

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

concerning an action programme for the vocational qualification of
young people and their preparation for adult and working life

(presented by the Commission)

SUMMARY

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND
THEIR PREPARATION FOR ADULT AND WORKING LIFE

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COMMISSION COMMUNICATION TO THE COUNCIL

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This Communication is the Commission's response to the request expressed in the Conclusions of the Council of 14 December 1989, inviting the Commission to prepare proposals for measures to adapt and reinforce existing Community programmes in technical and vocational education and initial training, to be based on an analysis of these programmes.
2. The Commission has taken account of a number of other significant developments in this field. First, the adoption of the Social Charter by the Heads of State or Government of 11 Member States at the European Council in Strasbourg on 9 December 1989, incorporating an entitlement by young people to receive initial vocational training of sufficient duration to enable them to adapt to the requirements of their future working life.
3. Secondly, in its Resolution of 16 February 1990, the European Parliament called for stronger Community programmes in support of the education and training of young people at school or following vocational training courses, since existing Community programmes are geared mainly to university students; and the use of partnership projects between schools, universities, training establishments and industry in the Member States, in order to reach a larger range of young people and to encourage mobility.
4. In addition, the Commission has taken account of the Council's wish that proposals on the future of the Young Workers Exchange Programme should be brought forward before 31 March 1991, and the present Communication covers the Commission's response on that point.
5. The Commission has also noted the views expressed by unions and employers organisations in the on-going Social Dialogue, in regard to education and training. In their Joint Opinion of 26 January 1990, the Social Partners emphasised

that high-quality education and initial vocational training, leading to recognised qualifications, were essential if young people were to be successfully integrated into working and economic life and to benefit from continuing training. They noted the potential contribution of improved initial training to the efficiency of firms, and to reducing the threat of youth unemployment, and emphasised the contribution which they themselves could make to helping schools take greater account of the realities of working life, through close links between firms and educational establishments.

6. The Commission has also taken account of the views of the Industrial Research and Development Advisory Committee (IRDAC) regarding the importance of closer links and cooperation between industry and schools of all kinds, for young people's preparation to enter the world of work; for the development of a well-informed understanding of industry on the part of teachers and pupils alike; and for their familiarisation with current practice in technical education and training.

7. Special account has also been taken of the Council Resolution of 29 May 1990 on action to assist the long-term unemployed and the need to develop stronger preventive measures through linked guidance and training arrangements. The European Council at its meeting in Dublin on 25-26 June 1990 recalled that, despite the recent significant improvement in general economic conditions, long-term unemployment among adults and young people remained a major problem.

8. The proposals take full account of the Opinion adopted by the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training at its meeting on 7-8 June 1990 (annexed). They also take account of the views of the National Policy Coordinators for the Action Programme for the vocational training of Young People and their Preparation for Adult and Working Life (PETRA) who, at their special meeting on 5 July 1990, considered the future of the Programme.

9. The Commission's own policies, and its own medium-term policy guidelines for education and training in the 1990s, reflect growing recognition of the fundamental and long-term contribution to the development of the Community which must be played by the education and training systems, including preparing young people for greater mobility and helping equip them with new types of qualification.

10. With this in mind, the Commission undertook, in its 1990 Programme of Work, to rationalise and coordinate its Action Programmes on vocational and continuing training. A Communication (COM(90)334 final) on this point has been transmitted to the Council for information, emphasising the area of initial vocational education and training and guidance for young people, as one of the main targets for such rationalisation and coordination.

11. In view of these developments and taking account of the new challenges to be faced by vocational training, the Commission is convinced of the need to establish a coherent set of actions to ensure that all young people can receive a period of vocational training leading to a recognised qualification. The Commission is equally concerned to promote a strong European dimension within such training, particularly by establishing opportunities for transnational exchange of young people in initial vocational training below tertiary education level, and for young workers. To be effective, such opportunities must be made available, progressively, to a proportion of the target population comparable to that being achieved for university-level students through the ERASMUS Programme. To attain this ambitious target, and thereby respond to the legitimate expectations of young Europeans and the requests of the Council, the European Parliament and the social partners, an overall strategy will be needed, mobilising and synergising all the resources which the Commission can call on in support of the vocational training and qualification of young people.

For this reason, in addition to the deployment of the European Social Fund in support of vocational training the Commission approved, on 8 August 1990, a Community Initiative entitled "EUROFORM" (SEC 1570 final) to provide, within the framework of the Fund, substantial new resources for the development of transnational cooperation and exchanges in the vocational training field, particularly for the benefit of young job seekers.

The following proposals outline further Community action to complement these measures, through developing transnational cooperation for the benefit of young people in initial vocational training and young workers, and especially by providing opportunities for transnational training exchanges for 100,000 such young people, during the period 1992-94.

II. THE CHALLENGES OF THE 1990s

12. In the 1990s, the development of a common vocational training policy, as called for in Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome has to face a number of new challenges in regard to initial training:

- first, new emphasis is being placed, at policy level in all Member States, on the importance of effective and high quality systems of initial training for the achievement of their economic and social policies. The need to adapt vocational training to economic and industrial change and to absorb and exploit the latest developments in new technologies is seen as a growing priority, at all levels of qualification and for people with different kinds of ability;

- second, the adoption of the Single European Act which came into effect on 1 January 1987 has added to the urgency felt in most Member States to develop, or improve, initial vocational training in response to the needs of national economies preparing for the completion of the Internal Market and increased global competition. Even more than before, it is now necessary to introduce a European dimension into the processes of training and systems of qualification.

- third, on the ground, "1992" has stimulated an upsurge of interest in European aspects of training and demand for more opportunities for transnational cooperation and networking including European exchanges of training staff and young people. The new needs of a truly European integrated market should be met, namely, by the corresponding creation of trans-European networks, particularly in the field of training. This has been highlighted recently in the Council's Resolution of 22 January 1990 and backed by the European Council meetings in Strasbourg and Dublin.

13. The implementation of a comprehensive and coherent policy at Community level for the training of young people, at or before their entry into employment, is therefore seen by the Commission as an urgent and important task, underpinning its policy in the field of continuing lifelong training. The key priorities for such policy should be:

- Improved access and participation. Member States are already very actively engaged in developing policies and strategies to increase the participation of young people in initial vocational training. But available data indicates great disparities between them, in terms of the proportion of young people staying on

in education or training after completion of full-time compulsory school. For 16-year-olds, the lowest retention rates were between 50% and 60% in 1985/86, compared to over 85% in most Member States (some nearer 100%); for 17-year-olds retention rates varied between 40% and over 90%, and for 18-year-olds between 30% and 80%. These figures demonstrate that many Member States have not yet reached a situation where all young people have the benefit of two or more years vocational training after their full-time compulsory education. Though the situation may have improved since then, these figures highlight the need for continuous efforts both nationally and at Community level to enlarge provision for initial training, to facilitate young people's access to it, and to enhance its status and attractiveness to young people.

- Responding to demographic change. Strategies aimed at developing high-quality training and vocational education and training will have to be implemented at a time when the numbers of young people are falling rapidly. For every 100 young people in the 15-19 age-range in 1990, i.e. the main target group for initial training, there will be 88 in 1995 and 84 in the year 2000. This implies the necessity to improve and diversify general education and vocational training to ensure the optimal use of quantitatively reduced human resources.

- New forms of training partnership. New forms of training partnership involving different training providers, firms, trades unions, local authorities, local development agencies and other promoters of local and regional development, will have to be used more widely, so as to mobilise all the training resources available at local, regional and national levels. Only then will it be possible to meet the pressure for more investment in the training of young people, and to achieve the improvements in quality and diversity of provision which are needed. Partnership at local and regional levels can also help solve problems related to the high cost of the equipment needed to modernise courses involving new technology.

