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**ABSTRACT**

This document is the result of the analysis of reports and the conduct of interviews with representatives of the social partners (employers, employers' organizations, and unions), education and training agencies, and other relevant agencies in Ireland. The document consists of four parts and a bibliography. The first part describes vocational education and training within the context of human resource policy and explains the involvement of social partners generally in economic and social matters. Part two addresses statutory provisions for vocational education and training and the involvement of the social partners. Part three describes training and education in the construction industry, the textile industry, and hotel catering and tourism industries. Part four reviews key issues and makes recommendations. Among the recommendations are the following: the social partners be formally represented on vocational education committees; educational authorities in conjunction with the social partners investigate the means by which local links can be consolidated and further strengthened; and questions of certification and the establishment of training standards be investigated within the context of increasing mobility of labor within the European Economic Community and the completion of the market in 1992. A bibliography of 116 items concludes the document. (CML)

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CEDEFOP Document

# The role of the social partners in vocational education and training, including continuing education and training, in Ireland

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

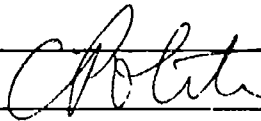
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**The role of the social partners in vocational education and training, including continuing education and training, in Ireland**

**Timothy Murphy  
Arthur J. Coldrick  
Irish Productivity Centre**

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## Foreword

This study is one of a series of 12 monographs on the situation in the EC Member States. Through an analysis of existing and historical structures governing cooperation and coordination between the social partners and the public bodies responsible for vocational education and training (excluding general secondary education and university education), it was intended:

- a) to carry out an in-depth investigation of the situation commencing with the central regulatory instruments and decision-making levels. These investigations were to examine the situation at regional, local and enterprise levels as well as in industrial sectors in EC Member States, and
- b) to develop proposals for the contents and objectives of an improved social dialogue at the various levels.

The reports comprise two sections: a general analysis and a sectoral analysis.

Although the general analysis was, as far as possible, to be reinforced by the sectoral analysis, the two were to be complementary, whereas the conclusions were to be directed more towards objective (b).

The general analysis of the historical development, institutional involvement and problem areas was also to include a

description of the current situation with regard to the links between the world of work (employees, employers, industrial sectors and enterprises) and the world of vocational training (in-company, inter company/group training, school-based training - both initial and continuing - private, public and independent vocational training sponsors).

Furthermore, attention was to focus on the degree and nature of the involvement of the social partners in the development, implementation, administration and control of training policy programmes, including the extent and nature of state intervention within the framework of this involvement. The following aspects were to be included:

- analysis of legal regulations and collective framework agreements (education, labour market and social legislation, nature and extent of the autonomous powers of the social partners in the field of vocational training as specified in general collective agreements, sectoral agreements and typical enterprise-related agreements), and
- investigation of the problems relating to existing cooperative approaches to vocational training, particularly with a view to the equal distribution of training provision amongst various target groups (women, young people, adults, early school leavers, foreigners, etc.) and amongst the various regions and sectors, and finally



- description of the different methods of state intervention aimed at promoting the social dialogue on the basis of selected situations and regions or sectors.

In order to illustrate and give a realistic description of the existing situation, the nature and extent of cooperation amongst the social partners and government bodies were to be analysed in three sectors:

- in a sector dominated by small and medium enterprises or craft industries, e.g. the construction sector;
- in a sector characterized by modern industrial technology, e.g. the metal or electronics industries, and
- in a sector in which services and the employment of female labour are predominant, e.g. banks and insurance companies.

In these sectors the intention was to analyse and compare work-place, employment and occupational structures (hierarchy) in specific areas in which appropriate data were available. The aim was to identify any differences in the social relationships between employees and employers, and to evaluate the involvement and participation of employees and their organizations in initial and continuing vocational training activities, including any eventual implications for career advancement.

The sectoral analysis was intended to illustrate the more general analyses and assessments, and to substantiate and supplement the findings with concrete descriptions. In this connection, the intention was not to carry out case studies but rather to evaluate existing studies and collective agreements between the social partners in respect of initial and continuing vocational training.

The research work was usually accompanied at national level by individual ad hoc meetings between the institute(s) under contract and the three Management Board members from the respective country, and at EC level by regular discussions organized by CEDEFOP and the contractual partners from other Member States.

The investigation covered a period of seven months. In the second half of 1986, the studies were carried out in Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom and they were concluded in early 1987. The studies in the other Member States were conducted in the course of 1987. A synthesis report to be prepared on the basis of the twelve country reports, will attempt to collate systematically the most important conclusions, common trends and results in order to promote the dialogue between those concerned both in the Member States and at EC level.

The individuals, independent scientists and scientific institutes under contract were, of course, free to adapt the set outline for all twelve investigations to the prevailing

conditions and existing institutional framework in their respective countries.

On behalf of the authors, too, I should like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the CEDEFOP Management Board from the respective Member States and to the numerous experts and individuals from the enterprises, training and other bodies, and to employers' and trade union organizations for their support in this work. We hope that this investigation will help to promote better and constructive understanding, despite the existence of very different interests, and thus lead to satisfactory solutions to the prevailing problems facing the development of initial and continuing vocational training. Thanks are also extended to the team of authors for the fruitful and successful cooperation on what was certainly not an easy subject for investigation.

B. Sellin  
Project Coordinator

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The role played by the social partners in vocational education and training is not easy to define, even in a national context, and for a number of reasons.

Firstly, in a relatively small country like Ireland, where employers and trade unionists, government administrators and personnel from training and development agencies meet frequently and in a variety of fora, informal links can be at least as important and play as large a role as formal ones. Informal links, however, are much more difficult for researchers to study and thus the full quality of the role played by the social partners may not be available for analysis. Frequently too as in the case of vocational education where there is little formal provision for social partner representation, some of those involved in the education system make a special effort to utilise the skills and knowledge of trade unionists and employers, not always in a representative capacity, with regard to specific projects. Others involved in the system do not.

Secondly, the role of the social partners differs as between education and training and as between different sectors and while the sectoral studies included in this report help to elucidate some of these differences, some important differences may and almost certainly are still awaiting elucidation. For instance, while the situation obtaining in manufacturing industry, agriculture, fisheries, and hotel and catering, regarding the

involvement of the social partners are very different with regard to training, nevertheless, the government has made provision for training in these areas. No such provision has been made in the case of the very large services sector, except in the case of certain training for government departments and local authorities. The financial sector including banking and insurance have so far been omitted from government initiatives. Training in such areas, therefore, is less visible and less general in its application.

Two main sources of data have been used in this study. In the first instance, a reference list of reports and articles was built up and secondly, a great number of interviews have been conducted (and in some cases second interviews with the same person) with representatives of the 'social' partners, the education and training agencies and other relevant agencies.

To assess the significance of the social partners involvement or the lack of it, it was necessary to describe the education and training systems, what has been happening in these systems by way of development in the past twenty years particularly, and some of the trends that are currently developing.

In any examination of the Irish scene it is important to state at the outset that neither the employers nor the trade unions are providers of vocational training and education as would be the case in other member states (the only exception being where

training is provided for their own staff and activists). Therefore any study must focus on the representative roles thereby assumed by the social partners within those structures established by the State, both in education and training to meet the country's needs.

Specifically the report deals with the following issues:

- (a) In order to set the scene there is a brief outline of vocational education and training in the general context of manpower policy followed by an equally brief resume of some of the roles played by the social partners in economic and industrial life in Ireland.
- (b) The development of vocational education and training over the last twenty years approximately and the extent of social partner involvement in these developments.
- (c) Three sectoral studies outlining the current situation with regard to the role of the social partners in:
  - (i) The construction industry.
  - (ii) The textile industry which is one of the most modernised in Ireland.

(iii) Hotel and catering industry which employs a large number of women workers. There proved to be little or no social partner involvement even of a consultative nature in the banking and insurance sectors, which were the suggested sectors for research.

(d) Conclusions and recommendations based on the general and sectoral analyses carried out.

PART I

THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS IN ECONOMIC & INDUSTRIAL  
SPHERES IN IRELAND



CHAPTER 1VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING WITHIN THE CONTEXT  
OF MANPOWER POLICY1.1 Introduction

The Government White Paper on Manpower Policy (1986) defined manpower policy as an integral part of an effective employment and labour market policy. Its contribution to employment policy was seen as centring on ensuring an adequate supply of skilled and highly qualified manpower for the needs of the economy. In addition to this basic "economic" aspect of manpower policy, manpower programmes, it was considered, must also perform social policy functions viz.

- (1) Help and support for young people, particularly those least qualified, through the transition from school to working life.
- (2) Provide the long term unemployed with priority access to employment and training opportunities.

- (3). Provide equality of treatment in the labour market for disadvantaged groups, including the disabled and women who still face a relatively narrow range of employment opportunities.

The White Paper of 1986 acknowledged that conditions had changed from those obtaining just over twenty years before, 1965, when the previous and up to last year most recent and sole White Paper on manpower policy had been published. The objectives set out in the earlier White Paper and the means chosen to implement them were developed against a background which assumed continuous growth and rapid expansion of the economy despite an anticipated decline in some traditional sectors. A major objective was to ensure supply of a modern and technically well trained workforce to meet requirements of incoming foreign investment. Thus measures taken were primarily concerned with the supply side of the labour market.

While these underlying assumptions were, in the main, borne out over the following fifteen years, recent experience has been very different. As was pointed out in the recent White Paper, the employment growth of the late 1970's, accompanied by large budget deficits, increased foreign borrowing and increased penetration of the home market by imports, had resulted in a balance of payments deficit of almost 12% of GNP, in 1980, rising to almost 15% by 1981 and a large imbalance in the public finances. More importantly from a manpower policy point of view, the restrictive

policies needed to halt these trends had resulted in an increase in unemployment between 1980 and 1985 from 7% to 18% (latest figure 18.6%). Within this overall trend, there have been particularly rapid increases in the number of young unemployed seeking a first job and in long-term unemployment among older workers.

It is within this context that firstly the role of vocational education and training will be examined and, secondly, it is within the same context that the role of the social partners in these activities will be examined. Unemployment has created particular and severe pressures on the manpower agencies, pressures which by and large, they have coped with well and the social partners, as we shall see, have played a very significant role in facilitating change which has helped the manpower agencies to adjust.

Modern labour force surveys, definition of manpower requirements and concern with manpower policy date from approximately 1960. In the Second Programme for Economic Expansion (1964), for instance, it was stated that manpower policy was conditioned mainly by:

- (a) The considerable labour surplus.
- (b) The decline in agricultural employment.
- (c) The increasing levels of emigration.

The Second Programme, therefore, planned for the creation of industrial employment on a widespread geographical basis through provision of loans, grants, tax concessions and other inducements to attract new industry and to encourage development of existing industry. As regards manpower policy in future it was decided that more emphasis be placed on:

- (a) Compilation of more detailed information regarding labour availability.
- (b) Provision of improved placement services and vocational guidance.
- (c) Promotion of vocational mobility including retraining.
- (d) Promotion of geographical mobility including resettlement.
- (e) Measures to deal with cyclical seasonal, regional and rehabilitation problems.

The report of the National Industrial and Economic Council (1964), an advisory body comprised of representatives of government departments and the social partners endorsed these principles. A successful manpower policy, it was claimed, would ensure that the supply of labour would be quickly adapted to the changing demand for it.

In 1967, the Industrial Training Act led to the setting up of the Industrial Training Authority (AnCO) whose structure, functions and activities are fully elucidated further on. The activities of the Industrial Training Authority were given impetus by the Third Programme for Economic Expansion 1969/1972, which gave details of the programme to be developed by the Authority in order to establish, provide and organise all forms of industrial and vocational training including the setting up of special training centres on a regional basis and co-ordination of the various bodies engaged in training. Before the implementation of the Third Programme began the Minister for Labour began discussions with trade unions and employer organisations to develop procedures to be followed in the case of large scale redundancy.

By 1985, when a report commissioned by the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) on manpower policy was published, unemployment had as stated reached 18% and broadly speaking, manual employment opportunities had decreased (mainly in agricultural and low skilled jobs) while there had been an increase in the demand for professional and highly skilled manpower. The NESC report recommended the broadening of manpower policy to that of a labour market policy with the following components:

1. Long term manpower policy primarily intended to promote the efficiency of the labour market through such processes as training and placement with an additional dimension covering technological change and education.

2. Short term special employment and training measures often introduced from a mix of economic (efficiency) and social (equity) motives.
3. Long term policies dealing with social infrastructure of the labour market -e.g. labour law, health and safety.
4. The industrial relations framework.
5. Incomes policy, taxation and social security.
6. Public sector employment and pay policy.
7. Labour market implications of sectoral policies other than those covered in items 1 to 6. The report was primarily concerned with 1 and 2 above and included indepth reviews and recommendations on the training system and the placement service.

It recommended inter alia:

- (a) A more dominant role for the Department of Labour embracing a comprehensive approach to issues in the labour market as a whole and not confined to a particular range of manpower policies as traditionally defined. This would include consideration by the Department of general economic and social policy, for example, in fiscal, social welfare and industrial relations spheres, as well as in 'traditional' manpower areas such as training and placement.

- (b) A joint education and training council with powers to co-ordinate activities in youth training and post compulsory vocational education.
- (c) With regard to the executive manpower agencies the establishment of a single executive state manpower agency which would take in all existing bodies in the manpower area particularly bodies involved in training and placement.

During this year the Government has acted to implement some of these recommendations. In the Labour Services Act, provision has been made for the amalgamation of three agencies - the Industrial Training Authority (AnCO), The Youth Employment Agency (YEA), both autonomous bodies and the National Manpower Service (NMS), up to now a section of the Department of Labour. The new agency is to come into operation on the 1st January, 1987 and has been named The Labour Services Agency (FAS).

These changes and the amalgamation of bodies in which the social partners have been represented, AnCO and the YEA with the NMS, while they coincide with the execution of this research project do not pose any great difficulties for the project. Possibly had it not happened such an amalgamation would have been recommended. The issue has been mentioned here so as to avoid confusion at a later stage. The description of the involvement of the social

partners will be confined to training and education bodies in which they have been represented in the past, with a brief outline of the structure and functions of the new body.

Developments in manpower policies and provisions, which are important to note for the purposes of the present study relate to the growing shift in emphasis toward a social dimension in training and education. Much more resources are now expended on training with such objectives than on training with economic or efficiency objectives. These developments in turn have led to new structures particularly at local level with implications for the social partners.



CHAPTER 2INVOLVEMENT OF SOCIAL PARTNERS GENERALLY IN ECONOMIC  
AND INDUSTRIAL MATTERS

The involvement of the social partners in vocational education and training, needs to be seen against the background of the involvement of the social partners generally in the economic and industrial life of the country. Judged over a span of forty years, successive governments have followed a policy of involving them in a variety of bodies and institutions with both executive and advisory powers. It is not the purpose of this section to deal with the particular approach to regulation of industrial relations in the country generally, except to say that the system is based on voluntary collective bargaining with the government attempting, firstly, to promote harmonious relations between the social partners by providing a legal framework in which conciliation and arbitration are possible and effective and, secondly, providing labour legislation to provide minimum standards within enterprises in a variety of areas e.g. safety, dismissals, fair employment practices.

