

created in 1970 and provides the link between government, industry and unions. It is federally financed by the Ministry of Education; Parliament approves the budget. It carries out research and development projects in the field of vocational training and negotiates training needs independently from the government. The Institute provides data on vocational education and training to inform employers and the public and to prepare the field for discussion and planning (Schmidt, paras. 1 to 3).

(51) The law requires a firm and its trainees to sign a contract agreeing to follow the training guidelines for their chosen trade or profession.

(52) Many large firms (eg. Bayer) provide vocational training for selected, top-quality apprentices, according to the guidelines set by the Chambers of Industry and Commerce. However, 65% of young people are trained in enterprises of less than 50 employees. In 1976, the government discussed the introduction of a levy on industry to finance an increase in the number of training places. Unions were favorable but industry saw the law as unnecessary government intervention. Employers agreed to produce an increased number of training places voluntarily. Most of the increase came in the crafts sector where apprentices can be trained at low cost, on the job, and also receive schooling in government-financed centres serving many smaller firms (Schmidt, paras. 15 to 19).

(53) Each year, up to 700,000 school-leavers over the age of 16 seek places in 420 apprenticeable trades. Training lasts from three to 3½ years, on average, with two days per week spent in the classroom and three days in the work place.

(54) At the end of the apprenticeship period, trainees are examined and, if they qualify, receive a nationally recognized diploma of vocational achievement awarded by the local Chamber of Industry and Commerce. This system of certification makes it easier for employers to know how skilled a potential employee is (Himmelreich, para. 2). Nine out of ten apprentices find jobs after certified training. Training in the dual system seems to be the best preparation for work (Allert and Braun, para. 17).

Re-training

(55) Whereas specific curricula are detailed in guidelines for initial training, no such guidelines exist for re-training (see para. 82. for Canada).

(56) Re-training is usually undertaken by employers at the work place and success is determined after a final exam at the end of the re-training period.

(57) The re-training system does not follow the format of the dual system for initial training that alternates systematically between work in an enterprise and the classroom. Our German witnesses said that re-training is less successful and produces worse results than the dual system of initial vocational training.

(58) Re-training is more successful, however, among those who have already had initial training (Schmidt, para. 22). Problems seem to spring from the inability of older workers to adapt to new methods rather than from a lack of motivation.

FRANCE

(59) The unemployment rate in France was 11.1% as of April 1987 and the average length of unemployment was 350 days.

(60) All social partners are beginning to see training as an economic and social necessity for a skilled, competitive workforce.

(61) At the same time, government policy focuses on giving more autonomy to the private sector (para. 79 for Canada), with fewer restrictions governing hours of work, minimum wages and so on. Traditionally, in France, the private sector has not seen a role for itself in training (para. 142 below; de Larminat, paras. 5, 6).

(62) The high levels of unemployment in 1980-81 forced government, labour and industry to examine existing structures pertaining to training, re-training and the transition from school to work (Ramoff, para. 4).

(63) Since the 1981 *Loi sur l'alternance*, 20% of youngsters entering the workforce have been trained in enterprises through school-industry twinning arrangements, to harmonize the school system with the labour market so that employers' needs can be met (para. 144 for Canada; Ramoff, paras. 5 to 8).

(64) The French system is less structured than the German. Informal agreements are reached between unions, government and industry as to what kind of training will be given. The agreements are not detailed or normative but provide, instead, training goals that are quite general (Ramoff, para. 13).