- Reducing regional disparities. Severe regional disparities exist in training provision. Alarming high levels of youth unemployment co-exist alongside areas with skill shortages. In addition to ensuring adequate investment in training in the disadvantaged areas particularly through the Community's Structural Policies, much can also be achieved by promoting transnational European cooperation to enable the transfer of training know-how and expertise, relevant to their development needs and possibilities, into the priority regions.

- Improved quality of training. It is increasingly clear that the impact of restructuring of industry, changes in work organisation within firms, and the introduction of new technology will mean an increase in demand for more highly-qualified young people, and a decrease in job opportunities for the unqualified. This has important long-term implications for the structure and content of courses, as well as for preparation for training within compulsory schooling, especially in relation to the need for entrants to have higher levels of general education, and for courses to emphasise certain general or polyvalent qualities such as adaptability, independence, initiative and the capacity to "learn how to learn", as well as the need for continuing training.

- Raising the status of technical and vocational education and training. Raising the status and public esteem of such training, so as to make it more attractive to young people and their families in terms of a real alternative to upper secondary general education, is an important policy objective for the 1990s. This has many implications, including the need to build better bridges between technical/vocational and other types of education and training, and to provide those in technical/vocational education/training with better preparation for further training, including the possibility of entry into higher education.

- Increased cooperation with industry. The need for partnership and closer working links between schools and firms is essential for the effective use of the alternance-based approaches to training now widely adopted, and for the proper functioning of the education and training system at all levels. There are many good examples in some Member States of ways of achieving closer cooperation and better mutual understanding between the world of industry and schools of all types. Such links are designed to improve young people's chances of successful entry into training and the world of work, and now need to be made a general and regular feature of education/training systems, with Community-level action in support of national initiatives and the active involvement of the Social Partners. In addition, throughout the Community there is a growing interest in ensuring that young people have the entrepreneurial skills necessary to prepare for a labour market where many of them will be working for small and medium-sized companies.

- Training more girls in technical and scientific fields. It is recognised that it is no longer simply a question of providing equal access to training for both girls and boys. There is a need to undertake specific measures to encourage

girls to make their vocational choices from a wider range of options than those traditionally perceived by them. This involves a lengthy process of attitude change, amongst the young people themselves and with their families. Clearly, however, major changes of attitudes and behaviour are also required on the part of employers, affecting recruitment practice, working conditions and career development, so that girls and young women have their choice rewarded if they enter a non-traditional field.

- Giving guidance services a European dimension. The completion of the Single Market will change occupational structures and labour markets, and make it necessary for the first time for educational and vocational guidance services to develop a European dimension, so that they can provide information on opportunities for both training and employment in other Member States. New forms of European training for guidance specialists need to be developed and European networks and data-bases set up, exploiting the full potential of new information technologies.

- Strengthening European aspects of training. Introducing a strong European dimension into the training of young people is a vital condition for the successful functioning of the Internal Market and the establishment of a people's Europe. Community policies to achieve this must be aimed at continuing and intensifying the efforts to promote European mobility, comparability of vocational qualifications and, as far as possible, the development and recognition of common European qualifications or training modules, as well as generally improving linkages and coherence between the national training systems.

III. CURRENT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES AIMED AT IMPROVING EUROPEAN COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE IN THE FIELD OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND INITIAL TRAINING

14. In responding to these challenges, a major part of the strategy of the Community must be to strengthen European cooperation on central issues of common concern. In operational terms, this means increasing Community support for practical transnational collaboration between training institutions or local training partnerships, and in particular structured exchanges of young people in initial training and their trainers. The Commission sees development in this field as a most profitable and concrete way to increase mutual awareness, and transparency, of training systems and processes in the Member States, and to

generate the practical experience which will help training providers and employers to recognise and accept the comparability of vocational qualifications.

Against this background, the Commission has examined carefully national initiatives in the field of youth exchanges which have a training goal and, at the same time, as requested by the Council, its existing programmes which have a bearing on technical and vocational education and training, in order to arrive at measures which will both reinforce and simplify these programmes and enhance their value as the Community's response to the needs of the 1990s.

15. As far as Member States are concerned, reliable quantitative data does not exist in a comprehensive form. However, such information as is available has led to the following conclusions:

- at present, the scale of structured training exchanges for young trainees is minimal, and participation in such as do exist is very unbalanced between Member States. In a few countries, the number of young people who benefit from a training placement abroad may be as high as 1% of the total number of young people in initial vocational training, but in most not even that;

- existing exchange programmes are not usually aimed at providing qualifying training periods abroad which form an integral or recognised part of a training course; much more common are short information or study visits, or short visits aimed at improving language learning;

- transnational links between training institutions, of the kind which exist between many universities, and which are necessary to provide the organisational framework for youth training placements, are rare in the initial training field;

- Member States have made some investment in this field, but, with the exception of the Franco-German Youth Exchange, there are no large-scale transnational programmes.

16. The extent to which the Commission's activities are concerned with initial training, and especially exchange activities in this field, can be seen from the following analysis. In particular:

- LINGUA : will support exchanges of pupils in technical/vocational education/training courses for language-learning only.
- COMETT & ERASMUS : can support exchanges of students and trainers, and the development of teaching materials, in higher technical education/training. But both are aimed at university-level training and are not concerned with initial training in technical/vocational schools.
- EUROTECNET: includes support for demonstration projects, and transnational exchange of experience in vocational training, initial or continuing, where there is a substantial new technology element, and which is targetted at young unemployed and those in employment, aged 18-25.
- IRIS : supports transnational cooperation on vocational training for women. The extent of its involvement with initial training for girls and young women is small.
- Youth for Europe : provides exchange opportunities for young people aged 15-25 in the areas of youth work and informal education, but outside mainstream education or training institutions.

The extent of these contributions to the field of technical and vocational education, apprenticeship and other forms of initial training for young people in addition to their full-time compulsory education is clearly limited. Most of them are not, or only marginally concerned with this field or target group (COMETT, ERASMUS, IRIS, Youth for Europe). In the case of LINGUA, exchanges of young people in vocational training are restricted to language training. Community action initiated under the EUROTECNET programme is primarily focused on training in new technology areas.

Of greater direct significance to the wider needs in technical and vocational education and training are the Young Workers Exchange Programme, and the PETRA Programme.

17. The existing Young Workers Exchange programme provides short and long exchanges, related to a particular economic sector, for 18 to 28-year-olds who are either employed or seeking employment. Up to now, the purpose has been to better equip these young people for employment, by a period of study and/or work experience in another Member State (4,000 exchanges in 1989). The Commission's

interim report and its evaluation of the programme indicate that these exchanges have very positive effects on the participant's career prospects and attitudes to mobility, but that short-term exchanges do not exploit the full potential of the programme. Future activities in this field will therefore focus on medium/long exchanges (i.e. at least three months), thereby increasing the potential vocational training benefits to participants. It is proposed to assimilate opportunities for exchanges of young workers into a wider framework of Community action in the field of initial vocational training, rather than continue to provide them as a separate activity. Care will be taken to build on the positive experience of the young worker exchanges, carried out over many years, and on improving their organisation and the preparation of participants, thereby providing new vocational experiences and enabling the acquisition of new vocational skills.

18. The main thrust of Community initiative in the field of initial training should be through the further development of the PETRA Programme for the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life. Set up under the Council Decision of 1.12.1987, the PETRA Programme embraces a wider set of policy objectives, including the development of transnational exchanges, and of other forms of cooperation which provide a framework for effective integration of exchanges into the training process. It can also provide the right context for the future organisation of young workers exchanges, putting a higher premium on the training component of the work experience abroad.