Involvement of the social partners in particular bodies takes place in a number of ways. For instance, one approach is to

provide for nominations from the social partners as in the case of the National Economic and Social Council. This body which replaced an earlier body called the National Industrial & Economic Council was established in 1973, to provide a forum for discussion of the principles relating to efficient development of the national economy and the achievement of social justice, and, to advise the Government through the Taoiseach on their application. Reports of the Council are submitted to the Government, laid before each house of the Oireachtas and then published. Over eighty reports on a wide variety of economic and social topics have so far been published. Since 1980 the Council has also published an annual review of economic and social policies. Membership of the Council comprises:

- . A Chairman
- . Five persons nominated by agricultural organisations.
- . Five persons by employer organisations.
- . Five persons nominated by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.
- . Five persons appointed by the Government (including two from National Youth Council)
- . The Secretary of two Government Departments, those of Finance and of the Public Service.

A somewhat similar approach has been adopted by the Minister for Labour in regard to manpower matters. The Minister set up, some years ago, a Manpower Consultative Committee with representatives from relevant government departments, the social partners and State development agencies, to advise him on manpower policy. The Committee through a network of sub-Committees set up for the purpose, produced a number of reports including, for example, reports dealing with occupational shortages, Industry/Third Level Education links, problems of the long term unemployed, attitudes toward industrial employment and an inventory of research activities in manpower related areas.

A recent development of a tripartite structure involving government, trade unions, business and employers has been the setting up of the Sectoral Development Committee. The Committee was established in 1981 arising from agreement in the First National Understanding (1979) on a sectoral approach to assessing the development potential of Irish industry. The Chairman of the Committee is the Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach.

The Sectoral Development Committee undertake detailed evaluations of industrial sectors and analyses of issues which affect more than one industrial sector e.g. linkages between indigenous companies and multi-national companies or marketing. The Committee normally operate by establishing expert groups, on a tripartite basis, to examine each sector or issue being evaluated. The reports of these expert groups form the basis for the recommendation which the Sectoral Development make to the government. Thus far there have been twelve such reports.

Throughout the decade of the 1970's there emerged by choice a form of centralised collective bargaining on wages which has given an added dimension to social partner and government interface. Initially this bargaining was confined to the social partners with the Government participating, in its capacity as employer, and resulted in a number of national or central wages' agreements. In later agreements there was a marked change in content matter with both pay and non-pay matters such as taxation, social welfare, employment and training issues, and economic development issues, being included in agreements which became known as "National Understandings" for economic and social development between government, employers and industry organisations and trade unions. As recently as 1987 a further such agreement has been concluded within a context of what has been called a Programme for National Recovery.

The involvement of the social partners thus begins at macro level where through these mechanisms they contribute to the development of national policy. A next step of involvement begins with the implementation of national strategy in particular areas e.g. training, through bodies especially set up by government for these purposes. The implementation stage impacts directly on individual employers and trade unions who can through their own representative bodies in turn influence developments at policy level, thus completing a loop in a circular process. Any consideration of social partner involvement, therefore, in vocational education and training in Ireland will centre naturally on their role in the institutionalised framework.

PART II

STATUTORY PROVISIONS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING & THE  
INVOLVEMENT OF THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

CHAPTER 33.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND3.1.1 Introduction

In order to understand the role of the social partners in vocational education and training as it has developed and as it currently obtains, and in order to make recommendations about possible changes in role for the future, it is necessary to understand the provisions that have been made both statutory and non-statutory, for vocational education and training. It is proposed to start with vocational education. In Ireland it is possible to distinguish in legislative terms and in practical terms between vocational education and training.

Straight away it can be said that the Vocational Education Act 1930, which gave rise to the vocational education system did not provide for social partner representation and as such was, very much a creature of its time: social partner involvement and co-operation, in Ireland at any rate, has been a phenomenon that only dates from the end of the Second World War or even later. While the Act facilitated the involvement of the social partners and was perhaps far sighted in this, with very limited exceptions the social partners were not formally involved: Political interests predominated and still do in the administration of

vocational education. This is in contrast to provisions for training, which, as we shall see, stemming from legislation put in place almost thirty years later, in 1967, had a central role, particularly at policy level, for the social partners.

The Vocational Education Act 1930 made provision for continuation and technical education. Continuation education was defined as education:

"...to continue and supplement education provided in elementary schools and includes general and practical training in preparation for employment in trades, manufactures, agriculture, commerce and other industrial pursuits, and also general and practical training for improvement of young persons in the early stages of such employment".

Technical education was defined in somewhat similar fashion as:

"education pertaining to trades, manufactures, commerce and other industrial pursuits (including the occupations of girls and women connected with the household) and in subjects bearing thereon or relating thereto and includes education in science and art (including, in the County boroughs of Dublin and Cork, Music) and also including physical training."

Continuation education was intended for those between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. (Compulsory school attendance ended at fourteen years at that stage). Technical education, on the other hand, was seen as beginning at age sixteen and as having two main purposes:

- (a) to train young people for entry to particular employments and
- (b) to improve the skills of those already employed (Coolahan 1981).

Higher technical education was confined to four larger centres of population - Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford. Apprenticeship training is dealt with case in other sections of this report.

### 3.2.1 Administration of Vocational Education

It is in the administration of the vocational education system that much of the interest lies as regards the present report, since this is the area where potentially the social partners can play a role.



The Act of 1930 provided for the setting up of Vocational Education Committees (VEC's) based on local government administrated areas (38 in all). Committees were composed of fourteen members of whom not less than five or more than eight had to be elected members of the local rating authority. The remaining members of the Vocational Education Committee were appointed by the elected members of the local rating authority. A section of the Act directed the local authority electing this remainder to the VEC to have regard to the:

"interest and experience in education of the person proposed to be so elected and to any recommendations made by bodies (including associations or bodies of employers or of employees) interested in manufacturers or trades in the area of such committee and shall, where it appears desirable and circumstances permit, so as to make such election as to provide for the representation of such bodies on such committee."

In effect there was no formal provision made for the representation of the social partners on the VEC's. Local rating authorities in electing committees could, did and still do to greater and lesser extents, show awareness of the benefits of having an input on the committee from those associated with employers and employees. In many cases also Chief Executives of Vocational Education Committees and the Committees themselves

have shown their awareness of the benefits of having an input from social partner interests by appointing those with links to the social partners on various sub-committees, project groups, and in committees of individual schools. And in the case of one type of third level technical college the social partners have representation as of right. Before dealing with this case, however, it is necessary to deal briefly with the way the vocational education sector has developed since 1930 and in particular with developments of the last twenty years.

### 3.3.1 Development of Vocational Education

The Vocational Education Act addressed itself to a very different set of circumstances, economically, socially and educationally to those obtaining today. As Coolahan (1981) has pointed out, at the end of the 1950's there was a great deal of criticism from many quarters about the condition of vocational education. Amongst those criticisms were:

- (a) That the full-time continuation course was of a terminal character with either little or no transfer value to further formal education.
- (b) Irish social attitudes still tended to disparage manual and practical type education. Parents preferred the more prestigious academic type education which led to greater opportunities for further education and white collar employment.

- (c) Many of the schools were small which prevented employment of specialised staff.
- (d) There was a high pupil drop out rate from even the short two year course.

Compared with the previous decades, the period 1960-'80 witnessed a dramatic increase in government and public interest in education. Coolahan (1981) has pointed out that changes in these two decades need to be considered in the context of change taking place in Irish society generally. There was a particular shift in thinking whereby education was being emphasised as an economic investment rather than, as had been traditional, regarding it as a consumer service. The development and prosperity of a modern technological society was seen as dependent on the availability of an educated workforce. In time the shift in thinking resulted in a number of practical initiatives. Curriculum changes were introduced into post primary schools and changes occurred in the content of existing subjects and the pedagogic approach to them, with technical and applied subjects getting more official support.

As regards the vocational education system two initiatives in particular had major implications. The first of these was the decision to make second level education available to all in 1967. Hitherto education in secondary school was only available on a fee paying basis, though supported by State grants, and as we have seen, education in vocational schools was very much restricted in content and scope.

The introduction of what became known as "the free education scheme" changed the conception of the appropriate form of post-primary school. While hitherto the post-primary or secondary system had been bi-partite - academic/ secondary schools on the one hand and vocational schools with an emphasis on technical and applied studies on the other - and little liaison between them, now the policy was one of eroding the academic/technical division, achieved through raising the status of vocational schools and encouraging a more comprehensive type curriculum in both secondary and vocational schools.

While the overall effect was to blur the distinction between vocational and secondary schools, at the same time an examination of Table 1 shows, that the vocational bias in terms of applied subjects was still maintained in the vocational system.

Table 1: Percentage of boys and girls taking various applied subjects where the subject was provided in secondary and vocational schools in Leaving Certificate (16 - 18 years) cycle.

	<u>Secondary</u>		<u>Vocational</u>	
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
Agricultural Science	4.5	0.5	10.8	4.0
Engineering Workshops Theory & Practice	1.5	-	50.5	0.3
Technical Drawing	13.6	0.1	69.7	1.2
Building Construction	4.8	-	43.3	0.1
Home Economics (Social & Scientific)	2.7	41.8	3.7	48.0
Home Economics (General)	0.1	12.8	0.3	21.1

Source: Department of Education. Statistical Report  
1983 - 1984.

As can be seen from Table 1 with the exception of Home Economics (Social & Scientific) and Home Economics (General) and Agricultural Science (and in all three of these subjects there are also significant differences but not of the same magnitude), the percentage of boys taking subjects Engineering Workshop, Theory and Practice, Technical Drawing and Building Construction is very much higher for students in the vocational system as compared to students in the secondary system.(1)

The second initiative which has had an impact on the vocational education system in the past twenty years was the establishment of nine Regional Technical Colleges at third level throughout the country, in addition to six existing vocational technological colleges in the Dublin area and two others in Limerick and Cork respectively. All colleges in both categories operate under the aegis of their local Vocational Educational Committee.

The purpose of the Regional Technical Colleges is to provide vocational education and training for trade and industry over a wide spectrum of occupations ranging from craft to professional level and including commercial, scientific, engineering, linguistic and other specialities. The six colleges in Dublin provide degree and diploma courses in engineering, architecture, building construction, business studies catering and marketing.

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1 There are of course large differences between boys and girls in terms of subjects chosen but these are not of direct interest in the present project. It happens that these statistics are supplied in this form.

Interestingly the social partners do have the right to nominate representatives to the Board of Management of these colleges - one each in the case of employers and trade unions - which are composed of about 12 members in each case.

To conclude this section on vocational education it is necessary to refer briefly to two more recent initiatives, at second level, Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes (VPT's) and two initiatives under the European Action Programme dealing with the transition of young people from education to adult and working life.

#### 3.4.1 Vocational Preparation & Training Programmes

In February 1985 the Minister for Labour approved a set of proposals for the implementation of a Social Guarantee for young people. The core objective of these proposals was to put in place a system whereby all young people who remained unemployed after a minimum period since leaving school, would be offered a place on a relevant training or work experience programme.

The development of these programmes derived impetus from two quarters. Firstly, it derived from the work of the Youth Employment Agency (a statutory body whose functions are dealt with later in this report) who pointed out that unequal treatment of individuals and groups (in access to educational services) inevitably carried over and was entrenched in the labour force. This phenomenon had been charted through successive annual school

leaver surveys which showed that attainment within the education system strongly influenced success, not only in finding and retaining employment, but also in getting access to training and work experience programmes provided by the manpower services.

Secondly, the impetus towards setting up Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes derived from the resolution in mid 1983 of the Council of the European Economic Communities on "Vocational Training Policy in the Community in the 1980's" which inter alia dealt with the question of guaranteeing access for unemployed school leavers to full time programmes of basic training and work experience, a concept which has come to be known as the Social Guarantee. Having regard to the guidelines set down by the Council of the European communities and the Minister for Labour, the objectives of the Social Guarantee were set out as to:

- "(a) Provide, as a matter of priority, for young people who have left school without qualification and are unemployed (Priority Group I).
  
- (b) Provide, as a second priority, for unemployed school leavers who, while having basic qualifications, have not completed the Leaving Certificate Course (Priority Group II).



- (c) Respond to the identifiable needs of the young people in the target groups involved"

(Youth Employment Agency, 1985.)

From an institutional viewpoint there were two broad thrusts towards a social guarantee involving contributions from both the education system (VPTP's) and the manpower agencies. To implement the Social Guarantee the Minister for Education and Labour established the Social Guarantee Advisory Board to develop the school to work transitional provision, by advising the Youth Employment Agency in relation to:

- . How the Social Guarantee should be provided.
- . Monitoring and reviewing the Social Guarantee commitment.
- . The extent and nature of the provision required for specific groups, both in manpower and education based programmes.
- . The level of allowances for participants in youth training programmes.

The Social Guarantee Advisory Board was comprised of 13 members of which four (two in the case of employers and two in the case of trade unions) represented the social partners.

The content of VPTP courses of one year's duration was comprised approximately of:

320 hours vocational training in such subjects, in descending order of popularity (1) as commerce, construction, engineering, craft and design, services, agriculture, electrics/electronics and science.

200 hours work experience.

280 hours in general or academic subjects.

More recently sanction has been given to a second year VPT Programme with greater specialisation during this second year.

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1 Department of Education. Vocational Preparation and Training 1984/'85. Programme Information. Dublin, 1985.

### 3.5.1 Transition from School to Work

The VPT's can be seen as one initiative seeking firstly to provide skills for those who are at a disadvantage as regards qualifications in regard to seeking work and further training and secondly, seeking to bridge the gap between school and work. A number of further initiatives jointly funded by the European Community and the Department of Education, under the Second Transition Programme, have been undertaken dealing specifically with transition from school to work. One of the thrusts of the initiatives is that of developing stronger links between schools and local communities. For instance, in one of these projects a task taken on by the project team based in a second level school was to:

- Develop an alternative senior cycle programme of up to two years duration leading to national certification in the form of a school certificate for students who did not wish to follow existing programmes.

Both the content and method of implementation of this course are of interest in terms of social partner involvement or the lack of it. As regards implementation, the use of out of school environment as a learning resource and of volunteer adults in the community were seen as essential strategies in the implementation of these new programmes and schools within the experiment were

encouraged to establish Local Liaison Networks. A number of programmes designed, which indicate the vocational bias of the initiative, included:

- (a) Work and Communication skills including an obligatory ten weeks in workplaces over the two years, work simulation, and knowledge of working life, that is, applying for a job, industrial relations, how workplaces are organised etc.
- (b) Computer applications.
- (c) Food and Agriculture
- (d) Irish Language
- (e) General Technology providing for learning experiences in areas of practical work, technology, graphics, design and related science.
- (f) Mathematics, including modules of a practical nature on general numeracy, business numeracy, construction numeracy, engineering numeracy, laboratory numeracy, agricultural/horticulture numeracy.
- (g) Social and cultural studies.

