les années du changement (1981-1984), actes du colloque 'Changer la vie, les années Mitterrand 1981-1984', 14-16 janvier 1999, organisé par l'Institut François Mitterrand et le Centre d'histoire de l'Europe du XX^e siècle*, Paris: Perrin, 2001, p. 797-818.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *The vocational training system in France*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1999.

Greinert, W.-D. *A theoretical framework proposal for a history of the development of vocational training in Europe.* Berlin: Institut fur Berufliche Bildung und Arbeitslehre. Available from Internet: http://history.cedefop.eu.int/framework.asp [cited 17.9.2003].

Mitterrand, F. Preface. In Mexandeau, L.; Quilliot, R. *Libérer l'école, plan socialiste pour l'éducation nationale.* Paris: Flammarion, 1978.

Parti socialiste, Parti communiste, Mouvement des radicaux de gauche. *Programme commun de gouvernement.* Paris: Flammarion, 1973.

Parti socialiste. Manifeste socialiste pour l'élection européenne. Les Socialistes pour l'Europe des travailleurs. *Le Poing et la rose*, supplement to No 77. Paris: Parti socialiste, 1978.

Parti socialiste. *Pour la France des années 80.* Paris: Club socialiste du livre, 1980.

Parti socialiste. Manifeste du Parti socialiste pour l'élection européenne de juin 1984. *Le Poing et la rose*, No 108, 1.6.1984.

Pond, E. *The rebirth of Europe.* Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1990.

Saunier, G. Prélude à la relance de l'Europe. Le couple franco-allemand et les projets de relance communautaire vus de l'Hexagone. In Bitsch, M.-T. (ed.) *Le Couple France-Allemagne et les institutions européennes: une postérité pour le plan Schuman?*

Brussels: E. Bruylant, 2001, p. 463-487. (Collection Organisation internationale et relations internationales, No 53).

Saunier, G. L'Élysée et l'organisation économique de l'Europe, 1981-1985. Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, *Milieux économiques et intégration européenne au XX^e siècle*, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Finance and Industry, 2002, p. 195.

7. Historical review of the social partners' contribution to developing vocational training in Europe

Vincenzo Romano

The Social Affairs Group of the European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation (CEEP) has been involved in the dialogue between the social partners from the very early days. That dialogue, together with other initiatives, played a major role in developing vocational training in Europe. In particular, the efforts of the social partners led to the resolve to establish a centre for the development of vocational training, whose creation was actively supported by the Social Affairs Group. It is interesting to review the historical aspects of the development of that European resolve, which contributed to the affirmation of the actions within the Community.

The legal origins of the 'social dialogue', which was not put on an institutional footing until 1985, are in Article 139 (previously Article 118b) of the Treaty of Rome. The Treaty specifically called on the European Commission to support a dialogue between social parties that 'should management and labour so desire ... may lead to contractual relations'.

The social parties were, from the outset, the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE), the CEEP and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). These organisations, each in its own way – especially through the formulation of views and by adopting a stance on several points of concern for the Community – began to draft the principles that were later, during the Strasbourg Summit of 1989, to be included in the Community Charter for the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers.

Issues of particular interest were: upholding the competitiveness and flexibility of companies within a framework of effective and broadly participative social policies; promotion of vocational training as the preferred instrument both for young people embarking on their working lives and for adapting the skills of workers at the time of industrial restructuring and the modernisation of production; and improving the labour market based on non-antagonistic rules wherever possible, setting objectives for rational management of the available human and occupational resources.

A major step in realising such aims was the action that led to the creation of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop). This organisation was not simply to be a study centre able to liaise with universities and other learning centres at national and international level but, above all, a place where the parties to the social dialogue, particularly employers and trade unions, could be consulted.

The European social partners were strongly in favour of establishing this centre, which was seen as one of the most important contributions that could be made towards achieving the aims of social and productive change within the European Community.

The representatives of trade unions were highly motivated, and it is to them we owe the soundness of much of the progress made in this particular field. We should also bear in mind the dynamic input of the employers' representatives, associated with the fact that this occurred during a phase of major change for the enterprise.

During the second half of the 1970s and into the 1980s, there was a perceived need for a return to an industrial – or even a neo-industrial - system of values. This resulted from crucial changes and social and economic events, all interrelated to varying degrees depending on the country and operational contexts.

These were expressions of economic globalisation, promoting a new centralisation of markets and thus redefining the role of the entrepreneur in the economic system. Attention was paid to developing small and medium size enterprises and broadening the concept of the enterprise to other aspects of the production process, such as the advanced service industry.

Those Member States whose production systems were more advanced and that shared historical, cultural, technical and scientific traditions, found it easier to meet the challenge. Other States, and those preparing to join the EC, faced problems that seemed difficult to solve.

One of those problems related to the concept of vocational training and, with specific regard to the relationship between training and general education, the content and methods of training. These varied from one country to the next depending on how they were applied in working environments that differed even in industrial sectors of the same type. It was also hard to reconcile the diversity of systems for the award of qualifications.