19. The PETRA Programme, as developed in 1988 and 1989:

- covers the whole field of initial youth training, i.e. technical and vocational education based in schools or colleges, apprenticeships and other forms of training courses and vocational preparation;
- is aimed at all young people who, after completion of full-time compulsory general school, wish to undergo vocational education and training, as well as teachers/instructors, educational administrators, partners from the industrial world (trades unions and firms) and other actors in the training field;
- involves both education and labour authorities in the management and implementation of the programme;

- places a major emphasis on the development of European cooperation and trans-national partnership between vocational education and training establishments of different kinds, including the exchange of young people and staff.

20. The action elements of the Programme so far have been mainly:

- a European Network of Training Partnerships, linking projects from the different Member States, to stimulate practical cooperation within the Community and to raise awareness of European aspects of training. More than 150 projects are now engaged in structured bilateral or multilateral cooperation; almost all of them involve the exchange of training staff, two-thirds involve exchanges of young people, and 80% are aimed at the joint production of training modules, or training or guidance material. To these must be added 90 further projects, which were admitted in 1990 and are now in their preparatory "contact" phase. In total, more than 240 projects are currently receiving financial and technical support from the Commission, to enable them to participate in the European Network;

- support for "Youth Initiative" projects, in which young people themselves are involved in the planning, organisation and implementation of projects with an education/training or vocational information component. Such projects also develop initiative and enterprise in young people. Up to now, more than 500 projects have received small (non-renewable) grants from the Commission; another 100 projects will be supported in 1990. The Commission has also taken steps to network these projects, to promote exchange of experience and to increase young people's awareness of the Community;

- European collaboration on research into the effectiveness of national training policies. At the Commission's request, 43 research institutes had been nominated by Member States in 1989 to cooperate on a number of themes and specific studies reflecting current priorities of the PETRA Programme. The Commission provides financial, and technical support to facilitate this cooperation;

- expansion of Exchanges for Vocational Training Specialists.

In 1989, the first full year of operation, the budget for the Programme was 9.5 MECU.

21. These elements are more fully described in the Commission's Interim Report, on the PETRA Programme, requested by the Council and submitted in March 1990, and the supporting technical document on which it was based. The Report showed that a major objective of the Decision of 1 December 1987, i.e. the commitment to provide one year's training to all young people, has in most Member States been broadly fulfilled. But it also highlighted the important fact that courses of one year's duration generally do not provide the breadth of training required for a recognised vocational qualification nor, in most cases, the foundations on which further training can be built.

22. It is clear that, with some changes, PETRA can be adapted to provide a composite response to the challenges described above in that it already addresses appropriate policy objectives, target groups and types of transnational action. In the period since its launch in 1988, the Programme has demonstrated its capacity to make a significant contribution to the further development of Member States' policies in initial training through its support to major national initiatives and programmes. It has also already proved of value by stimulating awareness of the potential European dimension in initial vocational training, by increasing experience and know-how in regard to exchanges and transnational partnerships; by identifying themes for technical cooperation, related to different client groups in initial training; and by stimulating developments which will lead to new "European" forms of training. A further report, with an evaluation of these and other aspects, will be prepared in 1991.

It is clear, however, that in its present form and with its existing budget, it cannot make a significant quantitative impact on the development of European cooperation in initial training comparable to that generated by, for instance, the COMETT and ERASMUS programmes in their respective fields.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

23. In response to the Council's request "for measures to adapt and reinforce existing programmes" and in the light of its Memorandum on the rationalisation and coordination of its vocational training programmes, the Commission proposes to consolidate and extend the existing PETRA Programme so as to include the Programme for the Exchange of Young Workers, giving it the following more ambitious qualitative and quantitative objectives:

- to promote all forms of initial vocational training leading to a recognised vocational qualification and, taking account of the deficiencies inherent in training courses of only one year's duration, to support national policies designed to offer all young people, who so wish, two or more years' initial vocational training;
- to increase the development of a European dimension in technical and vocational education and other forms of initial training;
- to intensify cooperation in initial training with special emphasis on a substantial development of European training exchanges for young people, including exchanges of young workers, with the aim of achieving 100,000 non-university exchanges in the three years of the Programme now proposed, a number comparable with that envisaged by ERASMUS for university students;
- to ensure coherence and complementarity with action implemented in the framework of the Community's Structural Policies, particularly the EUROFORM initiative.

24. The adaptation of the existing PETRA Programme offers the most appropriate framework to attain these objectives and to serve as the catalyst for drawing together the experience of the Member States in promoting common policies in the field of initial vocational training. It will therefore address the following target groups:

- young people in technical or vocational education, apprenticeships, or other forms of initial training leading to a recognised vocational qualification;
- young workers up to the age of 25, i.e. young people who are already in employment and who wish to complement their initial training with a period of work experience abroad.

The Programme deliberately does not concern itself with young job seekers and the young unemployed since they represent major target groups for actions implemented on a complementary basis, within the framework of the Community's Structural Policies and in particular, the EUROFORM initiative.

25. The Programme should be consolidated to comprise the following two main types of action:

Action A: Enlarged support for transnational and transfrontier projects aimed at improving technical and vocational education, apprenticeships and other forms of initial training, which have a European dimension consisting of:

- vocational training or work experience placements abroad for young people in initial training and their trainers, and for young workers,
- joint training of trainers,
- joint development of European training modules, and of qualifications/certificates related to them.

In operational terms this will involve:

- strengthening and extending the existing European Network of Training Partnerships, including support for youth initiative projects, to provide a platform for both the organisation of exchanges and for the joint development of other forms of partnership;

- providing special support for training and work experience placements abroad both for young people in initial vocational training and for young workers. The number of placements supported should be substantially increased, so as to grow to 16,000 in 1992, and up to 36,000 in 1993 and 48,000 in 1994, i.e. a total of 100,000 placements over the three years, of which, 20,000 will be provided for young workers.

This increased level will significantly enlarge the current, limited, training exchange opportunities in the Community for young people in the 16-19 age range who are in technical or vocational education or other forms of initial training and for young workers. It will also create the basis of experience required to develop a medium-term strategy in this area and will complement those provided for young unemployed and young job seekers within the framework of the EUROFORM initiative. Placements on this scale, which will benefit about 2% of young people in initial vocational training, are an important step towards achieving similar participation rates to those envisaged by the ERASMUS Programme, for students in tertiary education.

The exchange of initial vocational training specialists will continue to form part of PETRA. The thematic focus of these exchanges will be directly related to exploring methods, fields and outcomes of European cooperation in the area of initial training.

Action B: Further development of vocational information and guidance with a European dimension, e.g.

- supporting national contact points/centres to network the exchange of guidance data, and to explore effective methods for the transfer of guidance information throughout the Community;

- providing training for guidance counsellors/specialists, on European aspects.

26. In addition, the necessary arrangements will be made, at central and decentralised levels, for the networking of initiatives supported under the Programme; support of comparative research; the dissemination of results; technical assistance to implement the Programme; the evaluation of its development and its outcomes.

27. Almost all the types of action proposed are already being carried out, on a small scale, under the current PETRA Programme. The Commission's proposals do not imply, therefore, the need for major changes to the existing Decision, even though the relaunching of the Programme in this new expanded phase requires some re-statement of its new and broader objectives, and expanded modalities for action.

28. In accordance with its recent proposals to rationalise its action programmes in the training field, it is proposed that the Commission shall be assisted by a Committee of an advisory nature comprising two representatives from each Member State and chaired by a representative of the Commission. Twelve representatives, appointed by the Commission on the basis of proposals from the organisations representing both sides of industry at Community level, shall participate in the work of the Committee as observers, in view of the importance of full participation by industry in the training process and the preparation of young people for working life.

29. This Communication is accompanied by a proposal for a Council Decision and a technical annex relating to the proposed measures, and a financial record containing the corresponding financial estimates.