Already as a result of the experiment this programme is on offer in 56 schools. What is interesting, in the current context, is the community based aspect of the project. This movement towards community involvement has as we shall see also occurred in the training area. While personnel with close links to social partners frequently become involved in these types of projects and initiatives, this occurs on a pragmatic basis and by invitation. Given that this movement towards a community emphasis is one which is likely to accelerate, the actual and possible role of the social partners in these developments would need consideration. This is something to which we will return in the section of recommendations.

CHAPTER 4VOCATIONAL TRAINING4.1.1 Introduction

Separate provision has been made for different sectors of vocational training viz. manufacturing industry, hotel, restaurant and tourism related training, agriculture and fisheries. Of these four sectors, with a very limited fishing fleet training in fisheries is the least important in terms of numbers at any rate.

4.2.1 The Industrial Training Act 1967

Specific provision for training in manufacturing industry was made through the Industrial Training Act of 1967. The underlying reasons for the drafting and passing of this legislation stemmed from a growing realisation of the importance of a skilled workforce as a necessity in economic growth and in the development of competitiveness. The previous year, 1966, had seen the conclusion of a free trade agreement with the country's

biggest and most important trading partner, the United Kingdom. Free Trade was seen as posing a threat to indigenous industry and training was seen as a needed response to this threat.

The Act is the most important legislative provision made by the Government in the area of training and, as we shall see, provides for very full participation by the social partners in many matters. Consequently, a very full examination of the statutory body, The Industrial Training Authority, to which it gave rise follows. It is based on a number of principles as outlined in a speech of the then Minister for Labour to the Dail during the second stage of the Industrial Training Bill, May 1965:

1. That an important investment of a nation is in the developing of skills of the people.
2. The primary responsibility for training workers rests with employers.
3. Training costs of industry should be shared amongst employers in industry.
4. Training must be a continuing process rather than a once and for all process.
5. Everyone is entitled to a reasonable opportunity of improving his or her skills.

The Bill provided for the establishment of a new training body - The Industrial Training Authority (anCO), whose responsibility it was to concern itself with all types of industrial and commercial training including training of apprentices, training and retraining of adults, training of unemployed and redundant workers, refresher courses for those whose skills needed improvement, training of agricultural workers for other occupations and training of instructors and supervisors. The functions of the Industrial Training Authority were laid out as follows:

- (a) Provide for the training of persons for the purposes of any activity of industry.
- (b) Promote, facilitate, encourage, assist, coordinate and develop the provision of training.
- (c) Consider any employment in an activity of industry and make recommendations with regard to the nature and length of training for such employment.
- (d) Make arrangements for the application of tests or other methods for ascertaining attainment by persons employed or intending to be employed in industry.
- (e) Assist people in finding facilities for being trained.



- (f) Carry on or assist persons in carrying on research into any matter relating to training for the purposes of an activity of industry.
- (g) Pay maintenance and travelling allowances to people attending courses provided by The Industrial Training Authority.
- (h) Pay fees to people providing further education in respect of persons who receive it in association with their training in courses provided by the Industrial Training Authority.
- (i) Grant scholarships to such persons as The Industrial Training Authority selects, that are employed or are intending to be employed in an activity of industry.
- (j) Award prizes.
- (k) Pay allowances to those employed or who are intending to be employed in industry, who are going out of the State to undergo training.

#### 4.2.2 Executive Power

The Act concentrated executive powers in the hands of a representative authority with the aim of ensuring full consultation with the interests likely to be affected by the

decision of the authority. The Executive Council as specified in the act consisted of an independent Chairman appointed by the Minister for Labour and thirteen ordinary members appointed by the Minister as follows:

- 5 Nominated by Trade Unions
- 5 Nominated by Employer Bodies
- 1 Nominee of the Minister for Education
- 2 Nominees of the Minister for Labour

4.3.1 Background to Social Partner Involvement in AnCO The Industrial Training Authority (AnCO)

As was stated at the outset the involvement of the Social Partners in AnCO at the time of the passing of the Industrial Training Act in 1967, and subsequently, was not unique. From the early '60s National Policy overall sought to engage the participation of relevant interest groups and in particular the Social Partners. Since AnCO was established primarily to address

the training/development issues associated with industrial development it was not surprising, therefore, that the Employers and Trade Unions would play a key part. The thinking of successive Governments around that time is well documented and McCarthy (1977), for example, provides a comprehensive backdrop to the overall emergence of consensus. This, and similar works, indicate how Government was prepared to allow some influence both at policy formulation stage and at implementation stage to Social Partner interests over a wide range of economic and social activity. Thus, while there was an inherent logic in Social Partner association with AnCO, such association was but part of a much wider framework of attempted consensus thinking within the economy as whole.

#### 4.3.2 The Nature of Social Partner Involvement in The Industrial Training Authority (AnCO)

Apart from representative presence in the primary policy making forum of AnCO, i.e. the AnCO Council, Social Partner representation extends to a wide range of statutory and non-statutory committees and groups throughout the organisation.

It is extremely important in this context, particularly when attempting to understand events from an overall European perspective, that this representation is one of external Social Partner presence and not a case of internal staff representation.

Until very recently there have been no specific forum of a works council nature which would allow internal trade union participation. This fact mirrors the overall industrial relations scenario in Ireland which has evolved primarily on adversarial lines and does not as yet allow any direct comparison to the co-operative structures which are commonplace in other European countries under works council and/or co-determination arrangements. This means that participation by trade unions and employees in training matters at plant level is considerably less well developed in Ireland than in some other European countries.

The external representation referred to manifests itself, in addition to representation at Council level, in involvement in seven statutory Advisory Committees which were set up to advise AnCO on matters relating to training in the Textiles, Clothing & Footwear, Food/Drink/Tobacco, Printing and Paper, Chemicals and Allied Products, Construction, and, Engineering industries. The actual numerical representation varies over these seven structures dependant largely on the number and nature of employer and trade union interests active in the day to day affairs of the industries involved. What is significant in this context however is that in all cases employer and trade union persons enjoy actual membership of these Statutory Committees. This involvement further spreads to sub-committees and working parties set up by these Advisory Committees where again Social Partner representation will mirror that on the main Committees.

The process of representation extends further into 'expert' working groups, and the whole area takes on a local dimension

since AnCO Training Centres, which are geographically dispersed, in turn have local Advisory Groups, again with representation from the Social Partners. In this latter case, an important distinction needs to be made since the persons nominated will be local and will not necessarily be those with permanent membership of any of the Statutory Committees mentioned. This local involvement counters to some extent the highly centralised system of control whereby decisions in relation to training can be perceived as being "handed down", a matter which has been touched on, for example, in CEDEFOP Bulletin 2/86 where regional concepts of vocational training in Ireland were dealt with.

#### 4.3.3 The Logic of Social Partner Involvement

While to an extent this has already been touched upon in the context of industrial development there were, and are, a number of additional reasons for Social Partner participation. These would include:-

- On the Trade Union side the issue of craft apprenticeship is a fundamental one since it affects matters such as the nature of skill within a particular industry and the membership or otherwise in particular unions by individuals. Since the strength of a particular trade

union is to a large extent determined by the leverage which flows from the skill base of its members, in-take and training of both existing and future members of a particular trade union is fundamental. Since, on its creation in 1967, AnCO assumed the responsibilities previously held by An Ceard Comhairle - The Apprenticeship Board - it was to be expected that the trade union movement would wish to play a key role.

- For many years within the Irish economy, and the situation still prevails today, job creation in the private sector was a fundamental objective for successive Governments. This issue is well documented in the various industrial policy statements which have emanated down the years.

Accordingly, it is to be expected that Employers and trade unions would both wish to and be obliged to play an active role within the structure of any Agency, such as AnCO, which impinged on industrial policy and development. As will be seen later this involvement was all the more logical when a levy was placed on organisations as a financial device to generate investment in agreed training/development approaches.

- From both the Employer and Trade Union perspectives it was clear from the outset that the large number of trainees coming into the workforce following AnCO training together with the growth in in-company training, could

significantly affect the very nature of the Irish labour market and could well spill over into peripheral debates on matters such as wage bargaining - a province totally within the Social Partner ambit.

- From the AnCO perspective, and from that of the Department of Labour and of Government generally, involvement of the Social Partners in the everyday affairs of AnCO could be seen as creating a basic consensus for action, which consensus would then endorse and support the various action programmes for training and development created and implemented by the AnCO Executive. A failure to involve Social Partner interests, while ostensibly efficient in terms of time lost in the consultative process, would almost inevitably have in any event been counter-productive, since action programmes could subsequently have been blocked or, at the very least, queried at national, sectoral and local levels.

#### 4.4.1 The Role of Social Partner Representatives

While the framework described above allows for considerable presence and involvement of Social Partner interests within the AnCO structure, the actual role discharged by the representatives is quite another matter and presents considerable difficulty both

in understanding and in description. In the first instance it is important to stress that, by and large, the nominees derive their legitimacy from the fact that their other day to day work and activities are concerned with the industries or sectors covered by the particular AnCO forum in which they are involved. In other words, nomination of both employer and trade union persons will tend to reflect those persons' contacts with particular groupings, but will not necessarily reflect any specific training/development experience or expertise. It is to be expected, at the same time however, that representative employer and trade union bodies would give some consideration to experience and expertise in matters of training and development of appointees.

It is also to be expected that differences can and do arise at committee level between trade unions and employers, due both to clashes of interest and to orientation derived from day to day collective bargaining experience. Experience over time, however, has shown that the social partners can accommodate such differences. High trust levels and good working relationships can and do develop over time.

A major issue in regard to committees is the representational aspect and how this is executed by members. Consider the position from the viewpoint of a representative on a Statutory Industrial Training Committee. He/she is subject to at least the following influences:



- The original nomination will have been endorsed by the appropriate natural employer or trade union body and accordingly the individual will be conscious of wishing to adequately reflect the current collective viewpoint of that body.
- Additionally, however, the person will also be an active member of his/her own union or association and could well encounter situations where the policy of the individual entity might not be in total harmony with that perceived to be in the best interest of that body generally.

In addition the individual nominated will have personal views on particular issues concerning training and development.

- A further complication can arise with respect to both urban/rural and regional considerations where, for example, a particular representative may be extremely conscious of an acute training/development requirement relevant to his/her catchment area. Such concerns could at times over-ride any purely representative role.
- Once appointed to the relevant structure, the individual will naturally form commitments to the institution i.e. AnCO, and to the particular programmes discussed and endorsed within any forums at which he/she is present. Convictions so generated can be powerful and in their own right may overcome prevailing attitudes.

- Within any particular structure an individual representative will of course be very conscious of the views expressed by fellow members from the same 'constituency'. This is a crucial point and in certain cases may be a dominant one particularly where fundamental policy issues become involved. It could happen, for example, that employer or trade union representatives would meet separately before their collective involvement within a particular structure to ensure consensus within the grouping on a particular issue. It is difficult to record or examine the incidence of such meetings and background factors such as the potential agenda items and their implications would be of paramount consideration. In areas where a committee or similar structure has been long established, with high mutual trust, it would appear that the incidence of 'vested interest' group meetings are rare.

It can be concluded, therefore overall, that the actual role discharged by any social partner representative is a highly complex one, not amenable to general analysis. Participation rates in attending meetings vary and demonstrate, perhaps, the commitment of individuals to carrying out their roles.

Nothing, however, diminishes the basic fact that employer and trade union representatives have played, and will continue to play, an important role within the various structural fora

created under the Industrial Training Act for the furtherance of training. If at any stage the role played by any individual or group would appear to be passive it should not be overlooked that the potential exists for that individual or group to play a crucial role in particular circumstances.

#### 4.5.1 Consideration of Specific Activities

While the representative role is clearly an important one it is useful for the purposes of this work to examine some activities in training and development which came about through the advice and assistance given by the various representative fora. This allows an overview of the impact of Social Partner thinking and the following activities are typical examples:

#### 4.5.2 In-Company Training and the Levy Grant System

The Statutory Advisory Committees in the seven industrial sectors previously listed have, since 1969, advised on and approved various training policies within these sectors. In addition a Levy Grant Scheme has been introduced in each sector. In essence each of the schemes involves a payroll tax on designated companies within the industry specified of the order of 1.0% to 1.2% per annum. The funds so generated are then used, with the

advice of the relevant Statutory Committee both to stimulate and achieve specific training targets.

The Levy Grant System is in effect a payroll tax on employers and both the introduction of the individual schemes and their implementation is of primary importance to employer members and would be one issue where a collective overview would be much in evidence.

In this general area one central point of interest arises particularly when considered in a total European perspective. This is the overt acceptance that training/development at the in-company level should largely be deemed the prerogative of 'management'. In the period 1969 - 1975, for example, a clear objective of all Levy Grant Schemes for which generous financial incentives were embodied across all the industry sectors, was the appointment of training 'managers'. The persons appointed to these positions at organisational level were to be 'expert' trainers and in addition competent managers, capable of starting up, maintaining and evaluating a training function within their organisations. What is notable is that no question of 'joint ownership' arose due to the apparent tacit acknowledgement from the trade union side that training and development policy and activities at in-company level was a legitimate 'management' responsibility. In recent years the 'Training Manager' topic has been the subject of an intensive study by AnCO itself and indeed the matter has also independently been reviewed by CEDEFOP.

#### 4.5.3 Links with External Employer and Trade Union Interests

The involvement of employer and trade union representatives on the various Statutory and non-Statutory Fora established by AnCO does not preclude direct dialogue by the Executive of AnCO, at national and local levels, with employer and trade union bodies in their own right. At various stages in the evolution of AnCO - see for example, AnCO Annual Reports in the period 1970 - '75 - specific emphasis was placed on the need for such liaison. In the 1972 Annual Report, for example, it was stated - 'Despite the representative nature of the Council and the Industrial Training Committees, it is necessary for AnCO to maintain fairly close contact with individual employer and worker organisations'. Such ongoing contacts allow for specific issues to be raised with an individual employer or trade union body and, in this manner, particular issues for example which would impinge on any interest group can be dealt with without necessarily involving the matter at Committee level. At the highest policy levels, those that would involve the AnCO Council, it would be common practice for senior AnCO personnel to regularly meet with their opposite numbers in both the employer and trade union movements as part of routine operational activity.

#### 4.5.4 Apprenticeship and Women's Affairs

The training implications surrounding these two topics have been the subject of intensive debate and action throughout the European Community in recent years and the situation in Ireland has been no exception. As in other European countries specific 'experts' or 'expert groupings' have been established within the institutional employer and trade union bodies and 'training' has been one subject area of significance to such groupings. In such cases - and 'Safety' would be another such topic - ongoing training needs identification, programme formulation and evaluation would take place between the AnCO staff 'experts' and these counterparts. The role of the representatives in such cases would be concerned in the main with establishing priorities and with resource allocation.