It was in this area that marked differences between Member States became apparent. The divergences were not simply between countries having different traditional methods of production and economic achievement, but also between those whose economic development was similar and whose training systems might be assumed to be more closely related.

Even here, the priority might be versatile training that could be adapted to different jobs or it might be clearly defined training targeted towards certain jobs, backed by placements in the workplace. In the latter case there were different types of courses leading to different outcomes.

As a general rule, however, the weighting given to practical and theoretical training within a course could lead to radically different results.

It seemed obvious that Community policies aiming to establish interdependence between national economies and workforce mobility and flexibility at international level would have to be linked with harmonisation of training within Member States. This would have to be

achieved while allowing each one to retain its special characteristics based on socio-economic conditions, traditions and the various legal implications. Harmonisation, however, would mean that they could meet the minimum objective of coming together to build a common social policy as well as a policy on employment that encompassed the free movement of workers.

The problem, initially addressed in the Treaty of Rome, was taken up again on several occasions, not always with the same enthusiasm. At first the Council confined itself to setting out the general principles for a common vocational training policy. In the following years, the issue was developed with the help of studies by the EEC Vocational Training Committee, although these were mainly descriptions of the status quo in Member States.

The situation did not improve after the Council Decision adopting the general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy on 2 April 1963. The result was a period of stagnation that lasted throughout the rest of the 1960s.

In 1971 a new Council draft of the General Directives for a joint action programme in the vocational training sector did no more than confirm the planning declarations of 1963. It was not until 1973 that the Commission showed more determination. It presented a work programme (from Commissioner Dahrendorf) entitled Research, science and training, dealing with the subject of a common policy on training in Europe. At the same time a new Directorate-General (DG XII) for research, science and training was established.

The first document (which had the main merit of highlighting the need for coordination of vocational training in line with an industrial policy that would call for continuing, structural modification) followed the proposals in the Directive presented by the Commission to the Council on 8 April 1973 concerning a 'programme of social and political actions'. This described the need for resources to set up adult retraining measures and post-school training schemes for school-leavers who had no guarantee of finding jobs.

As a logical consequence of the commitment of the Commission and government experts towards tackling the problems raised by the new and ambitious programme of social action – and the requirement for even stronger commitment from the social parties in question – the need for the establishment of a European centre for vocational training became apparent. Its aim would be to develop research, share information and harmonise vocational training standards, as well as formulating model training programmes.

So, as we know, Cedefop was then set up by a Council decision of 1975. In the initial phases of its life, its work was directed towards the themes of the polyvalence of vocational training, basic training and the training of trainers, developing European concepts of vocational qualifications, the access of migrant workers and their children to vocational qualifications, etc. It also looked at the delicate question of relationships between school and the workplace.

On this last point, the members of the Social Affairs Group of the CEEP have never given much logical thought to the probably exaggerated claim of those who, at this time, criticised teaching establishments at every level for being far too detached from the needs of the workplace, production sectors and the industrial world. Such an attitude would seem to be unjustified, since education must not just consider its 'user' as someone whose personal goals are determined solely by production or employment.

On the contrary, students need to grow and expand their own personalities by experiencing the whole gamut of relationships inherent in modern society. This includes politics, culture, art, religion, and so on, giving education a multiple function.

Furthermore, when we looked at production in many European countries we realised that demands made upon the providers of education were not all along the same lines. The problems that needed to be addressed by the workplace, calling for an effective training programme, varied widely. They were linked to complicated variables such as technology, the market, the size of the company, the organisational model characteristic of each form of production and so on. Each economic factor, therefore, had its own requirements, differing from the others.

Overall, both the education providers and manufacturing had to do some thinking. There had to be a search for a way of working with schools that reflected the multiplicity of society's expectations of education. In the event, the actions of Cedefop, and particularly of employers' representatives, helped to establish that the industrial world certainly has the right and the duty to contribute towards defining the objectives and content of educational programmes, but it cannot try to prescribe what the school ought to teach. It must confine itself to offering instruments that help education providers – once those providers have agreed to the objectives and adopted certain programmes – to assess and be aware of the extent that educational objectives are being met.

Many European countries during the 1970s and the 1990s went through a historic phase that has proved particularly propitious for convergence between the world of the school and the world of work.

Employers, it seems, viewed school as a place where universal skills and conceptual instruments could be developed and a sound general educational background could be provided. In its turn, society and, within society, the school recognised the importance of workplace culture, organisational knowledge and the vocational ethic.

It only remains to look forward to a favourable climate in which we can develop these same values in the future within the educational system and as part of vocational training.

8. Vocational education and training in European social policy from its origins to the creation of Cedefop

Antonio Varsori

8.1. 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 launched a research project on vocational training policies in the context of the European construction. In the preliminary phase a detailed survey was conducted not only in several libraries, including the library of the Cedefop itself, but also on the following:

(a) the HAEC attached to the European University Institute (EUI) of San Domenico di Fiesole in Florence;

(b) Cedefop's archives in Thessaloniki;

(c) the archives of the International Institute of Social History (IISH) of Amsterdam;

(d) the archives of the European Commission, Council and Economic and Social Committee (ESC) in Brussels.