OPINION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING, ON INITIAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

"1. In the course of the meeting on 7 - 8 June 1990 the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training continued the discussion, already begun on 11 - 12 December 1989 on initial vocational training in the European Community. The discussion took place on the basis of the following documents:

- vocational education and initial training of young people in the European Community - proposal for a consolidation and development of the PETRA programme (doc. Nr. TFRH 124/90);

- interim report on the implementation of the Council Decision of 1 December 1987 concerning an action programme on the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life (PETRA programme) presented by the Commission to the Council, to the European Parliament and to the Economic and Social Committee (doc. SEC(90) 432 final of 13 March 1990).

2. During the discussion account was taken of the political, economic and social context which governed the Commission's intention to consolidate and build upon the efforts already undertaken in the initial training area. The Committee expressed the following opinion.

3. In the first place, the Committee underlines its attachment to the carrying out of the principle inscribed in the Charter of fundamental social rights of workers adopted by the Heads of State or Government of eleven Member States during the European Council at Strasbourg on 9 December 1989: "Following the end of compulsory education, young people must be entitled to receive initial vocational training of a sufficient duration to enable them to adapt to the requirements of their future working life; for young workers, such training should take place during working hours."

4. Furthermore, the Committee is particularly pleased at the conclusions of the Education Council of 14 December 1989 in which the Council requested the Commission:

o to make an inventory evaluating all current Community programmes with a direct or indirect bearing on technical and vocational education and training;

o to prepare proposals within the budgetary resources of the Community for measures to adapt and reinforce existing programmes and in the light of the results of the evaluation to implement a package of specific measures.

5. The Committee also notes that the Social Partners meeting at European level in the framework of the Social Dialogue and through their Joint Opinion of 26 January 1990, stressed the necessity, on the one hand, to improve and develop initial vocational training and on the other hand, to ensure that this is fully qualifying and recognised so that it will encourage social integration and constitute a solid basis for continuing training throughout active life.

6. The Committee shares the fundamental objectives expressed by the Social Partners in the framework of the Social Dialogue, and points out that it is important that the common policy of vocational training, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity to which it attaches the greatest importance, should include a large programme on initial vocational training following the example of these programmes which exist for continuing training, training for new technologies and for university-level training. The Committee stresses that a balance should be achieved between these essential parts of the general structure of the common policy of vocational training.

7. The Committee is pleased that the Commission, as announced in its work programme for 1990 as it emerges from the document which it has submitted to the Committee, intends to submit a quick reply to the invitation of the Education Council of 14 December 1989.

8. In the course of its debate on this document, the Committee noted that, in the framework of the inventory of Community action in the field of technical and vocational training and within the wider area of initial vocational training in general, PETRA is currently seen to be the main Community initiative in this field and that it provides a broad framework to contribute significantly to the development of a common vocational training policy. PETRA fulfils a vital role in implementing the Council Decision of 1 December 1987 in that it is designed:

- o to assist Member States in ensuring that all young people who so wish receive a substantial and qualifying period of vocational education and training, after completion of their full-time compulsory education;
- o to improve the quality of initial training through diversified forms of practical European cooperation.

9. The Committee considers that the PETRA Programme is well placed to contribute to the development of Member States' policies by promoting innovative training initiatives and stimulating the transfer and dissemination of positive experience and good practice. It is noted that almost all PETRA-projects form part of major national initiatives or reform activities in the vocational training field.

In terms of its thematic and operational priorities, PETRA endorses strongly the concerns of the social partners with regard to the need for initial vocational training courses to provide an integrated package involving:

- o training in sectoral skills and knowledge, both broad and specific,
- o a general education element, and
- o a vocational guidance component.

Through its emphasis on training placements abroad, for both young people and their trainers, and on the joint development of training modules and programmes, PETRA is also well placed to strengthen the development of a European dimension in initial vocational training. In this respect, PETRA can offer an appropriate platform for responding to the Council conclusions of 14 December 1989.

10. In the meanwhile, the Committee judges that the current very restricted budgetary limits on the programme risk affecting the potential of PETRA which should be developed to respond fully to the request of the Education Council of 14 December 1989.

11. Taking account of the document which the Commission presented to it, the consolidation and development of PETRA could be focused on the following lines:

- o assist national systems to develop policies, structures and procedures which are responsive to the changing needs of the European economy and ensure the maximum participation of young people in high quality training;
- o facilitate mobility, and comparability of qualifications, by providing opportunities of many kinds, formal and informal, for users and providers of training to familiarise themselves with the system and content of training in other Member States;

o stimulate and assist the development of initial training, in both the technical and vocational sectors, which is European in character;

o promote the use of partnerships, twinning between institutions, and transnational cooperative action, to develop training materials, course elements/modules, and common certificates;

o promote and assist training placements transnationally, of key training staff, and students, as a contribution to the gradual evolution of a more European system of training;

o promote and disseminate information on innovation and good practice in regard to all aspects of provision.

12. In developing the PETRA programme along these lines, the Committee is of the opinion that particular emphasis should be placed on rationalisation and improved coordination of current and future Community initiatives in the vocational training field, with due regard to the Council Conclusions of 14 December 1989 and the considerations of the working group on education and training of the Social Dialogue.

13. Account should be taken, in the development of Community resources for initiatives in initial vocational education and training, of the increased demand for practical European cooperation, and of financial support which may be available through the Structural Funds, especially the ESF, so as to increase the scope for action in this field.

14. In conclusion, the Committee shares the objectives and the proposed actions contained in the above mentioned Commission document, but it stresses that the "consolidated" PETRA programme should clearly demonstrate the subsidiarity and the added value of its action with regard to national actions."

comply with this Directive not later than 31 December 1992.

Member States shall lay down the manner in which such reference shall be made.

When the Member States adopt such provisions they shall contain a reference to this Directive or shall be accompanied by such a reference on official publication. The

Article 12

This Directive is addressed to the Member States.

Proposal for a Council Decision concerning an action programme for the vocational qualification of young people and their preparation for adult and working life

COM(90) 467 final

(Submitted by the Commission on 15 October 1990)

(90/C 322/05)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 128 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Whereas the fundamental objectives of the common vocational training policy set down in the second principle in Council Decision 63/266/EEC ⁽¹⁾ refer, in particular to the need to guarantee adequate vocational training for all and to avoid any harmful interruption between completion of general education and commencement of vocational training;

Whereas the tenth principle in Decision 63/266/EEC states that special measures may be taken in respect of special problems concerning specific sectors of activity or specific categories of persons;

Whereas the Council, by Decision 87/569/EEC ⁽²⁾, adopted an action programme for the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life (Petra), for a period of five years commencing 1 January 1988; whereas the Commission has presented an interim report on the implementation of this Decision;

Whereas the Council, by Decision 84/636/EEC ⁽³⁾, adopted a third joint programme for the exchange of young workers in the Community up to 31 December 1990;

whereas the Commission has submitted an evaluation report on the programme; whereas the Council, by Decision 90/268/EEC ⁽⁴⁾, extended the programme up to 31 December 1991 with a view to taking a decision later on an overall Commission proposal concerning initial vocational training including follow-up of the young workers exchange programme; and whereas it is the responsibility of the Member States, under Article 50 of the Treaty, to encourage, within the framework of a joint programme, the exchange of young workers;

Whereas the Community Charter of the fundamental social rights of workers, adopted at the European Council in Strasbourg on 9 December 1989 by the Heads of State and Governments of 11 Member States, declares in point 23 that, 'following the end of compulsory education, young people must be entitled to receive initial vocational training of a sufficient duration to enable them to adapt to the requirements of their future working life; for young workers, such training should take place during working hours';

Whereas the conclusions of the Council and Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council of 14 December 1989 ⁽⁵⁾, stressed the importance of the issues at stake in technical and vocational education and initial training and asked the Commission to propose ways in which cooperation can be achieved in this area;

Whereas the European Parliament adopted, on 15 March 1989, a resolution on the social dimension of the internal