#### 4.5.5 Training Methodology

It is in an area such as training methodology where perhaps the limitations of the representative system are to an extent demonstrated since the Statutory Committees are not necessarily 'expert' on such matters. While each Committee would have

recourse to the necessary expertise from within the AnCO establishment and its own sources there is nevertheless a sense in which the advice and direction from a Committee is necessarily restricted. Such is the growth and potential significance of aspects of training methodology, computer based learning, distance learning or satellite television, that the situation now may need to be reviewed.

#### 4.5.6 Funding of Training

An analysis of Social Partner intervention in this area is difficult since both the nature of the action and its intensity has varied both with time and circumstance. It is possible however to distinguish Social Partner influence on a number of trends:

Throughout the existence of AnCO a tension has existed between the employers and the Government with respect to their relative contributions to the funding of training. Earlier in the text reference was made to the existence of Levy Grant Schemes, but the influence of such revenue in volume terms has decreased significantly since the early '70s with the brunt of expenditure being borne by the State with considerable indirect support from the European

Social Fund. The National Economic & Social Council Report (No. 82) 1985 states - 'Over the years the direct contribution from employers to training costs has formed a small and dwindling proportion of the total'.

Funding for Apprentice training and the adequate treatment of unemployed apprentices, for example by offering them continuing training and work experience at AnCO Training Centres could be cited as one example where trade union representation has had a specific influence on the funding of a distinct activity. While again it is not possible to be categorical, it could certainly be argued that the resources allocated to the apprenticeship training system by AnCO in the period 1967 - 1987 owes much to the influence of the relevant trade unions.



CHAPTER 5OTHER STATUTORY BODIES INVOLVED IN TRAINING

While AnCO is the largest of the statutory bodies with responsibility for vocational training, there are other bodies involved in the area which, while not having as large an image as in the case of AnCO, need consideration in describing the training scene in Ireland:

5.1.1 Council for Education, Recruitment & Training in the Catering & Tourism Industry

The Council for Education, Recruitment & Training in the Catering and Tourism Industry (CERT) was established in 1963. It is the national body responsible for co-ordinating the education, recruitment and training of personnel for the hotel, catering and tourism industry of Ireland with priority for the needs of the tourism sector. It is the policy of CERT to:

- . Co-ordinate the recruitment training and formal education of young people for careers in the industry.

- . Assist companies so that a high standard of training is provided at all levels for those already in employment.
- . Provide training for unemployed people that will enhance their prospects of securing employment.
- . Provide advisory and support services to the industry.

CERT is an agency of the Department of Labour and functions under the control of the Minister for Labour. It is governed by a Council which represents industry, employers, trade unions, education associations, government departments and state agencies concerned with this function. There is a detailed report on CERT in the next section dealing with sectoral studies.

#### 5.2.1 Council for Development of Agriculture

The Council for the Development of Agriculture is the national body providing education, training and advice in agriculture.

The Council is governed by a 16 member board whose chairman is appointed by the Minister for Agriculture and whose members are appointed by the Minister on the nomination of the following bodies:

- 6 by agricultural and rural organisations

- 3 by the Minister for Agriculture
- 2 by the General Council of Committees of Agriculture (which are organised on a district basis).
- 2 by the staff of the organisation
- 1 each by the Minister for Education and by agricultural colleges which come under the auspices of the Council.

It is noteworthy that the social partners as such do not nominate members: while employer interests would be represented to a degree under the heading agricultural and rural organisations, trade unions would have no such representation. This reflects to a large degree the much lower level of unionisation in the agricultural sector. Thus in contrast to manufacturing industry, for example, there is no history of social partner involvement in the sector.

The Council currently devotes 40% of its resources to agricultural education and training. It should be noted that agricultural education is completely within the domain of the Minister for Agriculture: the Minister for Education has no brief in the matter. To deliver on its education and training programme the Council's resources comprise:

- . Fourteen Agricultural/Horticultural Colleges having a total teaching staff of 94 teachers and 60 technicians.

- . A network of 67 Agricultural Education Centres.

Of the 6,721 participants who completed courses during the year 1985, 4,060 were young entrants to agriculture and 2,661 were adults who completed formal courses of 25 to 100 hours or more (Annual Report, Council for the Development of Agriculture 1985). Most of the young entrants either complete a 1 year intensive residential course in an agricultural college or complete a course spread over two years in their own locality. Both lead to the Certificate in Farming.

In addition the Council provides funds for the Farm Apprenticeship Board which monitors training of apprentices over a four-year period.

#### 5.3.1 Irish Fisheries Board:

The Irish Fisheries Board is the State Agency with primary responsibility for the overall development of the fishing industry. It provides a wide range of financial, technical, educational, resource development and marketing services from the catching sector through to the processing and marketing sectors. As far as training and education are concerned the Board provides education and training courses for skippers, fishermen, and

trainee fishermen. The six part-time directors of the Board are appointed directly by the Minister for Fisheries & Forestry, that is, without provision for nomination by other organisations. As in the case of the Council for the Development of Agriculture there is no provision for the involvement of the social partners in training and education, again reflecting the low level of unionisation in the sector perhaps.

Before completing this section on the statutory bodies dealing with vocational education and training and the role of the social partners in these bodies, it is necessary to describe in some detail two further bodies more recently established, namely, the Youth Employment Agency (YEA), already mentioned and established in 1983, and the Labour Services Agency, a new manpower agency only established during the current year, 1987.

#### 5.4.1 The Youth Employment Agency (YEA)

The creation of the Youth Employment Agency was in itself a recognition of what has become a major pre-occupation of all manpower agencies in recent years, namely, unemployment and, in this case, youth unemployment. The Agency is financed by a one per cent levy on all incomes and its activities include job creation through the development of enterprise, and a commitment to self help among the young, ensuring that a second chance mechanism is provided to locate and provide services for the

young unemployed, for whom the main stream education and training structures have proved inadequate. One method by which this is done has already been described in the section under Vocational Education, namely, VPTP's under the Social Guarantee Scheme. In addition to in-school provision of this type the Agency, mainly through AnCO & CERT, makes out-of-school provision also in the form of various skill development programmes, Community Training Workshops, Community Youth Training Projects, and the provision of different forms of work experience.

More recently, in 1985, the Agency has set up eight pilot projects (COMTEC's) to provide a local planning and monitoring mechanism for all services funded from the Youth Employment levy. These projects are of interest in the present study since they represent a movement towards and an emphasis on a community response to problems of training and employment, whereas hitherto training has been seen as a matter for manpower and training agencies alone. This shift in emphasis has implications for the social partners and their role which will be developed in the section on recommendations. The programme was initiated to deal with such problems as:

- . The fragmentation that was seen to exist between education and manpower services.
- . The perceived lack of co-ordination between agencies at both local and national level.
- . The centralised nature of decision making.

- . The absence of community responses to the unemployed.

In regard to each project there was a Consultative Council broadly representative of training/manpower agencies, youth/community groups, employers/industry, trade union and local authorities. The functions of this Council were:

- (a) To provide a forum for involvement by a wide range of local community interests and statutory bodies in the overall planning and monitoring of manpower services for young people in their area.
- (b) To comment and make recommendations on current and proposed provision of services, including programmes for the promotion of employment, training and vocational preparation.
- (c) To consider and agree the draft two year plan proposed by the planning unit for approval by the YEA, and, thereafter, to monitor programmes in implementing the agreed plan.
- (d) To actively promote and monitor community managed employment and training provision with a view to developing further creative responses to youth unemployment.

The Youth Employment Agency itself is representative of the social partners but where the Industrial Training Authority, set up 20 years previously is, dominated in its Council by the social partners, the YEA is less so. Of a board of eleven (including a chairman appointed by the Minister for Labour) four directors are representative of the social partners (2 each from employers and trade unions), 2 are representative of young people, and one each representative of the Departments of Education and the Environment. The representative of the Department of the Environment reflects the community related nature of certain projects e.g. restoration of historic or of other buildings.

#### 5.5.1 The Labour Services Agency (FAS)

The other and very recent development which needs mention is that of the setting up of the Labour Relations Agency mentioned in the opening Chapter. The setting up of this Agency marks a further stage in the rationalisation and co-ordination of manpower services begun, in relation to youth matters, by the setting up of the Youth Employment Agency. The Labour Services Agency combines the entities that comprise AnCO, the National Manpower Service (until now a section of the Department of Labour concerned with guidance and placement) and the Youth Employment Agency. Advance notice for this development was first given in the White Paper on Manpower Policy, 1985, to which reference has already been made.



The Labour Services Agency will come into operation on 1st January, 1988. The functions of the new Agency can be summarised as follows: provision of training, re-training, employment schemes, placement and guidance services, helping local community groups and worker co-operatives to create jobs, and assisting persons seeking employment elsewhere in the European Community.

While the Act setting AnCO in place was passed in 1967, the Act setting up the Labour Services Agency reflects to an extent the changing circumstances twenty years on. The Board of this Agency is to consist of 16 ordinary members and a chairman. Eight members are nominees of the social partners, one representative of youth organisations, two elected by employees and the remaining five representative of various government departments namely Education, Social Welfare, Finance and Labour. The main differences between the compositions of the outgoing Board of AnCO and the incoming Board of the Labour Services Agency lie, firstly, in the stronger and more widespread representation of central government, secondly in the presence of employees directly elected and thirdly in the presence of a representative of youth organisations.

The stronger representation of central government reflects perhaps a desire to have the agency more responsive to government needs and constraints rather than an attempt to attenuate the influence of the social partners.

PART III

SECTORAL STUDIES

CHAPTER 6TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY6.1.1 Introduction

This section looks at the extent and level of social partners cooperation in the development of training for the building and construction sector through the Apprenticeship Scheme, and the on-going training and identification of training needs for those at work or seeking work within the sector.

The building and construction sector is an important element of the Irish economy, providing direct employment for some 43,000 people. In the past twenty years the level of activity within the industry has fluctuated considerably from year to year. However, it has suffered more than most sectors during the recession since 1980, when employment was at a peak of 103,000, a drop of some 58% in seven years. In the same period, the average annual level of unemployment in the sector increased by 56% from 21,000 to 48,000 on the live register of unemployed.

This fall in employment reflects the depressed state of the sector and the fact that output has declined each year since 1982. For example, the volume of building output in 1985 was 7% lower than its 1984 level and over 30% below the output attained in 1981. [N.E.S.C. report no. 83, (1986)].

The reasons for this decline are threefold. Firstly, the high level of mortgage interest rates has discouraged private house purchase, resulting in a sharp fall in demand for new houses. Secondly, the lack of financial investment and the fall in demand for industrial products has resulted in a decline in non-residential construction. And thirdly, the over supply of office accommodation and the resulting lowering of rents has restricted commercial development projects.

#### 6.2.1 Structure of the Industry

The Irish building and construction industry comprises some 6,328 registered companies, of which 4,548 are small building firms employing less than seven people full time, or 20% of the total construction industry workforce, thus exempting them from contributing the AnCO Training Levy for the sector. Sub-contracting to individuals and other specialist firms, therefore, is an integral part of the distribution of work within the industry.

It is estimated that for building firms with 20 or more employees payments for sub-contracting work carried out by other firms on their behalf accounts for nearly 25% of their total costs. Most of this work is done by small contractors.

The industry is predominantly site-based, and this causes particular problems for worker mobility and the meeting of training needs as work locations move and the worker follows. It is largely weather dependent and, consequently, employment levels tend to peak during the summer months and fall off in the winter. This employment fluctuation has an important bearing on the planning and timing of training programmes, both for apprentices and adult training.

While the workforce in the sector is mainly non-craft (some 47.5%). - [AnCO - The Industrial Training Autho, 1981)], the industry is craft centred and therefore apprenticeship training is of particular importance, keeping the crafts alive and containing a long tradition in the building industry.

Traditional attitudes are very strong within the workforce. The large number of small enterprises means that change is slow and the use of new technology is not as widespread as in other industrial sectors. The use of new building methods, materials and components are accepted very slowly over a period of years, rather than months, as would be the trend in these other sectors.

The industry is highly dependent on the state of the economy and on the economic policies of the Government, as it relates to the State Capital Programme, which in turn is a result of state investment in education, housing, roads and the development of the industrial infrastructure.

The Public Capital Programme, therefore, has a major influence on peaks and valleys in production within the industry since it finances approximately 50% of the construction industry output and has a significant effect on the remainder, through stimulating investment from the private sector and through grants and loans to encourage building and maintenance.

### 6.3.1 Training and Education

Industrial training in the construction industry is covered by two pieces of legislation, i.e. the Apprenticeship Act 1959, which set up the Apprenticeship Boards and designated some ten construction trades as statutory trades for training purposes and the Industrial Training Act 1967, which set up AnCO (The Industrial Training Authority) to promote and provide training to help achieve national objectives. AnCO took over the statutory role of the Apprenticeship Boards and responsibility for the training in the designated trades.

The designated trades for apprenticeships within the Construction Industry are:

- . Carpenter/Joiner
- . Slater/Tiler
- . Bricklayer/Stoneman
- . Glazier
- . Printer/Decorator
- . Plasterer
- . Stonecutter
- . Plumber
- . Wood Machinist
- . Construction Plant Fitter

6.3.2 Construction Industry Training Committee (CITC)

Under the Industrial Training (Construction Designation) Order 1969, the activities within the construction industry designated

for training purposes were defined. These activities fall broadly into four main classifications:

- . Site based operations
- . Manufacturing of Building Products
- . Local Authorities
- . Furniture and Timber

The scope and nature of this Designation Order was agreed after consultation with representatives of employers and the Trade Unions and the Construction Industry Training Committee (CITC) was established. It is a statutory committee under the Industrial Training Act, 1967.

There have been six CITC's since 1969 each been appointed for a three year term and they act purely in an advisory role relating to the design and formulation of alternative Levy/Grant schemes, on various related administrative issues and on the identification of wider training needs within the industry. The committees are by statute made up of representatives of the various interest groups within the sector. For example, the sixth CITC, whose term of office ended in September 1987, consisted of six general trade union members and the craft unions



associated with building and construction had nine members. The employers were represented by members from the construction companies (3), the manufacturing sector (4), the Construction Industry Federation (3), the Confederation of Irish Industries, the Federated Union of Employers (one each), and the County Managers (2) representing the local authorities. There was one educational representative and four other members appointed for their particular expertise in aspects of the industry. The CITC chaired by a Professor from the School of Engineering, University College Dublin.

One of the criticisms made of the CITC is that it is too large and unwieldy, but as the industry is so diverse and the trade union representation so fragmented, it is difficult to foresee any prospects of a reduction in size. 'Indeed, with the various working parties, the problem of size and fair representation always arises when one is being set-up.

Another criticism is the fact that it doesn't have any decision-making powers and is only advisory. This in particular was expressed by some employers. However, the counter argument made in this respect was that on only one occasion in the past ten years has the Council of AnCO rejected a proposal put forward by the CITC.