Based on this research and the material found, it was thought appropriate to concentrate 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 individual papers. The report that follows takes account of those papers but focuses on the history of Cedefop ([169]).

8.2. Vocational training in the early phases of European construction 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 European leaders 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' ([170]). 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 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 broader 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 the Mezzogiorno. 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

---

([169]) 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, Dr M. Willem, Dr S. Petersson 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.

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

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 economic and social forces in the construction of an affluent society. 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, was also a consideration. 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 '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 on the 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 ([171]).

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 ([172]). 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 it was not only the Communist organisations that defended their interests. 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

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

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

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. A broad consensus for the new Community among the iron and steel workers could be achieved only if it were to embark on 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 to improve safety and working conditions;

(c) measures were introduced in favour of workers who might lose their jobs as a result of the High Authority's decisions.

The ECSC had funds for relocating redundant members of the workforce, and vocational training was regarded as one of the most effective instruments for this purpose (Mechi, 1994/95).

8.3. 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 leading to the signing of the Treaties of Rome rejected Monnet's proposal and union pressure to involve 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, Italian delegates attempted to include certain clauses in the EEC treaty that provided for some form

of European social policy. An internal agreement was 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. 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*, 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 (e.g. 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. Union representatives were particularly active within the ESC 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 to their country's development and help to solve the Mezzogiorno and emigration problems (see Petrini, in this publication). In 1960 the EEC set up the ESF, although 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 ([173]). Discussions on implementing Article 128 were launched shortly thereafter and, in March 1961 the then Commissioner for Social Affairs, Lionello 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

([173]) 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.

within the various countries having agencies and authorities with responsibility for vocational training'. And he added: '… In proposing a number of 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' ([174]). In that context the Commission was strongly supported by the ESC, which produced a series of studies on the issue ([175]). 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) ([176]). Some Member States, and Italy in particular, hoped that this advisory committee might play a significant role in formulating effective European action in vocational training ([177]). 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 vocational training in the Six (the training of trainers) ([178]). In the same year the Commission concerned itself with the idea of a Community policy on vocational training, with special reference to agriculture; it was only a few years earlier that 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 ([179]). 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 ([180]). 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.

([174]) Bruxelles Archives de la Commission (BAC), 173/95, 2828, *Information note on the work of the Economic and Social Committee*, 7.3.1961.

([175]) See documentation in BAC 173/95, 2828.

([176]) *Official Journal of the European Communities*, 3090-3092/63, 30.12.1963.

([177]) BAC, 173/95, 2849, EEC, *The Council – Italian proposal*, 9.7.1963; EEC Commission *Note for the members of the Commission*, 12.11.1963.

([178]) 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.

([179]) 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.

([180]) BAC 174/95, 1045, *European Parliament Social Commission,* see Note doc V/SEC(65) 1355/fin., A. Sabatini, 21.12.1965.

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

(d) the first enlargement of the EEC to nations such as Ireland and the United Kingdom, characterised by areas of long-standing economic recession and social decline or dramatic deindustrialisation;

(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 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.

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 (AESC, 1969) ([181]). The subject was discussed in February 1970 by the Social Affairs Section of the ESC and some members of the Committee expressed the view that the Community should create a European centre for the study of vocational training. In particular

([181]) On the work of the ESC see in particular the paper by E. Dundovich in this publication.

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 the 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' (AESC, 1970). 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 educational systems and tackled scientifically to place the emphasis on research and the exchange of information on different experience. In 1969 the German Federal Republic had established the *Bundesinstitut fur Berufsbildungsforschung (BBF)*, which was to become a sort of model in this field ([182]). 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 ([183]).

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 ([184]). 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 scientific 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' ([185]). 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

([182]) 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* (ISFOL) (See Wollschläger, 2000).

([183]) See the documents in ACES, 1223/2 bis, 1224/4, 1224/5.

([184]) BAC 64/84, 970, *European Community – Council – Note*, 9.6.1971.

([185]) BAC 64/84, 970, *Standing Committee on Employment – Draft minutes of the second meeting of the Standing Committee on employment* – Brussels, 27 May 1971.

development of qualifications and educational and vocational training methods ([186]). 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 ([187]).

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 ([188]). 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'. 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 ([189]).

([186]) 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.

([187]) 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

([188]) 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.

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

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) ([190]). 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 ([191]). 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 ([192]). 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 legal 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 innovatory 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 ([193]). 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

([190]) 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.

([191]) BAC 64/84, 1001, *Commission of the European Communities, 'Archive notes'*, 14.1.1974.

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

([193]) 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.

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) ([194]). As far as the European Parliament was concerned, its observations had 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 resources. 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 ([195]).

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 into account its criticisms. 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. No fewer than seven delegations were of the opinion that the Director should be chosen by the Commission from candidates put forward by the Management Board ([196]). 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 ([197]). 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.

([194]) See also the documentation in ACES, 1260/1 and 1260/2.

([195]) BAC 62/86, 8, *European Parliament – Revised Draft*, rapporteur: F. Pisoni, 12.7.1974.