⁽¹⁾ OJ No 63, 20. 4. 1963, p. 1338/63.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 346, 10. 12. 1987, p. 31.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 331, 19. 12. 1984, p. 36.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No L 156, 21. 6. 1990, p. 8.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ No C 27, 6. 2. 1990, p. 4.

market ⁽¹⁾ in which it emphasizes the need to encourage transnational vocational training initiatives;

Whereas the European Parliament, in its resolution of 16 February 1990 on Community education and training programmes ⁽²⁾, expressed concern about the fact that young people do not have equal opportunities in this area since existing Community programmes are geared mainly to university students rather than young people at school or following vocational training courses, who are in the majority;

Whereas, by their joint opinion of 26 January 1990, the social partners, in the framework of the Social Dialogue, emphasized the importance of high-quality education and initial vocational training leading to recognized qualifications as an essential and irreplaceable condition for successful integration of young people into working and economic life;

Whereas, in response to the requests of both the Council and the European Parliament, there is a need to strengthen and extend the Community's experience in the field of initial vocational training with the aim of supporting the development of national policies in, and of adding a European dimension to, this field;

Whereas there is a need to stimulate exchange of experience between Member States, and diversified forms of practical transnational cooperation between training institutions, including periods of training or work experience abroad, as a contribution to the achievement of the internal market and the elimination of barriers to the free movement of persons in the Community, and to the creation of trans-European networks in a frontier-free Europe;

Whereas there is a need to respond to new challenges facing initial vocational education and training, in particular by raising its status, adapting its content, increasing its coherence and flexibility, stimulating cooperation between its providers, strengthening apprenticeship and work-based training, improving vocational guidance and attracting more girls and young women into technical and scientific fields;

Whereas this action programme should be organized in such a way that it interacts with the tasks and actions of the European Social Fund ⁽³⁾ as well as with the other vocational training programmes;

Whereas this action programme should, in its implementation, take account of the specific problems of the different

regions and target groups by ensuring a balanced development of the measures;

Whereas the Commission has adopted a memorandum on the rationalization and coordination of vocational training programmes at Community level,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Decision 87/569/EEC is hereby amended as follows:

1. Article 1 is replaced by the following:

'Article 1

1. A programme is hereby adopted for a three-year period from 1 January 1992 to support and supplement, through measures at Community level, the policies and activities of the Member States in doing their utmost to ensure that all young people in the Community who so wish receive two or more years' vocational training leading to recognized vocational qualifications, in addition to their full-time compulsory education.

2. The programme is also intended to:

- (a) raise the standards and quality of technical and vocational education and initial training, diversify vocational training provision so as to offer choice for young people with different levels of ability, and enhance the capacity of vocational training systems to adapt to rapid economic, technological and social change;
- (b) add a Community dimension to vocational qualifications, taking account of the need to promote comparability of these qualifications between the Member States;
- (c) stimulate and support practical cooperation and the development of training partnerships, both transnationally and within each Member State, between training providers, industry and other promoters of local and regional development, so as to achieve a more effective use of training resources, improve the transfer of experience and increase awareness of the European aspects to be taken into account in the development of initial vocational training;
- (d) develop opportunities for young people in technical and vocational education or other forms of initial training, and for young workers, to benefit from periods of training or work experience in other

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 96, 17. 4. 1989, p. 61.

⁽²⁾ OJ No C 68, 19. 3. 1990, p. 175.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 185, 15. 12. 1988, p. 9.

Member States, so as to add a European dimension to their training and to increase their mobility at Community level;

- (e) introduce a European dimension into the systems and processes of vocational information and guidance.'

2. Articles 3 and 4 are replaced by the following:

'Article 3

In order to achieve the objectives stated in Article 1 and to support and complement the activities of the Member States referred to in Article 2, the Commission shall make a contribution by means of the following measures, which are aimed at adding a Community dimension to the design and implementation of vocational training policies in the Member States:

1. support for transnational cooperation between initiatives of the kind set out in Article 2, including specific assistance to those involving young people in their planning, organization and implementation, which encourage the personal and vocational development of young people in vocational and technical education or other forms of initial training, and of young workers, who have left the education and training system, through cooperative or integrated vocational education, training and guidance measures. Such cooperation shall in particular promote within the Community:

— vocational training or work experience placements abroad for young people in initial training and young workers,

— joint training of trainers, and

— joint development of European training modules, and of qualifications and certificates related to them;

2. support for measures aimed at introducing a European dimension into the processes and systems of vocational information and guidance, in particular by:

— supporting national contact points or centres, to create a network for the exchange of guidance data, and to explore effective methods for the transfer of up-to-date guidance information throughout the Community,

— providing training for guidance counsellors/specialists on European aspects of guidance;

3. technical assistance, as necessary, in the implementation of this programme, comparative studies on vocational education and training issues, including surveys on the effectiveness of youth training programmes, and review of the evolution of vocational qualifications.

The Commission shall implement the programme in accordance with the provisions set out in the Annex.

The Commission shall draw upon the assistance of the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training in the implementation of this programme, subject to the conditions laid down in Council Regulation (EEC) No 337/75 of 10 February 1975 establishing a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (*).

(*) OJ No L 39, 13.2.1975, p. 1.

Article 4

1. The results of the measures taken pursuant to Article 3 shall be subject to objective external assessment, consisting of:

(a) an interim evaluation during 1994, and

(b) a final evaluation during 1995.

2. Before 30 June 1993 and before 30 June 1995, the Member States shall send to the Commission a report on the steps taken to implement the common framework of guidelines laid down in Article 2, including information on current arrangements to promote initial vocational training.

3. The Commission shall present an interim report before the end of 1993 and a final report before the end of 1995, including an overall evaluation of the implementation of this programme, to the Council and the European Parliament, as well as to the Economic and Social Committee and to the Education Committee set up under the Resolution of 9 February 1976 of the Council and of the Ministers of Education, meeting within the Council (**).

(**) OJ No C 38, 19.2.1976, p. 1.'

3. The following Articles 5 and 6 are added:

'Article 5

As from the 1992 budgetary year, the appropriations necessary to finance the Community contribution to the actions provided for in Article 3, including measures to ensure technical assistance at central or decentralized

level, continuing monitoring and evaluation, and other supplementary measures concerning information on the programme and concertation with policy makers and the social partners, shall be authorized in the annual budgetary procedure.

Article 6

1. The Commission shall be assisted by a committee of an advisory nature composed of two representatives from each Member State and chaired by a representative of the Commission. Twelve representatives of both sides of industry, appointed by the Commission on the basis of proposals from the organizations representing both sides of industry at Community level, shall participate in the work of the committee as observers.

2. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee a draft of the measures concerning:

- (a) the general guidelines governing the programme;
- (b) the general guidelines on the financial assistance provided by the Community (amounts, duration and recipients of assistance);

(c) questions relating to the overall balance of the programme, including the breakdown between the various actions.

3. The committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft, within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the question delivered by the committee. It shall inform the committee of the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.'

Article 2

This Decision shall take effect on 1 January 1992.

ANNEX

COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMME ON THE VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PREPARATION FOR ADULT AND WORKING LIFE (PETRA)

INTRODUCTION

1. This Annex sets out the measures required in Article 2 of the Decision, in particular for the consolidation of the existing Community action programme, known as 'the Petra programme', which was set up under Council Decision 87/569/EEC of 1 December 1987 and which shall be extended until 31 December 1994.

These measures are to be implemented at Community level by the Commission, respecting the principle of subsidiarity, to support and complement initial vocational training policies in the Member States and to add a Community dimension to their activities in this field. They are of two kinds:

- A. Support for transnational and transfrontier training projects;
- B. Support for measures aimed at introducing a European dimension into the processes and systems of vocational information and guidance;

In addition, the Commission will take the complementary measures and provide the technical assistance which are required to implement the programme.