It is generally felt that the level of cooperation between the social partners is excellent in the CITC and both employers and trade union members have expressed confidence in this continuing

for the advancement of training within the construction industries.

The level of commitment and interest of the members is shown in the fact that of the 35 members of the Sixth CITC, the average attendance at 21 meetings was 26 members.

### 5.3.3 Working Parties

The Committee set up a series of working parties on specific issues to identify the relevant matters and bring a report to the main committee for discussion and the formation of proposals. Working parties were set up on:

- . Workers in Concrete
- . Computerisation in Construction
- . Furniture Sector
- . Apprentices Intake
- . International Apprentices Competition
- . Local Authority Sub Committee

- . Construction Management Training
- . Working Parties on the Levy/Grant Scheme for the three years of the CITC

The following is a summary of their work:

1. Workers in Concrete:

This Working Party was established to address the growing need for Training in Concrete Technology. Members of the 5th CITC had participated in a study visit to Scandinavia where a considerable advancement has been made in this area.

2. Computerisation Working Party:

This Working Party acted as a steering group for the assignment undertaken by An Foras Forbartha (The Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research). The final report was submitted to the September 1987 CITC meeting and the 7 CITC will review the report on this topic. (See Below)

3. Furniture Sector Working Party:

This Working Party maintains an ongoing brief for monitoring training needs in the Furniture Sector and for keeping CITC up to date on current training needs.

4. Apprentice Intake Working Party:

This Working Party monitors the demand for opportunities in Construction trades and advises CITC regarding recommended intake levels and grant requirements.

During the 6th CITC this Working Party was also asked to undertake a more general study of future apprentice training needs and report on same to CITC.

5. International Apprenticeship Competition Working Party:

This Working Party was established to review the performance of Irish Construction Apprentices in International Competition and suggest ways in which the overall performance could be maximised. A report was submitted by CITC to AnCO.

6. Local Authority Sub-Committee Working Party:

This Working Party examined the proposal for a Local Authority Sub-Committee and recommended the terms and reference and composition of same to CITC who in turn recommended it to the Council of AnCO. The proposal was approved by Council and the first meeting of this Sub-Committee will be convened by the 7th CITC.

7. Construction Management Training Working Party:

This Working Party acted as a steering group for the Construction Management Training Project. The work involved was considerable requiring an indepth monitoring and evaluation of progress at all stages. The final outcome of the project was approved by CITC at its meeting 1 July 1987. The 7th CITC will be asked to implement these programmes.

8. Levy Grant Working Parties:

Three Working Parties were established to advise on the 14th, 15th and 16th Schemes respectively, together with two schemes for surplus levy funds.

The 16th Levy/Grant Scheme Working Party also examined the need for change in future Levy/Grant Schemes and made a submission on same to the September 1987 meeting of CITC.

In essence, this submission stated that the Levy/Grant Scheme could not survive in its present form because:

- (a) there is no likelihood of funding from other sources, e.g. ESF., YEA etc.;
- (b) serious decline in employment levels in the industry has led to a decrease in disposable funds;
- (c) apprenticeship grants make an inordinate demand on the Scheme's budget.

It was recommended that the matter of alternative or additional sources/methods of funding be investigated immediately.

Further, it appeared appropriate that the funding arrangements of other Industrial Training Committees should be examined and that suitable investigation of similar schemes in the UK and other EEC countries be undertaken.

#### 6.3.4 Levy/Grant Scheme

The concept of the Levy/Grant Scheme was intended as an incentive to promote systematic industrial training at all levels throughout designated industrial and commercial activities. This objective was to be achieved by the process of levying firms in designated activities of a percentage of their annual payroll (for the construction industry this is 1.25% of a payroll of £41,000 per year or more; those registered firms employing less than seven workers are exempt). The amount paid through this levy could then be recovered in the form of grants payable to the individual firm for undertaking prescribed and agreed training activities. The level of refund through training grants is up to 90% of the levy paid by the employer, the remaining 10% being retained by AnCO as a contribution towards the cost of providing a training advisory service and for administration expenses.

The idea behind the Levy/Grant Scheme is to impose a form of financial sanction on employers in order:-

- . to create an awareness of the need for a planned systematic approach to industrial training;
- . to promote investment by individual firms in manpower development, based on the premise that the prime responsibility for training within firms rests with the firm itself;

- following increased employer awareness, to quickly provide an intervention base for the Training Advisory service in order to give advice and assistance to industry in all matters related to training.

The Levy/Grant Scheme highlighted, therefore, the urgent need for action and very firmly placed the onus on the individual employer to put training high on the list of company priorities but always working within a sectoral wide training plan devised and recommended by the relevant Industrial Training Committee.

As regards the construction industry Levy/Grant Scheme, a total of £5.36m was levied on 2,000 registered firms (1985 figures) of which only 3.2m was paid. Because of the decline in employment in the industry, income from the levy has shown a proportionate reduction and in 1987 it is estimated that the Levy will only raise about £3.5m. In 1985 after a retention of £0.5m by AnCO, some £1.6m was used for the training of apprentices or 50% of the total levy paid. The remaining 50% was used in the development of courses and the training of those employed in the industry. Such vital areas as Quality Control, Safety and Site Management and Craft Training are given special emphasis. In the area of management and supervisory training, particular attention is being placed on the training needs which have emerged from the AnCO Business Skills Audit, carried out in small and medium sized enterprises for the construction industry, such as:

- Financial Skills



- . Marketing
- . Management Skills
- . Computing Skills

On the payment of grants, AnCO, on the recommendation of the Construction Industry Training Committee, will reimburse 43% of the levy paid by a firm if that firm appoints a qualified person to be responsible for the training function and undertakes to draw up a training plan for the workers in that firm, based on the identification of training needs. 57% of the levy paid will likewise be refunded to firms which cannot employ apprentices, for the appointment of a training executive and the preparation and implementation of a training plan.

The level of grant paid for attendance at such courses is equal to 33.5% of fees. However, in the special emphasis areas mentioned, grants of up to 75% are available.

Much of this training is carried out through other agencies such as the Irish Management Institute, the Building Advisory Service, An Foras Forbertha (Institute of Physical Planning and Construction Research), the Institute of Public Administration (for local authorities) and the Construction Industry Federation (CIF).

For example, the CIF offer a wide range of training courses, both in management and technical training for the industry and for

groups of firms within the sector. An example of such training would be in the important area of safety and courses on this subject range from the training of Safety Officers; the Law relating to Safety; Safety Site Practice and First Aid courses.

It is generally recognised that safety is one particular area within the Construction Industry where joint employer/trade union cooperation could be beneficial and the CIF, together with the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, have set up a joint committee to study site safety and devise training programmes. Indeed, Congress has recently published a booklet, specifically for workers employed on construction sites, to inform them of the health and safety hazards, to pinpoint unsafe situations and practices so that action can be taken to correct them before an accident occurs. (ICTU, 1987).

Surplus Levy/Grant funds are being used to support this cooperative work on safety and safety training. Other surplus funds have been used on other projects related to the work of the Construction Industry Training Committee. Some £40,000 was allocated to the production of twelve short training films for use by the Local Authorities. The films cost £80,000 to produce so 50% of the cost was met by the Levy/Grant Scheme and the making of these films was supported by both trade unions on the CITC and within the local authorities and by the private sector employees.

They are being very successfully used in the training of all levels of staff within the Local Councils.

Two other films were made for use by private sector construction firms on (a) Grouting and (b) Site Safety.

Surplus funds were also used to develop schemes to encourage training in the following areas:

- . Graduate Training
- . Technician Training
- . Management Training
- . Quality Control
- . Safety Training
- . Language Training

and also grants were made available to participating firms to purchase training equipment so as to keep their staff up to date with developments within the industry.

The Confederation of Irish Industries, representing the employers in the industrial/manufacturing firms within the Levy/Grant Scheme, have made a submission to the C calling for the

abolition of the scheme, so as to cut costs for industry believing that firms will continue to train depending on their needs. The CII state that the Levy/Grant Scheme has achieved its attainable objectives in making employees aware of the need and benefit of systematic training. (CII, 1987).

However, in its White Paper on "Manpower Policy", the Government decided to retain the Levy/Grant Scheme but in the future the payment of grants will be examined with a view to ensuring more effective targeting of training needs. (Para. 4.6).

The Levy/Grant Scheme for the Construction Industry is used with great effect to encourage training, both of apprentices and of those already employed in the industry and in the research of new directions and technical developments which are essential to make the industry an efficient element within the overall national economic structure. There is a very high level of input and cooperation between AnCO, the Construction Industry employers and the Trade Unions operating within the industry on training matters at sectoral level.

#### 6.3.5 Review of Apprenticeships in the Construction Industry

Following an extensive review of the apprenticeship programme with the interested parties, including employers and trade unions, AnCO introduced in 1976 a new apprenticeship scheme, the broad aims of which were:

- To improve the quality of apprenticeship training and to improve the standards of craftsmen.
- To ensure the relevance of the training and education received during apprenticeship to the needs of industry.
- To ensure sufficient numbers of well trained craftsmen to meet existing and future needs through a planned approach to apprentice intake.
- To introduce a system of testing and certification for apprentices leading to the award of a "National Craft Certificate".

It was envisaged that apprenticeship training would be for four years and as part of the improvement in the quality of training it was decided that the first year of an apprentices training would be provided off the job in a well equipped training centre. Since 1976 the total number of construction industry first year apprentices on off-the-job courses in AnCO or other approved training centres were:

1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
272	339	387	374	481	516	560	795	833	851

However the first year off-the-job training has proved to be unpopular with the employers because of the cost factor and many employers have preferred the "Block Release" approach of two days per week or one week per month, so that the apprentice is contributing to the companies output, thus justifying the employers investment.

Total registered first year apprentices for the same period.

1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
787	1057	1346	1509	1173	1460	1422	1321	1533	1372

The Curriculum Advisory Committee of AnCO set up expert working parties, consisting of experts and the social partners for each trade and comprehensive national curricula were drawn up and approved for each of the designated apprenticeship trades.

AnCO monitors closely the normal employer apprentice intake and in relation to forecasts of needs within the industry will take corrective action through AnCO sponsorship of its own first year apprentices to make up any possible shortfall in fulfilling this policy. AnCO has continually recruited first year construction trade apprentices since 1969. However, in recent years there has been pressure to impose an embargo on recruitment of apprentices from the trade unions, as out of a total of almost 6,000

apprentices some 1,300 are unemployed. AnCO have resisted this suggestion because of the implications for their investment in equipment and instruction staff in the training centres. The employers have not expressed a view on this trade union suggestion.

An area of concern for AnCO, however, is the level of qualification and certification for apprentices after their four years of training. It is recognised that in order to ensure standards and to keep up to date with developments in other European Community countries, a system of testing and certification is necessary. The Curriculum Advisory Committee make recommendations on the "Testing and Certifications of Apprentice Craftspersons" to the Council of AnCO in 1979 and following on from these recommendations a working party was set up to consider the report.

Its main recommendations were:

- Following consideration by the AnCO council, the report should be referred to the Apprenticeship Curriculum Advisory Committee, the Department of Education, and the various industrial training committees for their view before final approval by the council.
- The terminal testing arrangements in operation showing the development of the testing and certification system, should continue in operation until the proposed

review in 1989; and that any changes introduced in the Department of Education examinations shall be on an agreed and gradual basis.

- A Steering Committee be established with representatives from the following bodies:

The Department of Education

College Management

AnCO

Employer Associations

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Teachers

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to advise on the introduction, implementation, monitoring, appeals and updating the relevance of the testing process to current technological practices. The Committee would also advise the Joint Certifying Board (AnCO, and the Department of Education) accordingly within its terms of reference and it would be serviced by the Training Advisory Service of AnCO.

The representation on this Steering Committee is to be as follows:



Department of Education - 2 members  
AnCO - 2 members  
CTF, CII, FUE and IVEA - 1 member each  
ICTU - 4 members (to include one member  
from Teachers' Union of Ireland)

The Chairmanship of the Steering Committee will rotate between the employer and trade union representatives.

The system of testing and certification is to be reviewed in 1989.

The report was agreed and acceptable to all the members of the Working Party. However in the construction industry the trade unions will not accept forward certification as it ends the traditional apprenticeship qualification level on "time-served" rather than educational achievement.

Recent Review of Apprenticeship by CITC:

The Construction Industry Training Committee set up a working party to review the various aspects of apprenticeship training

for the industry. One aspect examined was the minimum educational requirements for entry to an apprenticeship and the following options were outlined for consideration by the CITC:

- . Leave the minimum standard as it is.
- . Modify the existing requirements by placing emphasis on specific subjects;
- . Remove educational requirements altogether and rely on other assessment methods for entry;
- . Raise standard required in Intermediate/Group Certificate;
- . Raise standard to Leaving Certificate;
- . Set out different educational requirements for the different trade groupings.

Another area of concern to the CITC on apprenticeship is the different channels to gain craft entry into the industry. At present there are four:

- . Direct intake into construction company, registered with AnCO, and must have minimum educational

requirement, does year off-the-job and day block/release;

- . Direct intake into company, registered with AnCO and does not do year off-the-job but does day block/release;
- . Direct intake into company is registered but doesn't do either year-off-the-job or block release. Would get completion certificate at end of four years;
- . Direct intake into company not registered, does complete training in company and at the end of time served will get a union card which gives access to a limited number of sites or employers.

At present apprentices qualify for craftsperson status after four years regardless of standards achieved and there is no overall coordination or control over the intake of numbers. The question is posed by the Working Party as to whether the CITC should do anything to control the numbers of apprentices coming into the industry through the various means. The problem in finding a solution is the divergent views of the employers and the trade unions on the channels of entry, system of assessment and any attempt to change traditional access to the crafts.

The Working Party states that in order to ensure that the Irish Construction Industry continues to operate at a high level of

quality and effectiveness, the certification of craftsperson would appear to be a desirable objective.

In order to maximise the benefits accruing from the free movement of workers within the EEC, a recognised system of certification for Irish craftspersons would be desirable and for craft certification to have any status within the industry it must have the support and recognition of both employers and unions.

The recent introduction of the National Craft Certificate is the first step towards apprentices being encouraged to achieve certain standards in addition to serving their time.

The Working Party found that off-the-job training was on the whole very good and of a high standard but recommended an examination of the modular method of off-the-job training operated in some European countries. It was also suggested that the systems used by anCO and the Vocational Educational Committees which are quite different shall be reviewed by the CITC with the intention of closer co-ordination of the two systems.

As regards on-the-job training in the industry and if an apprentice doesn't do the first year off-the-job he/she will get very little formal training on site.

### 6.3.6 Computerisation in the Construction Industry

On the recommendation of the CITC, a study was commissioned from An Foras Forbartha (Institute for Planning and Construction Research) on the subject of computerisation in the Construction Industry.

The study focused on two key areas:-

- . A review and analysis of existing studies, reports and articles.
- . A computer usage and training needs survey in the Construction Industry.