([196]) BAC 627/86, 8, *European Communities – Council* – Doc. R/3101/74 (SOC 253), 6.12.1974.

([197]) 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.

8.5. 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 formulating their contracts. In the meanwhile, 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 ([198]). 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). The minutes of the Management Board meetings convey a clear impression that in this initial phase the Management Board and the person to whom it 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).

([198]) BAC 18/86, 754, Cedefop, Annual Report 1976.

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 ([199]) and in May that year the Centre published the first issue of its Bulletin. Even so, the Centre still seemed far from settling down. 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) ([200]). Also, some members of the staff were starting to complain about their status, which was very different from, and a good deal less favourable than, 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) ([201]), had the primary aim of putting the work of Cedefop on a permanent footing. 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: 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 ([202]). These criticisms were the result of investigations conducted by the

([199]) BAC 64/84, 1009, the official inauguration was held on 9 March 1977.

([200]) BAC 18/86, 754, letter, C. Jorgensen to R. Jenkins, 23.5.1977

([201]) BAC, 18/86, 754, the other candidate was John Agnew, representative of the Irish Government on the Management Board.

([202]) '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 the 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

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 Commission' ([203]). As a consequence of these views, over the next few years Cedefop was careful 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) ([204]). 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 last 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

---

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.

([203]) 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 of 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 the desire of the Parliament to exert a stronger role as regards Community structures.

([204]) This suggestion had already been made by Roger Faist in 1981.

use about 95 % of the financial resources it had been assigned. These results were achieved in spite of the persistence of certain 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 problems arose with the organisational structures and the Staff Committee tendered its resignation in protest against this state of affairs, a symptom of some internal conflict (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 becoming President of the ESC in 1980 ([205]). 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 signing of the Single 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 ([206]). In 1986 the Centre's budget was 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.

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 promoting vocational training (Cedefop,

([205]) BAC 511/98, 445, *Draft Commission decision*.

([206]) The impact of the Single European Act on the social policies pursued by the Community is highlighted, for example, in Kowalsky, 2000.

1987) ([207]). The Centre could now claim that it was managing to use almost 99 % of the financial resources allocated (Cedefop, 1988a). From 1986, the Community launched certain specific programmes in vocational training, such as Comett, and these initiatives further reinforced the function performed by Cedefop. The Centre was in a position to provide its expertise in this context to the Community structures, individual States and the economic and social partners.

In spite of this positive vision, 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 status 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 determine 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 the launch of major programmes such as Socrates, Petra, Leonardo and Phare all seemed to be factors that would promote the work of Cedefop. 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).

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

([207]) In 1987 the budget was 6 586 000 ECU, a decrease of approximately 10 %.

leading European body took the decision of moving the seat of the Centre. Germany was now to host the future Central European Bank, and up to this time Greece had no European organisation or institution within its territory. For obvious reasons of establishing a political equilibrium the Council saw it as appropriate for Cedefop to be transferred to Thessaloniki. This sudden decision stunned the Centre and its staff. A few months later Piehl's term of office came to an end and there was a need 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: a 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: '… 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). 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 25th anniversary of its creation: Cedefop and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, based in Dublin, had been the first European agencies. The Centre has been a point of reference for other similar agencies created over the years. Its actions have offered not only a fruitful experience for the officials, experts and politicians involved in promoting vocational training, but also served as an interesting example of development, the challenges and change and renewal in the history of European integration.

8.6. References

Addison, P. *The road to 1945.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1975.

AESC – Archives of the Economic and Social Committee. *Letter of Mr Germozzi to Mr Berns.* 22.7.1969 (AESC 1223/1).

AESC – Archives of the Economic and Social Committee. *Proceedings of the 52nd meeting of the session on social issues, ECOSOC.* 4.2.1970 (AESC 1223/1).

Aldcroft, D. H. *The European economy, 1914-90.* New York: Routledge, 1993, p. 197-248.

Carew, A. *Labour under the Marshall Plan: the politics of productivity and the marketing of management science.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the first meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 23-24 October 1975*. Cedefop Archives, 1975.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the fourth meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 8 July 1976.* Cedefop Archives, 1976a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. Working programme 1977. *Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 15-16 November 1976.* Cedefop Archives, 1976b.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 8 March 1977*. Cedefop Archives, 1977.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the eighth meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 18 January 1978.* Cedefop Archives, 1978a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the 9th meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 14 March 1978.* Cedefop Archives, 1978b.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the 10th meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 7 July 1978.* Cedefop Archives, 1978c.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the 16th meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 10 July 1980.* Cedefop Archives, 1980a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the 17th meeting of the Management Board – Berlin, 14 November 1980.* Cedefop Archives, 1980b.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the Management Board – Berlin, 1 July 1981.* Annex, par. 6. Cedefop Archives, 1981a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1980*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1981b.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Minutes of the discussion of the Management Board of 13 November 1981 on Cedefop's work programme for 1982*. Cedefop Archives, 1982a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1982*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1983.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Essai de diagnostique sur la crise que rèvèle la démission du Comité du Personnel [Diagnosis of the crisis revealed by the resignation of the Staff Committee],* 20.2.1982. Cedefop Archives, 1982c (Riva files, box 1, doc.).