The Commission's support for the measures mentioned above, and for the technical assistance, will be financed from its specific budget for education, vocational training and youth policy.

ACTION A

I. SUPPORT FOR TRANSNATIONAL AND TRANSFRONTIER TRAINING PROJECTS

I.1. Scope

2. The Community will extend its financial and technical support for transnational and transfrontier cooperation between initiatives implemented in the field of initial vocational training which, in accordance with the objectives set out in Article 1 of the Decision, aim to:

- (a) raise the standards and quality of technical and vocational education and initial training, diversify vocational training provision so as to offer choice for young people with different levels of ability, and enhance the capacity of vocational training systems to adapt to rapid economic, technological and social change;
- (b) add a Community dimension to both the supply of, and demand for, vocational qualifications, taking account of the need to promote comparability of these qualifications between the Member States of the Community;
- (c) stimulate and support practical cooperation and the development of training partnerships, both transnationally and within each Member State, between training providers, industry and other promoters of local and regional development, so as to achieve a more effective use of training resources, improve the transfer of experience and increase awareness of the European aspects to be taken into account in the development of initial vocational training;
- (d) develop opportunities for young people in technical and vocational education or other forms of initial training, and for young workers, to benefit from periods of training or work experience in other Member States, so as to add a European dimension to their training and to increase their mobility at Community level;
- (e) introduce a European dimension into the systems and processes of vocational information and guidance.

In the implementation of these objectives and of these actions, specific problems of the different regions and target groups will be taken into account through ensuring a balanced development of the programme. In this perspective, particular attention will be given to actions:

- promoting equal opportunities for young women by reinforcing girls' and young women's access to vocational training in industrial, technical and scientific fields,
- improving training opportunities for disadvantaged young people,
- ensuring a balance in the flow of exchanges of young people between the Member States of the Community.

3. In accordance with the different systems in the Member States, the term initial vocational training shall refer to:

- (a) all forms of vocational training, below university level, following the completion of the period of full-time compulsory education, or general education at (upper) secondary level, and providing a structured training programme, part of a programme or complementary elements to it, in order to enable young people to gain a recognized vocational qualification;
- (b) complementary action, including the provision of practical work experience, to improve the preparation of young people for working and adult life, motivating and enabling them to develop their competences in an active way and to practise their skills, and fostering their sense of enterprise and initiative.

4. Such training can be offered in different forms (full-time or part-time) and by different providers (education, training or other authorities in the Member States; firms; other private or public training bodies), involving in particular:

- (a) technical and vocational schools, or colleges;
- (b) training centres or training workshops;
- (c) apprenticeship or systems of alternance-based training;
- (d) programmes offering practical work experience for young people, related to the vocational field in which they are being, or have been, trained;

(e) other training and vocational preparation measures, including youth initiative projects which provide an alternatively structured, participative learning context, and in which young people themselves are actively involved in the planning, organization and implementation.

5. The transnational and transfrontier cooperation supported under the programme shall be aimed at the following target groups:

- young people in technical or vocational education, apprenticeships, or other forms of initial training leading to a recognized qualification,
- young workers up to the age of 25, i.e. young people who are already in employment and who wish to complement their initial training with a period of work experience abroad.

The programme does not concern young job seekers and young unemployed as they represent major target groups for actions implemented within the framework of the Community's structural policies and, in particular, the European initiative.

1.2. Activities

6. The Community's support is aimed at stimulating transnational cooperation in particular through:

- training or work experience placements abroad for young people in initial training and their trainers, and for young workers,
- joint training of trainers, and
- joint development of European training modules, and of qualifications and certificates related to them.

Training initiatives participating in the programme will be working in one or more of these activity fields. The training or work experience placements abroad constitute the major part of action A of the programme as they absorb 70% of the financial contribution foreseen for this action.

1.2.1. Training or work experience placements for young people abroad

7. In the case of young workers, the implementation of training and work experience placements in another Member State shall build on the experience of the third joint programme for exchange of young workers. In particular, these placements shall provide new vocational or training experience for the participants which will:

- develop their vocational knowledge and enrich their practical experience,
- promote their awareness of the problems of the working world, and
- bring them into contact with the working environment of the host country.

The placements shall also provide the participants with the opportunity to improve their knowledge of life, work and society in the host country and to learn more about the objectives of the European Community and the way in which it functions.

The duration of such placements shall normally be three months, but they may last up to one year where, by the nature of the work experience and its training objectives, a longer period is required.

8. In the case of young people who are still in the vocational training system, training or work experience placements abroad shall normally form an integral and recognized part of their training process, and must embody clear training objectives which have been mutually agreed between the trainee and the sending and the hosting organizations. The duration of such placements should not be less than three weeks, in order to meet these objectives. In order to facilitate the integration of such placements into the training process, they should be based on specific vocational sectors which relate to the training needs of participants.

Particular emphasis shall be placed on ensuring that each placement involves a significant added training value, e.g. experience of new training methods or equipment, new content, new forms of training partnerships, etc., so as to maximize the benefits of exchanges within the Community and to foster the transfer of innovation know-how and good practice.

9. It is the responsibility of the training institutions/initiatives or, in the case of young workers, the young people themselves or their employers, to organize their exchanges/placements. Member States shall make the necessary arrangements to assist in the identification of potential partners or placements, to help match supply and demand and to ensure adequate preparation, organization and 'on-the-spot' support. Each Member State shall designate one (or more) competent agency (agencies) responsible for coordinating and implementing this part of the programme at national level, in accordance with specific guidelines agreed at Community level.

1.2.2. Joint training of trainers

10. Community assistance shall be granted to support bilateral or multilateral transnational partnerships aimed at the training or retraining of trainers, and teachers in the field of technical or vocational education, on aspects of common concern. Such partnerships shall be established with regard to the aims set out in paragraph 2 above and could involve, for example, joint training seminars, exchanges or joint development of training material.

1.2.3. Joint development of European training modules, and of qualifications and certificates related to them

11. Community assistance shall be granted, in the first place, for training institutions or projects wishing to engage, on a bilateral or multilateral basis, in medium or long-term cooperation on the development and implementation of European training, especially the development of new qualifications and vocational profiles, involving:

- training units (modules or courses) and methods of assessment which can be adapted for use by, or integrated into, existing training provision in different Member States, or
- training units to form distinct components of integrated transnational training programmes, i.e. programmes in which certain complementary elements of a total training course are provided by (a) training institution(s) in another (or several) Member State(s).

1.3. Community financial contribution

12. For the implementation of training or work experience placements abroad, the Commission will provide financial aid to the individual Member States, as a Community contribution towards covering:

- subsistence costs for young people during the placement abroad,
- justified travel costs, up to 75%,
- the costs of preparatory language training,
- the cost incurred for the preparation, organization, monitoring and publicizing of placement programmes in each Member State.

13. In calculating the aid to each Member State, quantitative objectives will be assigned in relation to the number of young people from 15 to 25 years in its population. Inspired by models applied in the Erasmus and Comett programmes and taking into consideration the need to ensure a balanced flow of exchanges in the Community, the calculation will also take account of:

- the gross domestic product of each Member State,
- the geographical distance between Member States.

14. Applications for grants shall normally be received and processed by the designated agencies in the Member States.

15. For other cooperative training activities, the Commission will provide a financial contribution, normally for two years, averaging ECU 30 000 per year, towards the costs incurred by each individual training institution involved in a transnational or transfrontier partnership on:

- preparatory activities,
- joint training of trainers,
- joint development of European training modules.

ACTION B

II. SUPPORT FOR MEASURES AIMED AT INTRODUCING A EUROPEAN DIMENSION INTO THE PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS OF VOCATIONAL INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE**II.1. Scope**

16. The Community will support links and active cooperation between Member States' services for vocational information and guidance of young people, aimed at ensuring:

- that all young people receive suitable information, practical advice and, if necessary, individual counselling and help, to make them aware of the vocational training options available to them, enable them to assess their strengths and make informed choices, motivate them to strive for vocational qualifications and facilitate their access to initial training,
- that, as part of this process, all young people and their parents are given the means to obtain up-to-date information on training opportunities and guidance services available in other Member States, and that they are encouraged and helped to use this information.