The final report was submitted to AnCO last September and its main conclusions were:

1. The take up of computers in construction has been low compared to other industries mainly due to bad experiences of systems introduced in earlier years, the disparate nature of the industry, the relatively large

proportion of small firms (64% employing less than 4 persons) and the unavailability of specific systems developed for the industry.

2. Information required in the industry is of both a general and project specific nature. The volume of information is large and diffuse and communication to users is difficult.
3. The nature of the information flows in the industry, from design to construction to management of the constructed facility is critical to the development of the full potential of computerisation in the industry.
4. The major potential applications for construction firms are at company management level (i.e. payroll, purchase ledger, sales ledger, nominal ledger, sub-contractor ledger, management reporting and cash flow forecasting) and at project management level (estimating, cost control, planning and scheduling and variations and price adjustment).
5. The introduction of computers can have a significant impact on staff within an organisation and the "human" aspect must be taken into consideration.

6. Training on computers and computer related issues is generally required at all levels in an organisation, i.e. at management, professional/technical and administration/ clerical levels.
7. Training may be required in the following subject areas:- Computer appreciation, project appraisal and feasibility studies, systems management, specific computer applications, keyboard skills and staff motivation.
8. Just over 9% of all firms in the industry use computers with 7.4% using in-house computer systems and 1.8% using bureau services. A further 23% of firms are interested in using computers with 11% having formally considered the matter. About 67% expressed no interest in computers.
9. The level of computer usage varied considerably from sector to sector with 94% and 98% respectively of firms in the civil engineering and cement/concrete manufacturing sectors having systems.
10. The main software application areas were payroll and general accounting.
11. Some 1,150 persons operate computers in the industry with 25% being employed on a full time basis.

12. Levels of investment in computer hardware varied from £3,000 - £300,000 and in computer software from £1,000 - £200,000. However, approximately 50% of firms invested between £3,000 - £10,000 in hardware and £1,000 - £5,000 in software.
13. Prior to the installation of their systems 40% of firms stated that staff had computer related training mainly for management and computer operators.
14. The major application areas for expansion of computers are estimating, planning and cash flow control.
15. The main factors motivating firms to introduce computers is to increase management/financial information and overall management efficiency.
16. The key supports identified by firms in investigating the potential of a computer system were, computer appreciation courses, an independent service to assess their particular requirements, information related to the experience of computer users, an independent assessment of the costs/benefits involved and practical demonstrations of computers in use.



### 6.3.7 Training Requirements:

The report identified the following training needs in regard to computerisation:

#### Existing Users:

The majority expressed a need for training in one or more personnel areas as follows:

- . Clerical/Administration Personnel: Keyboard Skills Knowledge of Software Capabilities
- . Management Personnel : Specific Software Applications User Needs and Specifications New Developments Computer Appreciation Evaluation of Systems Keyboard Skills
- . Technical Personnel : Specific Software Applications Keyboard Skills New Developments

Potential Users:

These firms were divided into those that formally considered computers and those that had not formally considered. There was a considerable consensus among both categories as to what support and training were required. The key training requirements are as follows:

- . Computer Appreciation Courses
- . Assessment of Costs and Benefits
- . Preparation of User Specifications
- . Practical Demonstrations/Training Courses
- . Independent Advice/Information on Suitable Systems
- . Assessment of Computer Needs

Non-Users:

The key training requirement was General Appreciation Courses.

Recommendations:

Based on the information in this report and the findings contained in the survey reports it is recommended that action be

taken to develop training programmes to meet these demands. Such programmes should be practically orientated and specific to the construction industry and its constituent sectors.

The implications of this report for the future computer training needs in the industry will be considered by the next CITC.

#### 6.3.8 Training at Site and Plant Level

Within the construction industry there is no cooperation with or involvement of the trade unions in the identification of training needs, the content of programmes or the development of skills at site or plant level. The trade unions see training and ongoing education as the responsibility of management, given the needs they perceive for the continued efficiency of their enterprise. Management would agree with this view. However, while within the manufacturing sector, training of the existing workforce is determined by advances in technology and new production needs, on the building sites little or no training takes place.

Because of the craft dominance of the site workforce further training is considered unnecessary after the completion of an apprenticeship but also there is no planned programme of training for the unskilled workers on site, many working in vital areas which require particular expertise such as steel fixers, concrete finishers or scaffolding erectors. The general trade union representatives have expressed concern with the lack of training

and consequently the limited opportunities for advancement for these unskilled workers while the craft unions would be concerned about any step in this direction.

However, AnCO through its Adult Training for unemployed persons carry out a number of programmes in the Training Centres or through External Training Agencies in such areas related to the building/construction designation as:

- . Furniture making
- . Sign making
- . Steeplejacks
- . Timber Harvesting
- . Updating of skills for unemployed small builders
- . Concrete workers (as mentioned earlier)

With the very high levels of unemployment within the industry, the opportunities for reentering the workforce even with undated skills are remote for many unemployed people within the sector.

#### 6.4.1 Conclusion

As shown, the Construction industry Training Committee is a body with wide social-partner representation, which considers a very wide range of training issues. Consequently it has extensive influence on the direction and design of training policy for the industry as a whole. The Training Advisory Service of AnCO, after consultation with the members of the CITC submit each year a detailed programme for training within the industry, identifying and giving priority to specific areas of need. This programme is adopted by the CITC after discussion and submitted to the Council of AnCO for approval.

In effect the policy forming body for training in the construction industry is the Council of AnCO. The CITC, while having the right to be consulted acts in an advisory capacity on the programme of training for apprenticeships, for the training of existing workers and in identifying other training needs.

The Council of AnCO after consultation with the Industry Training Committee is empowered to make a levy order imposing a levy on employers within the industry. The legislation also empowers the Council, after consultation with the CITC, to dispose of the monies raised through the levy through grants or loans for the provision of relevant training courses.

#### 6.4.2. Social Partner Role in Training Policy

At sectoral level, as shown, there is a high level of involvement and cooperation between the employer representatives and the trade union members of the CITC. However, at individual firm level the trade unions are not involved in the identification of training needs or in the design of training programmes. Indeed, in most Irish building and construction companies no in-company training takes place and any further post-apprenticeship education or training undertaken by a worker in the industry is done on a personal basis.

The only tentative moves where social partner cooperation is apparent, at individual firm level, is in the area of site safety where a joint Irish Congress of Trade Union and Construction Industry Federation Committee is working on the design of specific safety training programmes. In a recent speech on the subject of health and safety at work, the Minister for Labour, has indicated that shortly he will launch a major programme to reduce accidents and ill health at work and included in this initiative will be the construction industry.

The industry has suffered greatly from the recession since 1980 and consequently the training needs within the sector have diminished in importance with so many unemployed construction workers and apprentices. However, in the formulation of training

policy there is a high level of commitment and cooperation to training and the future needs of the industry so that it can benefit from any increase in building activity as the economic climate improves and the level of investment increases in the years ahead.

The social partners have also co-operated in skill development for young and unemployed construction workers, through Community Youth Training projects under the Social Guarantee scheme.

CHAPTER 7TRAINING IN THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY7.1.1 Introduction

Unlike the construction industry, the textiles sector is a growth area in the Irish economy and is dominated by a number of large employment centres, mainly subsidiaries of multinational companies, operating the latest production systems and technology. The industry consists of approximately 140 firms employing 10,400 and producing a range of natural and synthetic fabrics such as :

- . Woollen and Worsted
- . Linen and Cotton
  
- . Jute and Synthetics
  
- . Hosiery
  
- . Made up Textiles



All of these products are experiencing a boom in demand and production is having difficulty in keeping pace with demand. The turnover for the industry was £543m, of which 70% was exported, totalling £380m in 1985. (IIRS, 1986).

In recent years textiles have undergone significant changes as a result of increased competition, changing markets, new technology and a challenging industrial environment. After a decade of job shedding, the levels of employment have stabilised and are indeed increasing. Since the mid 1970's, largely because of the number of greenfield operations which have been established, the sector is modern and operationally efficient by international standards and generally tends to have large workforces by Irish standards.

A major factor as regards training in the textile sector is the continual demand for product change which results from seasonal demands, shifts in fashion and colour, the wide diversity of raw materials available, as well as the continuing technical developments taking place in materials and processes. Consequently, firms need not only workers with the required skills but also the flexibility to respond to continuing short term and long term change in their markets and in the production process.

Textiles Industry Training Committee (TITC):

This Industry Training Committee is constituted under the same conditions within AnCO as is the Construction Industry Training Committee and was established under the Industrial Training (Textiles Committee) Orders 1969 to 1982. The term of office of the last Committee expired in September 1987. The Committee consisted of 23 members with an equal number of representatives of both workers and employers in the industry, together with an educational member and two independent members. The outgoing Chairman was a Professor of Marketing from University College Dublin.

Unlike the CITC, the Committee for the Textiles Industries has no craft union representation and all the worker representatives are officials of either of the two large Irish General Unions, the ITGWU (8 members) and the FWUI (2 members). On the employers side, textile manufacturing companies have 8 members and the Confederation of Irish Industries (Irish Textile Federation) and the Federated Union of Employers one representative each.

Over the years much of the training for the Irish textile industries, in particular for technologists and managers has been done in:

- . The Scottish College of Textiles
- . Leicester Polytechnic

- . Hollings College, Manchester
- . Leeds and Bradford University

and other similar institutions. Training for these aspects of the industry in UK colleges has been greatly facilitated by the availability of scholarships from AnCO.

The Levy/Grant Scheme:

The main role of AnCO as it impinges on the day to day operations of textiles firms pertains to the operation of the Levy/Grant system. Every two years a Levy/Grant Scheme is devised by the Training Committee. Each scheme includes:

- (a) The percentage to be levied of each firm's payroll which comes within the levy scheme, those firms below a certain level of total payroll being exempted;
- (b) The conditions under which grants will be repaid to the companies in the scheme.

In general, firms within the Levy/Grant Scheme are entitled to recover 90% of the levy they paid, subject to their meeting the

conditions of grant as stipulated. Because a percentage of firms do not claim for levy recovery or do not meet the stipulated conditions for grant approval, a surplus levy fund arises each year. Firms who have already recovered 90% of levy may benefit from these surplus levy funds (and get back amounts in excess of their original levy contribution) depending on how the Training Committee decides to dispose of these surplus levy funds.

Once a Levy/Grant Scheme has been agreed by the tripartite committee it goes to the Council of AnCO for approval and following that to the Minister for Labour. Once the Minister for Labour's approval is granted, AnCO may make an Order bringing that scheme into effect for the year in question.

The Levy/Grant Scheme was first implemented for the textiles industries in 1969/70 and has operated in each year since then. The main objectives of the schemes in that period were to establish the training function at the level of the individual firm (with training management being established in each firm) and to get firms to approach training in a systematic way.

### 7.2.1 Netting and Exemption from Levy

In the 1978/79 Levy/Grant Scheme, the rating/netting principle was introduced. This pertained to firms whose training progress had been such that they warranted recognition by the system. Firms whose systematic training approach exceeded an agreed score (66 points) were required to pay only 10% of levy and were absolved from paying the other 90% which was previously recoverable through grants. This facilitated the cash flow of the netted companies.

In July 1977 the TITC, in the context of their discussion of netting, recommended to the Council of AnCO that exemption from levy for firms doing exemplary training should be introduced for the Levy/Grant Scheme in the year 1980/81. There was considerable discussion of this question within the TITC and AnCO. In 1982 the Council of AnCO decided to accept the principle of exemption for firms who reached a qualifying standard on the rating scale, the details of the scheme to be worked out later. The decision of the Council was not implemented pending review of the total future of the Levy/Grant Scheme by a Working Party drawn from AnCO and the Department of Labour.

### 7.3.1 Apprenticeship in Textiles

There are no designated trades within the textile industry but many of the leading companies are committed to apprenticeship training in the trades in which they have craft employees, in particular fitters and electricians.

Many employers have expressed dissatisfaction at the slow pace of change in the training of crafts people through the apprenticeship scheme in contrast to the rapid change in technology in the industry. To cope with the need a number of companies with the cooperation of the worker representatives have concentrated on providing training for non designated crafts such as Carding Engineers and Loom Tuners for up to five years, thus providing high skilled employment with the capability of fully maintaining modern computerised weaving looms and replacing the less flexible fitter. In one company this training period includes six weeks training in a UK plant. This particular company further proposes to recruit trainees after completion of their second level education and provide an intensive course on Loom Tuners in Scotland and this approach has been agreed with and has the complete support of the trade unions.

All companies who train apprentices and the trade unions involved support the first year off-the-job and the level of training received in the two Regional Technical Colleges (Athlone and

Dundalk) is considered to be of a high calibre. There is also a high level of commitment from both employers and trade unions to on-the-job training for the remaining three years of the apprenticeship.

As regards the certification of apprentices on completion of their four years training, the same attitudes prevail as in the Construction Industry. To a large extent apprentice intake into the fitter or electrician trades reflects the views of the trade unions in a local area and the trade unions also consider that "time served" in a unionised employment qualifies an apprentice for a union membership card. The trade unions therefore continue to consider certification of apprentices with a lack of enthusiasm.

#### 7.4.1 Training for Workers in the Textile Industry

Because of its rapidly changing technology there is a consciousness of the need for training within the textile industry in particular in the modern synthetic and cotton sectors and the major companies invest large amounts in training. The Industrial Training Committee has established a system used in many companies and by AnCO for the industry as a whole called ITN (Identification of Training Needs). On the basis of this exercise, training programmes in company and for the industry as a whole are devised and implemented.

One particular company has undertaken in its collective agreement to:

offer training opportunities whenever practicable. However it is agreed that if a job requires a skill that is not readily available within the plant, the company will not be obliged to train present employees for such jobs.

The Levy/Grant Scheme, for the Textile Industry is 1% of total payroll for firms with emoluments over £90,000 per annum. Organisations with a lower emolument are exempted but may opt into the Scheme.

As with the CITC, the concentration of in company training in recent years in the textile companies has been in the area of:

- . Management and Supervisory Development
- . Marketing and Sales
- . Quality Control
- . Computer Training



The Textile Industry Training committee allocated surplus funds in 1985/86 for additional training in specific areas identified as needing support by the Committee. Some of these courses are:

- . Technical courses, both abroad and in-company
- . Textile Technology Training
- . Training for re-equipment
- . Industrial Graduate or undergraduate training
- . Training of redundant 3rd of 4th year apprentices
- . Trade Union training courses
- . Safety Training

The surplus fund grant for Trade Union training courses consists of a payment of £36 per day or the actual wage of the participant, whichever is the lesser, which will be paid to firms for employees who are trade union members attending such courses. Many textile companies facilitate the trade union members on the workforce in attending these courses and avail of this particular grant.

In all textile firms safety training gets a high priority, and in a number there is active involvement of the trade union representative in safety courses and safety representatives or members of the safety committee are released to attend ICTU safety courses under the provisions of the grants from the surplus levy fund.