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Lignes de force pour l'organisation du Centre et la politique du personnel [Guidelines for the organisation of the Centre and personnel policy],* 7.6.1982. Cedefop Archives, 1982d (Riva files, box 1, doc.).

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1982*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1983.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1983*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1984.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1984*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1985a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Note for E. Piehl*, 14.10.1985. Cedefop archives, 1985b (Riva files).

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1986*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1987.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1987*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1988a.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Letter from C. Politi to E. Piehl*, 2.11.1988. Cedefop archives, 1988b (Riva files, box 1).

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1989*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1990.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1990*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1991.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1991*. Berlin: Cedefop, 1992.

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1996.* Thessaloniki: Cedefop, 1997

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Annual Report 1998.* Thessaloniki: Cedefop, 1999.

Ciampani, A. *L'altra via per l'Europa; forze sociali e organizzazione degli interessi nell'integrazione europea (1945-1957)*. Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995.

Ciampani, A. (ed.) *La CISL tra integrazione europea e mondializzazione*. Rome: EL, 2001.

Degimbe, J. *La politique sociale européenne du traité de Rome au traité d'Amsterdam.* Brussels: ISE, 1999.

Dundovich, E. *The economic and social committee's contribution to establishing a 'vocational training policy' 1960-1975.* [In this publication.]

Ellwood, D. W. *Rebuilding Western Europe, America and postwar reconstruction.* London/New York: Longman, 1992, p. 138-139.

ESC – Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities. *Annual Report 1974.* Brussels: ESC, 1975, p. 16-17.

Girault, R.; Levy-Leboyer, M. (eds) *Le Plan Marshall et le rélevement économique de l'Europe.* Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France, 1993.

Gobin, C. *L'Europe syndicale.* Brussels: Editions Labor, 1997.

Hick, A. Il tema della politica economice e sociale nel dibattito dei movimenti europeisti. In Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea.* Venice: Marsilio, 2000, p. 24-33.

Kowalsky, W. *Focus on European Social Policy: countering Europessimism.* Brussels: ETUI, 2000.

Le politiche sociali in Europa. CEPR – Centre for Economic Policy Research. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999, p. 20-21.

Mechi, L. Il Comitato Consultativo della CECA. In Varsori, A. (ed.) *Il Comitato Economico e Sociale nella costruzione europea.* Venice: Marsilio, 2000, p. 34-46.

Mechi, L. Una vocazione sociale? Le azioni dell'Alta Autorità della CECA a favore dei lavoratori sotto le presidenze di Jean Monnet e di René Mayer. *Storia delle relazioni internazionali*, 1994/1995, Vol. 10-11, No 2, p. 147-184.

Milward, A. S. *The reconstruction of Western Europe 1945-1951.* London: Methuen, 1984.

Morgan, K. O. *Labour in power 1945-51.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.

Petrini, F. *The common vocational training policy in the EEC from 1961 to 1972*. [In this publication.]

Poidevin, R. (ed.) *Histoire des débuts de la construction européenne Mars 1948 – Mai 1950*. Brussels: Buylant, 1986.

Romero, F. *Emigrazione e integrazione europea 1945-1973.* Rome: EL, 1991.

Schwabe, K. (ed.). *Die Anfänge des Schuman Plans 1950-1951.* Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1988.

Silei, G. *Welfare state e socialdemocrazia: cultura, programmi e realizzazioni in Europa occidentale dal 1945 ad oggi.* Manduria/Bari/Rome: Lacaita, 2000.

Spierenburg, D.; Poidevin, R. *Histoire de la Haute Autorité de la Communauté Européenne du Charbon et de l'Acier: une expérience supranationale.* Brussels: Bruylant, 1993.

Varsori, A. Jean Monnet e il Comitato d'Azione per gli Stati Uniti d'Europa dalle origini ai trattati di Roma (1955-1957). In Ciampani, A. (ed.) *L'altra via per l'Europa. Forze sociali e organizzazione degli interessi nell'integrazione europea (1945-1957)*. Milan: Franco Angeli, 1995, p. 139-170.

Varsori, A. Euratom: une organisation qui échappe à Jean Monnet? In Bossuat, G.; Wilkens, A. (eds) *Jean Monnet, l'Europe et les chemins de la paix.* Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999, p. 343-356.

Varsori, A. Politica e amministrazione nel Comitato Economico e Sociale Europeo. *Storia Amministrazione Costituzione. Annale dell'Istituto per la Scienza dell'Amministrazione Pubblica.* Bologna: Il Mulino, 2000, p. 105-134.

Wollschläger, N. *Leading Europe to training: the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 1975 to 2000*. Thessaloniki: Cedefop, 2000.

9. The role of vocational education and training and Cedefop in EC/EU social policy

Laura Leonardi

9.1. The prospects

A historical reconstruction of the role of vocational education and training (VET) and Cedefop in European social policy, together with the picture as it emerges from a comparative analysis of the evolution of European national VET systems, offers many good starting points for an approach to the subject in terms of the outlook for the near future.