The Commission will ensure close coordination with relevant ongoing work of Cedefop and other Community initiatives in this field; especially with a view to linking European guidance activities for young people with those aimed at adults.

II.2 Activities

17. The Community's contribution is aimed at developing materials, methods and procedures which can facilitate practical cooperation between the guidance services, especially through:

- networking the exchange of European guidance data. This involves, in particular, the establishing of a European network of national contact points or centres which will develop and update data for use by guidance services in all Member States,
- providing support for the training of guidance counsellors/specialists, on European aspects of guidance. Such training could take the form of bilateral or multilateral training seminars, initially involving trainers of guidance personnel from different Member States.

II.3. Community financial contribution

18. The Commission will provide financial support to projects proposed by the Member States, up to a total of ECU 1,4 million in 1992, and up to ECU 1,7 and 2 million in 1993 and 1994, respectively. The allocation of project grants shall be decided by the Commission after individual assessment of suitable proposals.

COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES

19. The Commission will take the necessary complementary measures. This will include information on the programme and the dissemination of its results, by means of publications, seminars, etc., as well as the continuation of support for transnational cooperation in studies on specific issues in initial vocational training. In addition, the Commission will provide the technical support required for the implementation of the programme and the coordination and evaluation of the actions supported under it. As necessary, the services of specialized institutions and organizations will be called on to provide technical support, both within the Member States and at Community level.

FINANCIAL RECORD

1. Budget heading and title of action

B3-1021.

Community action programme for the vocational qualification of young people and their preparation for adult and working life (PETRA).

2. Legal basis

Article 128 of the EEC Treaty.

3. Proposed classification

Non-compulsory expenditure.

Non-differentiated appropriations (Article B3-1021).

4. Description

The aims of the Programmes are as follows:

- to promote all forms of initial vocational training leading to a recognised vocational qualification and, taking account of the deficiencies inherent in training courses of only one year's duration, to support national policies designed to offer all young people, who so wish, two or more years' initial vocational training;
- to increase the development of a European dimension in technical and vocational education and other forms of initial training;
- to intensify cooperation in initial training with special emphasis on a substantial development of European training exchanges for young people,

including exchanges of young workers, with the aim of achieving 100,000 exchanges in the three years of the Programme now proposed, a number comparable with that envisaged by ERASMUS for university students;

- to ensure coherence and complementarity with action implemented in the framework of the Community's Structural Policies, particularly the EUROFORM initiative.

The adaptation of the existing PETRA Programme offers the most appropriate framework to attain these objectives. It will address the following target groups:

- young people in technical or vocational education, apprenticeships, or other forms of initial training leading to a recognised qualification;
- young workers up to the age of 25, i.e. young people who are already in employment and who wish to complement their initial training with a period of work experience abroad.

The Programme does not concern young job seekers and young unemployed as they represent major target groups for actions implemented within the framework of the Community's Structural Policies and, in particular, the EUROFORM initiative.

The Programme comprises the following two main types of action:

Action A: Enlarged support for transnational and transfrontier projects aimed at improving technical and vocational education, apprenticeships and other forms of initial training, which have a European dimension consisting of:

- vocational training or work experience placements abroad for young people in initial training and their trainers, and for young workers,
- joint training of trainers,
- joint development of European training modules, and of qualifications/certificates related to them.

In operational terms this will involve:

- strengthening and extending the existing European Network of Training Partnerships, including support for youth initiative projects, to provide a platform for both the organisation of exchanges and for the joint development of other forms of partnership;
- providing special support for training and work experience placements abroad, both for young people in initial vocational training and for young workers. The number of placements supported should be substantially increased, so as to grow to 16,000 in 1992, and up to 36,000 in 1993 and 48,000 in 1994, i.e. a total of 100,000 placements over the three years of which 20,000 will be provided for young workers.

The exchanges of initial vocational training specialists will be integrated into Action A. The thematic focus of these exchanges will be directly related to exploring methods, fields and outcomes of European cooperation in the area of initial training.

Action B: Further development of vocational information and guidance with a European dimension, e.g.

- supporting national contact points/centres to network the exchange of guidance data, and to explore effective methods for the transfer of guidance information throughout the Community;
- providing training for guidance counsellors/specialists, on European aspects.

In addition, the necessary arrangements will be made, at central and decentralised levels, for the networking of initiatives supported under the Programme; support of comparative research; the dissemination of results; technical assistance to implement the Programme; the evaluation of its development and its outcomes.

5. Justification

The economies of the Member States will be faced with many new challenges,

during the 1990s, in adapting to technological and industrial change, and to the new opportunities and needs emerging from the completion of the Internal Market and increasing global competition.

In this situation, it is vital to optimise the human resources of the Community by developing the skills of the European workforce. The future needs of the labour market can only be met by ensuring that all young people can benefit from a sufficient period of initial training leading to a recognised qualification. Such training must include a strong European dimension if the potential of the Internal Market is to be fully exploited. The extent of transnational cooperation in support of this dimension is still inadequate. Therefore, Community investment in this field must be substantially increased to ensure that initial vocational training can make an appropriate response to rapidly changing social and economic needs.

The Programme will make a significant contribution, especially by providing opportunities for transnational training and work experience placements for young people, totalling 100,000 in the period 1992-1994. The Programme will also respond to the need to promote other new forms of transnational cooperation which have a key contribution to make to the effective implementation of the common vocational training policy.

6. Financial implications of the programme on operating appropriations

Nature of expenditure and method of calculation

6.1 The necessary appropriations will be included in future budgets. Estimated requirements until 1994 amount to 177.4 million ECU.

6.2 The method of calculation of the Commission's financial contribution to European transnational training placements for young people in initial training and for young workers within the framework of Action A of the consolidated PETRA Programme is outlined below.

a) The Commission's financial aid shall be used to provide:

- a subsistence allowance for the individual young person involved in a training placement abroad;

- up to 75% of the justified travel costs;

- a contribution towards the costs for the necessary preparation and organisation of the placements, including preparatory language training of participants, monitoring and 'on the spot' support, and costs incurred by the designated organising agencies in the individual Member States.

b). In order to determine the total financial contribution from the Community, which will be required to ensure a progressive development of European training placements over the three-year period 1992-1994, the Commission has based its calculations on the following working hypotheses:

- a total of 100,000 training placements shall be achieved in the period 1992 to 1994, of which 80,000 will be provided for young people in initial vocational training and 20,000 for young workers;

- the Community's financial contribution to each placement is calculated at an average of 700 ECU for placements of young people in initial vocational training, and 2700 ECU for placements of young workers, based on the breakdown below.