One major area of trade union involvement in in-company training is as regards the protection of production bonuses. During training the bonus allowance is not paid and consequently there would be a reduction in the workers wage. Unions monitor this situation and if a member is in danger of suffering a reduction in income representations will be made to management. This also applies in the case of a worker who has recently completed a training course and may suffer a reduction in bonus while getting "up-to-speed" on a newly learned skill. In one company the shop steward regularly seeks the assistance of the instructor in such cases.

With the exception of safety, trade unions do not get involved in course content but may in some cases be consulted on who should attend specific training courses.

### 7.5.1 Social Training

One aspect of training in the textile firms is the commitment to providing work experience or training courses for unemployed school leavers. Many of the companies reviewed have a number of young people participating in various forms of work experience or temporary training such as:

- . Second level Transition Year Student
- . Youth Community Projects
- . Work Experience Placements
- . Trainee Marketing (associated with Irish Goods Council)
- . Young Travellers Workshop

In all these companies the trade unions have been supportive of such social training so long as the employment of existing employees is not threatened. One company actually has a clause written into its collective agreement as a guarantee to this effect. In this firm the names of those who have had a work

experience placement with the firm are kept on a reserve list and are given priority when vacancies arise. However some 80% of these young trainees secure employment within a very short space of time after completion of the placement, all of which has active union support.

#### 7.6.1 Conclusion

The Textile Sector has weathered the recession stronger and more efficient due in large part to a strong commitment to training at all levels. AnCO, through the apprenticeship scheme and their identification of specific training needs contribute to keeping the companies competitive in the international markets.

The extent of cooperation and commitment to the training needs between the employers and trade unions has created a positive climate for employee development within the industry. The involvement of the social partners in the identification of training needs and the formulation of training policy to meet these needs at sectoral level, is substantial. However, as in other sectors, the involvement of trade unions at individual company level is low but not so low as in the construction industry.

Both management and trade unions at the level of the individual firm consider training policy as the responsibility of management

and training programmes will reflect the commercial needs of the company in keeping up to date with new technology to meet the demands of the market place. However, many of the larger firms do consult with the worker representatives on aspects of training courses which may effect trainee earnings or other aspects of their employment.

One aspect of training which is given wide support by firms operating in this sector is training and work experience for young unemployed school leavers involved in Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes, (VPTP's), community projects or second level transition year programmes. Many of the larger enterprises would continually have up to six young people from these programmes on work experience modules within their workforce. This commitment, as we have seen, has the full support of the trade unions.

CHAPTER 8TRAINING FOR THE HOTEL, CATERING AND TOURISM INDUSTRIES8.1.1 Introduction:

Tourism in Ireland is an important sector within the economy, being a major foreign exchange earner, a big employer both of full time and seasonal workers and makes a large contribution to the national exchequer. In 1985 tourism earnings amounted to £960 m. or 5.5% of G.D.P. and 35,000 people were directly employed totalling approximately 3% of the workforce, with many more seasonal workers employed during the main tourist season.

It is an industry which is very dependent not only on the international economic environment but also on the political climate both at home and abroad at any given time. A growth rate of 8% per annum for international tourism is projected up to 1995, and the hope for the Irish market is to gear itself to attract an additional £500 m., in revenue from foreign tourists over the next 5 years. It is hoped that this level of expansion

will generate an extra 25,000 jobs within the sector. Consequently, the training function within the industry is of vital importance for its development.

A vital component of the tourism industry is the hotel and catering area and this has grown rapidly over the past fifteen to twenty years. Unlike other sectors training for the hotel and catering industries is not provided by AnCO but by the Council for Education, Training and Recruitment in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Industry (CERT), which is the oldest of the Irish manpower agencies, having being established as a company in 1963. Its main activities are in industry-based training, college and school based training and the training for the unemployed or those returning to work, in its own training centres.

CERT is a State sponsored organisation receiving a grant-in -aid through the Department of Labour for its activities and it also receives funds from the European Social Fund, the Youth Employment Agency and through grants from the industry.

The stated policy of CERT is:

- to co-ordinate the recruitment, training and formal education of young people preparing for careers in the industry;

- to assist companies so that a high standard of training is provided at all levels for those already in employment;
- to provide training for unemployed people that will enhance their prospects of securing employment;
- to provide advisory and support services to the industry.

In 1985 a Manpower Survey showed that over 63,000 people are directly employed in the hotel and catering sectors alone, and the survey indicated a small but steady growth in employment. Of these 63,000, 73% are permanent while the remainder are working on a seasonal or casual basis. The survey also revealed that two thirds (66%) of the hotel and catering workforce are female.

Many aspects of the industry covered by CERT go beyond those directly associated with tourism, and the training provided through the various courses are available to workers in institutional and industrial catering such as hospitals, workplace canteens and sports and social clubs as well as the more general areas such as hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and the licensed trade.



The Council of CERT is representative of all of those organisations with interests in the various sub-sectors of the industry, as follows:

The Industrial Training Authority - one member

Educational interests - three members

Department of Labour - one member

Irish Hotels Federation - two members

Restaurants Associations - one member

Trade union associated with the sector - two members

Others - three members

The Minister for Labour appoints an independent Chairman and also appoints four additional members to the Council.

The Council of CERT have set out a plan for the next three years designed to improve the economic development of the hotel, catering and tourism industry through training of the workforce at all levels. The plan is also intended to help in the co-ordination of the education of young people entering the industry. Key aspects of the plan are:

- The development of a range of high quality management training programmes and the establishment of a formalised programme for trainee managers.
- A major research programme into specific industry issues including management, the scope of tourism and in-company training.
- The extension of training and consultancy services in the international field, to secure additional revenue, and to establish a record of high quality overseas work.
- The introduction of an Industry Competence Awards Scheme aimed at raising operational standards through on-the-job certification of industry staff.
- The expansion of in-company training programmes, to extend the number of companies operating their own staff training under CERT guidance.
- The extension of national certification to all formal craft training courses through CERTS's work with the National Curricula and Certification Board.

- The provision of training and advisory services for the industry, with a new emphasis on small business development.
  
- The continuation of CERT's student industrial placement service in Ireland and overseas.
  
- The development of a range of training publications and resources.

While the emphasis of the plan is on the education, training and placement of young people entering the industry, it also provides for ongoing training needs across a wide spectrum which includes training for the unemployed, management and other specialised training courses.

#### 8.2.1 Curriculum Development and Certification

A National Craft Curricula and Certification Board for the industry was set up in 1982 by CERT and the Department of Education, to develop a national system of curricula and certification for the hotel, catering and tourism industry. The

membership of this Board is representative of the range of expertise on the Council of CERT including the trade unions, and of the Department of Education.

To date standards for certification have been set for bartenders, waiter/waitresses and hospitality assistant courses. The Board is at present developing standards for a national course for chefs which will be recognised for certification, and will be an alternative to the British City and Guilds examination.

A series of other courses have also been approved, designed to give those working within the industry the opportunity for further full-time training in college, leading to National Certificate qualifications in such aspects of the industry as Bar Supervision and Accommodation Supervision and provide the opportunity to up-date all levels of staff with new trends and developments within the industry.

#### 8.2.2 Management and Supervisory Training

A recent report carried out on behalf of the Government, into the Irish Tourist Industry expressed concern at the insufficient resources for the development of key management skills and the lack of co-ordination between available college courses and the requirements of the industry.

CERT also identified the need for formal training programmes at supervisory levels within the industry. It emerged from a recent review of the workforce that many in supervisory positions such as Head Waiters/Waitresses, Head Bartenders and Accommodation Supervisors, had been informally trained on the job and that a significant number had received no formal training for their jobs. Consequently, new advanced courses were introduced in 1986 aimed at preparing experienced personnel for supervisory positions. Short term courses and seminars were also provided to meet other identified needs within the industry, and were designed and developed in consultation with industry associations, many of whom are represented on the Council of CERT. Examples of such courses which were designed to provide the participants with an in-depth knowledge of specific subjects such as stock control, Accountancy for Hotels and Restaurants, Modern Dietetics, Computerisation, Sales Negotiations and labour law.

### 8.2.3 In-Company Training

A recent trend in the sector has been to provide training courses on a range of subjects within hotels, catering and other tourism establishments. CERT has encouraged firms to set up and develop their own system for training staff in the workplace. Because of concern with the lack of management and supervisory skills there has been particular emphasis in these in-company training programmes on the training of managers and supervisor thus giving this level of staff practical assistance in improving their work skills.

#### 8.2.4 Training of Apprentices

CERT is responsible for the organisation, recruitment and training of young people entering the Craft Apprenticeship Scheme within the industry. The designated apprenticeships are those of chef, waiter/waitress, bartender, housekeeping assistant and porters. Courses for these trainees are provided in a number of Regional Technical Colleges throughout the country, the College of Catering, Dublin and other third level colleges and training centres. In 1986, a total of 1,223 young people attended full time craft courses in these skills.

The trade unions organising within the industry take a neutral role in the training of apprentices as regards the development and organisation of the training programmes through the various colleges and training centres. However, as in the other industrial sectors reviewed, they take the view that time served should be considered as acceptable in the recognition of a craft qualification. Others in the industry, CERT, the Vocational Education Committees, and the Department of Education hold the view that the modern demands on the industry require a higher level of skill and consequently a recognised formal certified qualification.

### 8.2.5 , Work Experience Placements

As a requirement for national certification of the craft qualifications, trainees receive a minimum of four months work experience each. This is intended to ease the transition from college into the workplace environment. In the past three years so great is the shortage of trained personnel that demand from the industry for work experience trainees has doubled and an average of two trainees were placed in each host establishment in 1986.

The growing value placed on the need for formal training within the industry is highlighted by the fact that in most crafts the demand for trainees exceeded supply, in particular the demand for final year chefs and for dining room trainees far outstripped the numbers available for placement.

### 8.3.1 Diploma and Degree Courses

The Dublin College of Catering a college of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee at third level, provides degree and diploma courses not only in Hotel and Catering Management but

also in Home and Social Science, Food Technology, Environmental Health and Environmental Management. Other third level colleges also provide training for the industry. Through their representation on the Councils of these third level bodies, the social partners participate in the affairs of these third level institutions.

### 8.3.2 Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes (VPTP)

As referred to in an earlier section of this report, recent years have seen the introduction of Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes for young unemployed school leavers. The intention of these full-time programmes is to provide these young people with a basic training in an employable skill and with work experience.

Programmes meeting these requirements were set up in hotel, catering and tourism skills in thirteen second level schools and in 1986 over 300 students participated. The Vocational Preparation and Training Programmes were designed by CERT and the Department of Education and they provide a broad understanding of the industry, a range of basic practical skills and work experience, in addition to continuing general education. It is intended that in future years a number of places will be reserved for the more successful VPTP students for formal training in hotel and catering skills.



#### 8.4.1 Training and Placement Abroad

What is considered a vital aspect of training in the hotel, catering and tourism industry is the need for international experience. CERT in recognising this need for further training and work experience so as to broaden the range of skills and experience for trainees and workers within the industry.

Work experience arrangements have been made with a number of American hotels and restaurants in recent years, but the main international experience is through the Swiss Hotel Association and the EEC Young Workers Exchange Programme to Italy, France, and Germany. A total of 111 people were selected for training on these exchange programmes. A further 8 CERT graduates received one year's further training and experience in the Irish Institute for European Affairs in Louvain, Belgium. Their studies included practical experience in specific areas of kitchen, diningroom and housekeeping as well as additional course in language, cultural and environmental studies.

#### 8.4.2 Training of the Unemployed

Because of the shortage of well trained staff in certain skills, CERT have provided basic craft training for unemployed people

seeking jobs within the industry. To meet the demand for these courses, training is provided in two permanent centres in Dublin and a number of temporary centres set up as required in seasonal hotels in regional locations.

The courses provided covered such areas as basic cookery, bar operations, food service and accommodation services. All of these courses include a lifeskills general education programme and training in new technology. These courses are funded through the European Social Fund, the Youth Employment Levy and from the Exchequer Grant to CERT.

#### 8.4.3 Hygiene and Safety Training

On going courses on hygiene and safety training both through CERT and in-company is a vital requirement of the industry. Unlike the other areas of training where the trade unions have no specific input into course content or structures, in this area of training companies and individual hotels will discuss with trade union representation the content of the courses. This is considered necessary so as to avoid industrial relations problems if disciplinary action is required for a breach of hygiene or safety regulations and so that the trade union representative is aware of the reasons for training.

#### 8.4.4 The Role of the Trade Union

Apart from the level of consultation with employers as regards hygiene and safety training, trade unions have no input into training programmes within individual establishments and companies nor is there consultation on course content. Trade unions do, however, at a national level participate actively in the formulation of training policy through the Council of CERT and the National Craft Curricula and Certification Board.

#### Conclusion:

With the growing competition internationally for tourists, and the growing awareness of ever raising standards and demand for quality, higher levels of training in the hotel, catering and tourism industry has become more urgent. There is an wide level of commitment and co-operation between the social partners with the various sub-sectors operating in the industry. In particular there is a deep commitment among employers for continuous updating of skills of existing employees and in providing training opportunities to young people coming into the industry. It is the general view of the employers consulted that they get value for their investment into training but as one employer observed "there is no quick pay-off from training, it is a long term investment".

PART IV

REVIEW & CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 9REVIEW OF KEY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS9.1 General Considerations

9.1.1 In attempting to isolate from the report key issues in vocational education and training, which in turn can act as a backdrop to recommendations, it is relevant to view the involvement of the social partners within a number of distinct areas:

- Policy formulation and resource allocation.
- Strategy for implementation at National, Sectoral and Company levels.
- Form and content of vocational education and training interventions.
- Evaluation and communication of ongoing achievements.

As we have seen, for the most part the involvement of the social partners differs depending on the area: Involvement generally is high in policy making and low in delivery or implementation.

The above framework will be followed both in the context of Vocational Education and Vocational Training. While adhering to this overview a few general considerations are initially examined.

From analyses in the preceding chapters it is clear that key issues, both of a general and specific nature, begin to emerge. There are, for instance, wide differences between how the vocational education and vocational training systems are administered and financed. Some of these differences spring from the fact that, as already mentioned, the vocational education system was set in place at a much earlier time than was the case with regard to vocational training. Other disparities spring from differences in philosophy and conception regarding the objectives and functions of education as opposed to training. Education has been established much more as a basic right of citizens than has training and is seen much more as a prerogative and a responsibility of the State than is the case with regard to training.

- 9.1.2 The Industrial Training Act of 1967, highlighted training as a responsibility of employers and the Levy Grant

Schemes directly reflect this. Revenue from the Grant Scheme, however, has diminished greatly as a proportion of resources devoted to training over the twenty year period in which AnCO has been in operation. Changing conceptions of the role of training, away from purely economic and immediate manpower objectives toward social objectives, has led to a great increase in State financing, matched by funds from the European Community, devoted to training and at the disposal of AnCO and other training bodies. This has meant that the training bodies concerned with social partner participation have possibly become instruments in carrying out a wider range of government objectives and policies than has been the case twenty or even ten years ago.