The outlook could, however, be more clearly delineated and a few considerations of a more sociological nature added, in the light of the trends that contemporary European societies have had to deal with for some years now. These include the problems associated with employment and unemployment, which challenge European social policy at different regulatory levels: European, national, regional and local. These trends can be traced back to a single basic challenge for European societies, one that brings the present structural order into question: how to reconcile competitiveness with social cohesion.

Finally, in a more effective approach to prospects, European Employment Strategy (EES) will be another fertile area of reflection from which to consider the future of VET and the role of Cedefop in relation to European Union (EU) policy.

First, let us look at the problem of structural unemployment that has loomed large since the 1970s (Larsson, 2000). It differs in nature in each EU Member State, but structural unemployment is generally seen as a phenomenon closely linked with social exclusion. Research on the problem in Europe (Gallie and Paugam, 2000) has confirmed the relationship between unemployment – especially long-term unemployment – and poverty, affecting the female population in particular.

At the same time, post-Fordist models of labour organisation, characterised by discontinuity of employment and policies of internal and external flexibility, are no longer compatible with social protection systems, which are shown to be weak and inadequate (Supiot, 1999). The complexity and segmentation of job markets often appear as a polarisation of 'insiders' and 'outsiders', making it increasingly difficult to act on supply and demand in employment.

It has important implications that most of the jobs created in recent years are connected to the development of the knowledge society and the new economy. Between 1995 and 2001 (*Employment in Europe 2002*, 2002) employment rose by 2.2 % each year in the high technology sector and by 2.9 % in the knowledge sector. The former has generated over 20 %

of jobs and now employs 11 % of the workforce; the latter has led to the creation of 70 % of new employment, absorbing a third of the total working population. Of those working in the high technology sector, 30 % have a higher level of education, as have 42 % of people employed in the knowledge sector. Combined with these trends is the fact that the knowledge society and the diffusion of new communication technologies raise the level of qualifications and call for continual innovation in skills and knowledge through the constant updating of training.

However, 40 % of the working population is still poorly qualified (20 % of those aged between 25 and 30).

However, alongside the employment created in the more advanced sectors and connected with the information and knowledge societies, forms of poor quality employment – defined as badly paid, unskilled and unstable – also proliferate. Poor quality employment, accounting for approximately a quarter of the employment created, albeit with significant differences between the Member States, provides little opportunity for the individuals doing the jobs to improve their situation and avoid the risk of social exclusion (*Employment in Europe 2001*, 2001; *Employment in Europe 2002*, 2002). As it emerged from the Lisbon Council in 2000, quality of employment ([208]) helps to increase job productivity and social cohesion. An employment policy based on quality has the effect of stimulating business investment in technology and knowledge while enhancing job motivation and satisfaction; it is therefore linked with incentivising and increasing the rate of activity and social inclusion. The present situation is, however, still far from the desired objectives. A quarter of full-time wage-earners in Europe and two thirds of people who work part-time involuntarily are employed on 'poor quality' jobs. Of these workers 25 % become unemployed or inactive in the space of two years, a level five times higher than for workers in skilled jobs. Furthermore, once unemployed, they have few opportunities for entering training programmes or returning to employment (*Employment in Europe 2002*, 2002).

Although these phenomena are to be found in every EU country their impact varies, given the structural diversity of the education and training systems, economic institutions, markets, political and social institutions and the prevalent configuration of regulations. Starting from this empirical observation, a more detailed knowledge and analysis of the differences between European countries has been shown to be more important than a search for similarities in formulating more effective European policies, above all in social policy (Crouch, 1997; Streeck, 2000; Zeitlin and Trubek, 2003).

In relation to these phenomena, VET resources, particularly of a continuous, lifelong nature, are increasingly strategic for entry into employment and adapting skills to the new needs of

([208]) Quality of employment, in the European documents, is a complex notion and is defined in relation to certain key aspects: intrinsic quality of work; qualifications, permanent training and career advancement; equality between the sexes, health and safety in the workplace; flexibility and security; integration and access to the employment market, work organisation; harmonisation of working life and the private sphere; social dialogue and workers' participation; diversification and non-discrimination; overall work services.

the world of production. It should be borne in mind that the level of educational attainment of 40 % of the unemployed in Europe is still below upper secondary level. Furthermore, VET is becoming a strategic instrument for social inclusion: Jacques Delors (*Growth, competitiveness, employment* ..., 1993) had previously stated the importance of establishing a 'right' to education and training, a principle affirmed in Article 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, signed in Nice. VET should therefore be both an instrument for combating unemployment and also a 'citizen's right'. These two aspects are not easy to reconcile on a level of strategic policy ([209]) at a time of recession and the reformulation of consolidated welfare models.