Calculation of average Community contribution to training placements abroad

	Young people in initial training institutions	Young Workers
	3 week placement	3 months placement
1. Subsistence allowance	up to 110 ECU per week/participant, i.e. 330 ECU for a placement period of three weeks	up to 480 ECU per month/participant, i.e. 1440 ECU for a placement period of 3 months
2. Contribution to covering travel costs	225 ECU/participant, i.e. 75% of an estimated total of 300 ECU	510 ECU/participant, i.e. 75% of an estimated total of 680 ECU, including local travel and additional travel costs related to participation in specific language preparation courses
3. Contribution to covering the costs incurred for preparation and organisation of the placement, including language preparation	<p>145 ECU per placement, including:</p> <p>a) up to 80 ECU to cover costs in connection with language preparation (materials etc.).</p> <p>b) up to 65 ECU (i.e. about 10% of 1, 2, and 3a above) to cover costs incurred for technical organisation and monitoring.</p> <p>It is assumed that the training institutions themselves will identify partner institutions for exchanges and monitor the placements.</p>	<p>750 ECU per placement, including:</p> <p>a) up to 500 ECU to cover costs in connection with language preparation;</p> <p>b) up to 250 ECU (i.e. 10% of 1, 2 and 3a above) to cover costs of technical organisation, administration and monitoring through competent external agencies.</p>
Total per placement	700 ECU	2700 ECU

6.3 Financial sheet

PETRA Action Programme

Financial Sheet

1992-1994

	<u>MECU</u>		
	1992	1993	1994
<u>Action A:</u>			
Support for transnational training projects			
1. Training and work experience placements abroad			
- for young people in initial vocational training* (average total cost per placement: 700 ECU)	7.0 (10000 x 700)	21.0 (30000 x 700)	28.0 (40000 x 700)
- young workers (average total cost per placement: 2700 ECU)	16.2 (6000 x 2700)	16.2 (6000 x 2700)	21.6 (8000 x 2700)
2. Cooperative training activities:			
- development of European training modules or joint training of trainers (average 30,000 ECU project).	12.0 (400 x 30,000)	15.0 (500 x 30,000)	15.0 (500 x 30,000)
<u>Subtotal Action A</u>	35.2	52.2	64.6

* as defined in Annex, paras 3 & 4.

	1992	1993	1994
<u>Action B:</u>			
Support for measures aimed at introducing a European dimension into vocational information and guidance			
1. Support for transnational activities to network guidance information and data (100,000 ECU per project)	0.8	1.0	1.2
2. Support for the training of guidance specialists (training seminars and development of training material; 2-3 transnational training projects per year)	0.6	0.7	0.8
<u>Subtotal Action B</u>	1.4	1.7	2.0
<u>Subtotal A and B</u>	36.6	53.9	66.6
<u>Complementary measures</u>			
1. Information, publication, conferences, cooperation (5% of Actions A and B)	1.8	2.7	3.3
2. Technical support for the implementation of the programme (8% of Actions A and B)	2.9	4.3	5.3
<u>Subtotal</u>	4.7	7.0	8.6
<u>Total</u>	41.3	60.9	75.2

6.4 Summary table

The estimated appropriations are shown below :

	M ECU			
	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1992-1994</u>
Action A	35.2	52.2	64.6	152.0
Action B	1.4	1.7	2.0	5.1
Complementary measures	4.7	7.0	8.6	20.3
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	41.3	60.9	75.2	177.4

These amounts are in accordance with the technical analysis, by the Commission's services, of the financial resources needed for the full implementation of the measures proposed. The actions derive from the policies required to implement the Single Act, which have been given priority status in the revised Budget Perspectives for 1991 and 1992 attached to the Inter-institutional Agreement; they are also however subject to the restrictions imposed by the Budget Perspectives up to 1992 on this type of expenditure, the future of which cannot be foreseen at this stage. The annual expenditure figures for these measures will therefore be fixed in the course of the annual budget procedure.

7. Fiscal implications

None

8. Type of monitoring

a) Financial monitoring is provided by the competent departments of the Commission with respect to the conformity of expenditure and execution of the budget.

b) Technical supervision is provided by the competent departments of the Commission, especially the Task Force on Human Resources, Education, Training and Youth with assistance from the proposed advisory committee.

c) Criteria to be used in the evaluations, to be carried out under Article 4 of Decision 87/569/EEC of 1.12.87, will be established in consultation with the Member States and will include:

- total level of transnational exchanges; of trainees, trainers, and other staff;
- balance of exchanges, i.e. analysis by originating Member State; region; training sector; level of training; and gender of trainee;
- character of exchanges, i.e. content, duration and integration with course;
- value of exchanges, as perceived by participants and training authorities;
- impact of exchanges and other Community-level actions on: quality of training and guidance; participation by young people.

9. Financial implication for staff appropriation and operation
(Part A of the general budget)

Staff needed from 1992:

- 2 A7/4 : organisation and monitoring of youth training placements and transnational projects; organisation and monitoring of guidance and research measures as well as supplementary measures.
- 2 B : technical support at meetings; documentation and information; supervision and monitoring of contracts and budgetary operations.
- 3 C secretaries.

Expenditure on the above staff requirements are covered by the Community (part A of the Commission budget) and amount to ECU 369,000, for one full year.

The national authorities may second staff under the conditions established for other Community programmes.

The necessary posts will be provided by internal redeployment or in the framework of the 1992 budgetary procedures.

10. Technical assistance

To ensure an effective implementation of the programme in the Member States and at Community level, it will be necessary to call on the assistance of experts in initial vocational training. Support will be given to Member States for coordination and animation of the different actions at national level and, especially, to Member States where organisational and administrative difficulties meant that they could not fully benefit from the PEIRA Programme in the past. At Community level, technical support will be needed for the following tasks:

- technical coordination of the establishment of a European network of transnational training projects comprising training and work experience placements abroad for young workers and young people in training systems;
- logistical support and coordination of joint training of trainers and/or European training modules;
- support for the coordination of the vocational guidance actions and studies envisaged;
- preparation of information on the programme and arrangements for translation of documents in all Community languages;
- logistical follow-up of the programme and of related activities in the Member States;
- technical support on preparatory work for meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops organised at Community level by the Commission;
- technical support on grant management;
- support for the coordination of studies.

IMPACT ON COMPETITIVENESS AND EMPLOYMENT

I. What is the main justification for the measure?

In order to enable firms and individual workers to face the challenges of industrial change, and to exploit the opportunities created by the Internal Market, the highest priority must be given to developing the vocational skills of the workforce. The demand for higher levels of qualification and specific, as well as polyvalent generic skills, will increase whilst the employment prospects of unqualified labour will diminish further. Therefore, in relation to the future workforce, it is essential to improve the quality of initial training for young people, so that they may acquire a recognised and relevant qualification, and also to introduce a strong European dimension into vocational training provision. The Community's policy, to be implemented through this proposal, is aimed at continuing and intensifying efforts to improve the quality of training, promoting European mobility and comparability of vocational qualifications, and developing linkages and coherence between the national training systems. The proposed action programme will promote:

- training or work experience placements for young people abroad;
- joint training of trainers;
- joint development and transfer of European training modules and of qualifications and certificates related to them;
- the introduction of a European dimension into the processes and systems of vocational information and guidance;

II. Features of the firms concerned, in particular:

a) Are any small businesses involved?

All types of enterprises are concerned.

b) Is there a concentration in regions:

(i) eligible for national regional aid?

(ii) eligible for ERDF assistance?

All regions are concerned.

III. What obligations are directly imposed on firms?

The action programme imposes no direct obligations on firms. However, the measures envisaged presuppose an active participation of firms, particularly in relation to the training placements and the development of joint training modules.

IV. What obligations may be indirectly imposed on firms via the local authorities?

Participation in the European Network of Training Partnerships by firms would necessitate some degree of cooperation with local authorities.

V. Are there special measures for SME's? Give details.

No

VI. What will be the foreseeable impact on

(a) firms' competitiveness?

The introduction of a major Community initiative for young people in initial training, can be expected to have a considerable impact on firms competitiveness, in the medium term. To have a well-qualified workforce will be a factor of increasing importance for firms, in the 1990s.

(b) employment?

The level of collective competence is also important for the stability of employment.

VII. Have both sides of industry been consulted? What are their opinions?

Yes. In their joint opinion of 26 January 1990, in the framework of the ongoing Social Dialogue, the Social Partners emphasised that high-quality education and initial vocational training, leading to recognised qualifications, were essential if young people were to be successfully integrated into working and economic life and to benefit from continuing training. The proposals also take full account of the Opinion adopted by the Advisory Committee on Vocational Training at its meeting on 7-8 June 1990.

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