- 9.1.3 While the emphasis in this report has been on those bodies and those areas of training where there has been involvement of the social partners, it should not be forgotten that similar provisions for training have not been made in the services area, which is a large and growing sector in the economy. There is little doubt that training as carried out in the services sector differs greatly in the quality and resources devoted to it, being of high quality in such areas as banking and insurance and the public utilities generally. In the course of this project preliminary approaches were made to the retail banking sector so as to carry out an analysis of the role of the social partners training in banking. It was quickly discovered that the social partners as such had no role, so that it was not possible to pursue such a course.

9.1.4 As regards provision for training there are three distinct conditions which are discernible, hinging on the involvement or lack of involvement of government, as follows:

- (a) Tripartite statutory bodies such as AnCO, CERT, the YEA and the new Labour Services Agency (FAS) with defined objectives and structures composed of representatives of central administration, employers and trade unions and answerable to the appropriate Minister.
- (b) Statutory bodies such as the Council for the Development of Agriculture (ACOT) and the Fisheries Board (BIM) which are charged with certain training responsibilities, but in which there is no provision for social partner involvement.
- (c) Training in other areas of the services sector, where no government provision for training has been made. Such lack of provision, of course, does not preclude involvement of the social partners but such involvement would be the exception rather than the rule.

In the areas where there is tripartite involvement, such involvement tends to be taken for granted. Certainly in the course of this research, there were no strong views



expressed that the system should be in any sense discontinued. Because it is taken for granted, however, it is not always possible to pinpoint the very great advantages that have accrued from the tripartite approach and the way in which it has helped to facilitate the development of a strong vocational training system, to reconcile differences and to smooth the path in developing manpower policies consonant with the very great economic, industrial and social changes through which the country has been progressing over the past twenty years. This success is seen in the general consensus, that by and large, the country has a well educated and well trained workforce. The review of issues and recommendations that follows are aimed at facilitating the further development of vocational education and training.

#### 9.2.1 Why Involve the Social Partners in Vocational Education and Training

A key issue and a key question to ask is why should the social partners be involved in issues of vocational education and training and how this involvement should best be structured. Already we have seen that there are areas of both education and training where they have not been involved and are not involved. The main reasons for involving them must be that their involvement facilitates decision making. This we can assume arises because:

- (a) The social partners have a vested interest in decisions taken in the area and if they are not party to such decisions implementation can be subsequently affected.
- (b) The social partners can provide a particular type of expertise e.g. knowledge of conditions at enterprise level or knowledge of the attitudes and beliefs of their members; which can make decisions taken more readily capable of being implemented than if they were not involved.
- (c) Representatives of the social partners have a specific expertise in regard to education or training such as the content of training, techniques of training, or up to date knowledge of developments in training.

The second part of the question raised above related to how the social partners might be involved. There are a number of ways in practice that this involvement comes about:

- (a) Through nominations to particular bodies as a statutory right as in the case of AnCO or the Labour Services Agency.

- (b) Through invitations to sit on a particular body by a minister as a representative of a government or employer organisation.
- (c) Through invitation to sit on a particular committee either national, regional, sectoral or local by a school, training body or local community group.

It should be stated, of course, that the social partners themselves could make arrangements, independently of government to meet, discuss and take decisions on issues relating to education and training matters. This is not the model for social partner involvement which has emerged in Ireland; the social partners do not tend to take joint initiatives of this type.

In summary, the role of the social partners, therefore, can and does differ firstly as to the stage in the cycle at which involvement takes place e.g. policy formulation or implementation, secondly as to the reasons for involving them and, thirdly, as to the manner in which involvement takes place.

The recommendations and the specific considerations giving rise to them now follow.

### 9.3 Vocational Education

9.3.1 Under the Vocational Education Act 1930, it was recommended that in appointing Vocational Education Committees, local authorities should endeavour to include representatives of employer and employee interests. As was pointed out in the text this was never formally implemented.

There are good reasons for having the social partners formally represented. Firstly such formal representation would serve to signify the very direct interest the social partners have in vocational education. Secondly, such representation could ensure that debates and discussions relating to education had an input from those with knowledge and experience of conditions within the enterprise and the world of work. Thirdly it would help to give emphasis to the importance of transition from school to work. Fourthly, such formal representation could help to facilitate the development of other less formal links between the social partners and educational agencies.

Reference has been made to the fact that as the situation currently stands chief executives of Vocational Education Committees and principals of second level schools

do establish links as a matter of course with industry and the social partners in regard to specific projects. We consider such links invaluable and a necessary supplement to more formal representation on Vocational Education Committees.

It was found in the course of the project that both teachers and administrators would welcome stronger links and more involvement with the social partners, seeing this as a means of increasing the local relevance of education and as a means of broadening the perspectives of pupils. They did emphasise, however, that involvement of the social partners worked most fruitfully when the emphasis was placed on the role expertise of those involved rather than on the representative role. When representative interests became paramount, and roles became highly structured in project groups, progress could become difficult and slow.

There are a number of other reasons why greater social partner involvement in vocational education would be useful. As was pointed out, in an earlier section, traditionally in Ireland, industrial and manual occupations were and are seen as less desirable than professional or white collar occupations. Strong representation of the social partners in the system could help to redress this. In addition the National Economic and Social Council has pointed out (P.11, this report) the need for greater cooperation/liaison between the education

and training sectors. Introducing the social partners more strongly into the education side could help in establishing such closer liaison.

It is recommended, therefore:

- (a) that the social partners should be formally represented on Vocational Education Committees and
- (b) that educational authorities in conjunction with the social partners should investigate the means by which local links can be consolidated and further strengthened.

#### 9.4 Vocational Training

9.4.1 There is statutory involvement of the social partners in the area of policy making and resource allocation through participation in the Councils of AnCO, CERT, YEA and on such bodies as the National Council for Social and Economic Development. This pattern of involvement holds true both in regard to national and sectoral levels.

At enterprise and local level, however, divergences in the roles of the respective parties emerge. There are few

examples of joint involvement of the partners at enterprise level; generally development and implementation of training policy at this level is the prerogative of management. There is some evidence from the sectoral study on textiles of a movement toward joint efforts in this regard. It must be assumed that becoming involved in training matters at these levels is not a pressing issue for trade unions. Trade unions have a degree of control over the development of training policy at national and sectoral levels where criteria, both for the disbursement of funds and for standards for training programmes are set. The implementation of these policies is approved and monitored by the appropriate staff of AnCO in regard to all types of training - apprentice, upgrading of skills and re-training.

The main developments in the training field in recent years have been towards, social objectives as a response to labour market conditions. In turn this has led to involvement of parties other than the social partners e.g. community interests in decisions on training. The involvement of the social partners has undoubtedly greatly facilitated the emergence of this type of training and there have been, for instance, very few problems with regard to developing work experience programmes or community based projects for unemployed. Without the history of social partner involvement and the established links between manpower/training agencies and trade unions, employers and enterprise managements, such initiatives would likely have posed more problems.

#### 9.4.2 Employers:

Policy considerations from an employer perspective are influenced by a number of factors:

- That expenditure and human resource development should be aimed towards general preparation (education) and specific skill acquisition (training).
- That training should be cost effective and not generated simply by the availability of funds. On this account employers generally are (have been for some time) unenthusiastic about Levy Grant Schemes and related funding mechanisms.
- That certain forms of apprenticeship are outmoded and craft skills could be more effectively acquired by revised arrangements. The trade union countervailing view would be influenced in this regard by the need to protect existing members' interests.
- That training is most cost effective when specific and responding to an identified need. While employers have supported the need for programmes which cater for the unemployed, they would maintain



that problems can arise in regard to these programmes if the skills so acquired do not enhance job opportunities.

#### 9.4.3 Trade Unions:

Trade unions while not necessarily opposed to the general thrust of employer thinking would nevertheless emphasise other considerations which would include:

- Developing mobility within the labour market through acquisition of transferable skills.
- Provisions for disadvantaged groups.
- Their perception of the volume and quality of skill already existing in particular segments of the labour market.
- The need for job experience to complement skill and knowledge acquisition.

Both parties would support the emphasis on spending as high a proportion as possible of resources on direct training rather than on administrative support structures.

## 9.5 New Roles and Opportunities

9.5.1 The establishment of the Labour Services Agency (FAS), bringing together The Industrial Training Authority, Youth Employment Agency and National Manpower Service as one body will dominate the vocational training scenario in Ireland for years to come. Any consideration, therefore, of social partner activity in vocational training must be considered in this context and extensive involvement of the social partners in this body has already been legislatively provided for as described earlier.

The establishment of the Labour Services Agency (FAS) on the 1st January 1988, taken in conjunction with recent developments and proposals in vocational education affords a timely opportunity to the social partners to review their respective roles.

This recommendation is all the more relevant since the social partners have recently played a major role in bringing about the agreed programme for National Recovery. The consensus arrived at through the formulation

of this programme involved a serious re-examination by the social partners of their own roles within the overall economic and social fabric, a process which could now be applied to the vocational training arena, particularly since vocational training is seen as playing a significant role in the Recovery Programme.

9.5.2 There is a need for the social partners to develop and promulgate their own policies in regard to education and training.

There has been a tendency over the twenty years for the social partners to react to government and government agency initiatives in education and training. In other words the government has set the stage and the agenda for developments. It would make for a more robust form of involvement, if the social partners became more proactive and more questioning, individually and jointly, in regard to training matters, in accordance with their status in the community and their importance in national life. From this would come a greater tension and vibrancy in the development of training policy. A more positive and vigorous execution of role for the social partners could extend beyond policy formulation even to a point where, as in other member states, the social partners collectively or separately would become directly involved in the provision of training itself.

### 9.5.3 Role Examination by the Social Partners

Throughout the report the importance and significance of the contribution of the social partners within the national structural framework has been emphasised. It is already clear that participation in the form of representation of the social partners will continue. Both the nature of the representation and the role to be played by the representatives deserves attention.

In addition to protecting constituent interests, there is a strong case for the social partners to look more closely at an expanded contribution which would transcend constituency considerations. It is not that the social partners ignore such considerations at present but that there would be benefit in devoting even greater attention to an expanded contribution. It is recommended, therefore, that the social partners consider:

- (a) How best representatives to the statutory and other structures should be selected so as to maximise the relevant social partner contribution.
- (b) How on both an individual and collective basis the respective social partner constituencies can

service the organisations. Consideration could be given, for example, to the creation of expert groups on vocational training within the parent social partner institutions.

(c) Dissemination of and discussion on the outcomes of social partner representation in order that a wider audience from the respective constituencies are informed of and committed to the policies and programmes adopted.

(d) In addition to developing and promulgating their own policies on vocational training there is also need for the social partners to independently, monitor and research particular training initiatives and outcomes of initiatives, that is, independently of the training agency involved. This would probably best be done by collating the views of members of the constituent bodies on a regular basis rather than by undertaking in depth research as such. Again, this would be aimed at having the social partners develop systematic and planned approaches to vocational training, that is, planned to reflect their members needs, interests and ideas so as to generate wide debate on training issues.

9.5.4 It may be opportune, given present developments, for both social partners to consider a role as potential providers of training. Unlike other Member States there is no established tradition in Ireland, as we have seen, whereby, either collectively or individually, social partner institutions provide vocational training. The expertise and experience built up in many individual companies in the vocational training field has already led to an ad hoc situation whereby such companies may offer programmes on the 'open market' so to speak. Similarly, expertise in training and development matters has grown up within individual trade unions to a point where certain facilities and programmes could form part of the national scene. While this would represent a radical departure in certain instances, it could nevertheless, if properly introduced, further confirm the Social Partner role within vocational training overall.

9.5.5 Particular problems are posed by the continuing high rates of unemployment in Ireland and both social partners may have a clear role to play in the provision of training for this group. Already there are some limited examples where social partner institutions have established either special funds or structures which provide for training for the unemployed with a view to their re-integration into the workforce. This area may present a unique opportunity to the social partners to expand their role in vocational

training since their intimate links with industry and with the unemployed themselves provide an excellent platform for action. Whether such activity would always form part of overall Government strategy is a moot point, and, in certain instances, such training might best be considered as separate from the national scene. Clearly, however, any question of duplication of resources would have to be avoided.

- 9.5.6 Quite apart from becoming involved directly in training, as was pointed out a number of times in earlier sections of the report, there has been a movement towards community institutions in regard to unemployment. The social partners are playing a constructive role in these developments already.

The time may be right, however, for the social partners in conjunction with the appropriate agencies to review how well the involvement of the social partners, in regard to training with mainly social objectives, has worked in the past and how it might best be consolidated for the future.

This recommendation is made in the context of training with social objectives having come about as a reaction to

high unemployment and not within the context of a deliberately planned manpower initiative. There is, for instance, no committee which oversees such training as in the case of the long established Industry Committees, though of course the Youth Employment Agency has had a coordinating role in regard to people under 25 years of age.

## 9.6 Training and Re-Training Within Industry

9.6.1 Vocational training and re-training within industry must continue to be a major objective of the manpower and training agencies. The changing nature of work itself and the advent of new technology continues to demand new skills and knowledge from the existing workforce and from new entrants. The continued existence of certain traditional craft based approaches to training is likely to remain a lively issue exercising both social partners in the immediate future. Questions of certification and qualification are likely to continue and even grow given the increased present and future mobility within Europe and the likely harmonisation of working conditions when the completion of the internal market takes place in 1992.

It is recommended, therefore, that as a matter of urgency questions of certification and the establishment of standards generally in regard to training be investigated within the context of the increased and increasing



mobility of labour within the EEC and in the context of the completion of the market in 1992.

- 9.6.2 There is no provision for involvement of trade unions in training decisions at plant level as we have seen. Equally it would seem little direct involvement takes place except in the matter of how training can affect pay or working conditions. It is the authors' experience that the involvement of trade unions is likely to be somewhat greater than emerged in the report particularly in regard to training related to the introduction of new technology. There are benefits likely to accrue in certain situations from joint approaches to training and development at plant level.

The development of case studies relating to joint involvement in implementation of training would, it is suggested, be a useful contribution to knowledge in the area and provide indicators of policy in the future.

### 9.7 Conclusion

The involvement of the social partners in Ireland has been a part of a tripartite model - government, trade unions and employers and this basically remains the model within the new Labour Services Agency being established on the 1st January, 1988. Funding for training is largely now provided by government through funding of the agencies involved in training and their activities and through a number of grant schemes in which charges are levied on employers.

There is a tendency in such a situation where the main initiatives are taken by government, that the social partners given their pre-occupation with many other matters besides training, become reactive rather than pro-active. Being in a sense consumers and representing consumers of training, so to speak, there is much to be gained by the social partners in becoming pro-active. This in turn possibly means giving somewhat more attention and consideration to alternative approaches and ideas in the training area than has been done in the past. The experience of twenty years work is a good base from which to start.

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