The EES found its inspiration in the White Paper *Growth, competitiveness, employment* ... (1993), was formulated in a pragmatic way in the Essen Strategy (1994), formalised in the Treaty of Amsterdam, and launched in its current form by the Luxembourg Jobs Summit (1997). To mention all the stages that left an imprint and conferred a precise political orientation, reference should also be made to the Councils of Lisbon, Nice and Stockholm. The social agenda adopted by the European Council in Nice called for an in-depth examination of the EES in 2002, five years after its launch, and in Barcelona new guidelines were adopted.

With reference to the EES, the importance of the adoption of the open method of coordination as a new form of governance for employment policy at a European level should be stressed. This should take into account the specific national and regional features of Member States and involve economic, social and political bodies, as well as society in general, in defining and implementing European strategy.

Since its inception, the EES has identified VET as the main instrument for attaining the objectives related to the four pillars ([210]) on which it is based.

In Lisbon, where the objective of reaching 70 % of the total employment rate for the year 2010 was fixed, the Council highlighted the importance of integrating VET policies with other macroeconomic policies, social protection and diffusion of new technology.

The analysis, which evaluates the impact of the EES within the overall situation of European policy, points out that there have been structural improvements in the European employment market, with 10 million jobs created, 6 million of them occupied by women. Unemployment has reduced by 4 million, while the active population has increased by 5 million. Results have also been seen in terms of more employment-intensive economic growth and a faster response by the jobs market to economic and social changes.

([209]) The solution to welfare problems advanced by the Commission moves away from traditional concepts of deregulation and implementation of social policies according to the criteria of the past. To re-establish welfare the promotion of new occupational skills, permanent cultural and vocational training, the enhancement of social participation and responsibility for care become essential. Together with new forms of employment it is necessary to develop new forms of social insertion (Supiot, 1999).

([210]) The four pillars are employability, entrepreneurship, adaptability and equal opportunities.

An evolution in national policies towards the common objectives defined by the guidelines (*Employment in Europe 2002*, 2002) has also been witnessed.

In adopting the paper *Taking stock of five years of European Employment Strategy* (2002), the European Parliament has emphasised the need to modify some aspects of that strategy. In particular it has expressed itself in favour of accepting the Commission Communication that proposes rationalising the coordination of economic policy and employment and reformulating the guidelines on combating two fundamental forms of inequality: between men and women and in access to VET. This latter point was not sufficiently developed under the National Action Plan, particularly in the Southern European countries.

The report on *Employment in Europe 2002* (2002) identifies European social policies for the near future: investing in human resources, reducing the differences between the various regions and inequalities between men and women and improving the quality of employment, which is set as a priority for social policy in the EU as well as in the countries that have applied to join the EU.

It is reasonable to affirm that Cedefop will play a growing role, since VET are factors leading to the integration of the different sectors of political intervention. The European institutions need support in several respects: information, analysis, knowledge and the availability of data on skills, VET systems in Europe, directly connected to the employment markets and the world of business, and the individual's experience of the transition to working life and social inclusion.

The historical reconstruction of its evolution and constant affirmation of its role in relation to the European institutions, and the strategies and priorities that Cedefop has set itself in 2003, suggest its contribution to future European social policy will be fundamental. It already has a strategy that takes an integrated approach to the problems of VET, aiming at the different levels of governance (European, national and regional) and forming relationships with institutional bodies, identified as the social partners, companies, and public and private education and training systems. Cedefop's activities over the last few years have focused on optimising the production of information, research and the dissemination of knowledge, with a view to the knowledge society and to playing an innovative role in existing society. It is exactly what the EU needs to face the present challenges to economic growth and social cohesion in an appropriate manner.

9.2. References

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Medium-term Priorities: 2003-2006.* Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2003. Available from Internet: http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/ download/publication/reference/4022_en.pdf [cited 18.9.2003].

Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *Work-Programme 2003*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2003. Available from Internet: http://www.cedefop.gr/download/cur rent _act/wp2003_4021_en.pdf [cited 18.9.2003].

Crouch, C. Skills-based full employment: the latest philosopher's stone. *British Journal of Industrial Relations,* 1997, No 35, p. 367-391.

Employment in Europe 2001. European Commission. DG for Employment and Social Affairs. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2001.

Employment in Europe 2002. European Commission. DG for Employment and Social Affairs. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2002.

Gallie, D.; Paugam, S. *Welfare regimes and the experience of unemployment in Europe*. Oxford: University Press, 2000.

Growth, competitiveness, employment: the challenges and ways forward into the 21st century: w*hite paper* / European Commission. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1993 (Bulletin of the European Union, Supplement 6).

Larsson, A. *The European employment strategy: a new field for research.* London: European Society of the London School of Economics, 2000.

Streeck, W. *Competitive solidarity: rethinking the 'social model*'. Cologne: Max Planck Institute for the Study of Societies, 2000.

Supiot, A. (ed.) *Au-delà de L'emploi.* Paris, Flammarion, 1999. Published in English as *Beyond employment: changes in work and the future of labour law in Europe.* Oxford: University Press, 2001.]

Taking stock of five years of the European employment strategy. Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2002 (Documents COM, (2002) 416).

Zeitlin, J.; Trubek, D. M. (eds) *Governing work and welfare in a new economy. European and American experiments.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

10. Authors' details

Dr Lorenzo Mechi
Via Mazzini, 1
I-50011 Antella (Firenze)
Tel. (39-055) 62 01 54
e-mail: lorenzomechi@tin.it

Dr Francesco Petrini
Via di Boldrone 88
I-50141 Firenze
Tel. (39-055) 45 08 55
e-mail: francesco.petrini@tiscali.it

Dr Elena Dundovich
Via Scipione Ammirato, 19
I-50136 Firenze
Tel. (39-055) 66 04 90
e-mail: edleone@yahoo.it

Dr Maria Eleonora Guasconi
Via di Città, 43
I-53100 Siena
Tel. (39-0577) 22 35 74
e-mail: eleonora.guasconi@libero.it

Georges Saunier
10 Place du Général Leclerc
F - 94120 Fontenay-sous-Bois
Tel. (33) 685 73 78 68
e-mail: saunier@paris7.jussieu.fr

Dr Vincenzo Romano
Avenue Churchill, 77
B-1180 Bruxelles
Tel. (32-2) 344 22 84

Prof. Antonio Varsori
Università degli studi di Padova
Dipartimento di studi internazionali
Via del Santo 77
I - 35123 Padova
Tel. (39) 049 827 83 82
Fax: (39) 049 827 83 55
e-mail: antonio.varsori@unipd.it

Prof Laura Leonardi
Dipartimento di Scienza Politica e Sociologia
Università di Firenze
Via delle Pandette 21
I-50127 Firenze
tel. 0039-055-4374430
fax 0039-055-4374931
e-mail: leonardi@unifi.it

11. List of abbreviations

AEC	European Cooperation Association
AECS	Archives of the Economic and Social Committee
BAC	Brussels, Commission archives
BBF	*Bundesinstitut fur Berufsbildungsforschung* (Federal Institutes for Research in Vocational Training)
Cedefop	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
CEEP	European Centre of Enterprises with Public Participation and of Enterprises of General Economic Interest
CEREQ	*Centre d'Etudes et de recherches sur les qualifications* [French centre for research on education, training and emplyment]
CFDT	*Confédération Française des Travailleurs*
CGIL	*Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro*
CGT	*Confédération Générale du Travail*
CISL	*Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori* [Italian Confederation of Workers' Trade Unions]
Coreper	Permanent representatives committee
DGB	*Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund* [German Trade Union Confederation]
ECFTU	European Confederation of Free Trade Unions
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EES	European employment strategy
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESC	Economic and Social Committee
ESF	European Social Fund
ETUC	European Trade Union Confederation

ETUS	The European Trade Union Secretariat
EUI	European University Institute
HAEC	Historical Archives of the European Communities
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IISH	International Institute of Social History
ILO	International labour organisation
ISFOL	*Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori* [Institute for the promotion of employee vocational training]
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
UIL	*Unione Italiana del Lavoro*
UNICE	Union of Industrial and Employer's Confederations of Europe
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions

Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training)

Towards a history of vocational education and training (VET) in Europe in a comparative perspective: Proceedings of the first international conference October 2002, Florence. Volume II. The development of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU and the role of Cedefop

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2004

2004 – VI, 108 pp. – 21 x 29.7 cm

(Cedefop Panorama series; 101 – ISSN 1562-6180)

ISBN 92-896-0315-1

Cat. No: TI-13-04-002-EN-C

Free of charge – 5153 EN –

04 05 16 TI-13-04-002-EN-C

This volume gathers the contributions of the second day of the First international conference on the history of vocational education and training (VET) in Europe in a comparative perspective, held in Florence in October 2002.
The overall theme of the conference was the different developments of VET in Europe and the development of EU-social policies, in particular in VET.
The second session of the conference dealt with the development of VET in the context of the construction of the EC/EU and the role of Cedefop. The contributions comprise articles on European social policy, in particular the background for the introduction of a VET policy in the European Coal and Steel Community due to the structural changes in post-war Europe, the subsequent inclusion of a common vocational training policy in the treaty of Rome, followed by the 10 principles and the action programmes of 1965 and 1971. The economic and social committee's contribution to the common policy and that of the unions in the creation of Cedefop is described. A concrete example is given in the article on the role of VET in François Mitterand's idea of a European social space. The volume concludes with an article on the role of VET and Cedefop in EC/EU social policy.

Mette Beyer Paulsen

PANORAMA

Towards a history of vocational education and training (VET) in Europe in a comparative perspective

Proceedings of the first international conference
October 2002, Florence
Volume II

CEDEFOP
European Centre for the
Development of Vocational Training

Europe 123, GR-570 01 Thessaloniki (Pylea)
Postal address: PO Box 22427, GR-551 02 Thessaloniki
Tel. (30) 23 10 49 01 11, Fax (30) 23 10 49 00 20
E-mail: info@cedefop.eu.int
Homepage: www.cedefop.eu.int
Interactive website: www.trainingvillage.gr

Free of charge – On request from Cedefop 5153 EN

Publications Office
Publications.eu.int

ISBN 92-896-0315-1
9 789289 603157