

40 YEARS OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING: *Assessment and perspectives*

Created in 1971 upon the initiative of Jacques Delors, continuing professional development represents one of the major issues for the economic, social and environmental development of our society.

Despite the criticisms formulated against its great complexity and insufficient efficiency, the system of vocational training possesses substantial strengths. In fact, it depends upon consistent funding and a principle of mutualisation; it gives a central role to social partners; it increases the individualisation of the right to training by searching to place the employee in control of his training. Finally, successive reforms have enabled it to adapt to developments in the world of work.

With the reform of 2009, the social partners and the legislator have sought to correct certain weaknesses in the system in order to make it more efficient and equitable. In fact, training remains underused as a tool for securing career paths, the provision of training remains lightly regulated, the finance complex and the governance always problematic. Hence the measures taken are attached to the fight against inequalities in accessing training, in particular for employees with few qualifications, job seekers or employees of SME's and VSB's.

If it is still too early to prepare a full assessment of the Act, scarcely two years after it was implemented, certain positive effects appear to be of a nature to meet the objectives of improving the system. This is the case with the better linkage between initial professional training and continuing professional development, the creation of the Joint Fund for Securing Career Paths and the reform of the OPCA (Organisme paritaire collecteur agréé – Joint Commission for Collective Training) currently being implemented.

In response to the Prime Minister's request, our assembly formulates 24 recommendations based around four priority objectives at each negotiated change in the vocational training system.

Before everything, this necessarily entails leaving the 2009 Act time in order that it can produce its full effects before drawing up a full assessment and stabilising the system to permit all its participants to avail themselves of the tools and mechanisms.

Beyond that, the ESEC insists upon the necessity of reinforcing the central place of social partners, while calling upon the responsibility of the public authorities in order to ensure that everyone has equal access to vocational training providing them the means to find their place in the world of work and sharing in our society. In this regard, the fight against illiteracy and long term unemployment must be the subject of a strong commitment by all participants, including policy makers.

Vocational training expenditure
€ 31.3 Billion in 2009
(of which € 12.8 Billion by businesses)

15,500 training providers

117,000 diplomas awarded in CPD



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THE PROPOSALS OF THE ESEC

TO CREATE BETTER LINKS BETWEEN INITIAL AND CONTINUING TRAINING

1. **Continue** to structure a public life-long careers advice service
2. **Strengthen** the links between the education system and the world of work to provide effective careers advice
3. **Promote** alternate training
4. **Strengthen** the role of universities in continuing training
5. **Establish** a right to deferred initial training
6. **Give** fresh momentum to the APEL (Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning)

IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY OF THE VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM

7. **Make the training plan** a strategic tool in human resources management
8. **Improve** access to training in the SME's and VSB's
9. **Establish** a «quality» listing of training providers
10. **Adapt** the training and certification system to economic, social and environmental developments as well as European challenges
11. **Promote** innovative teaching methods
12. **Inscribe** training as a component of businesses' social and environmental responsibility

MAKE TRAINING A TOOL IN SECURING CAREER PATHS

13. **Facilitate** access to vocational training for job seekers
14. **Experiment** with adapting the «the professional security contract» (*contrat de sécurisation professionnelle*) to the long term unemployed
15. **Create better links** training and partial unemployment, such as reduced activities
16. **Strengthen** Job Center's cooperation with collection agencies
17. **Create better links** between the DIF (droit individuel à la formation – individual training entitlement) and other training arrangements
18. **Conduct** a feasibility study concerning the creation of individual training accounts
19. **Consolidate** the CIF (congé individuel de formation – individual training leave) resources

« Teaching and training are factors in social progress, technical development and economic growth »

Preamble of the national inter-professional agreement of 9th July 1970 upon basic and advanced vocational trainings

STRENGTHEN GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

20. **Improve** the governance of the vocational training system
21. **Clarify** regional governance
22. **Take better account of** « external considerations» in governance
23. **Strengthen and coordinate** evaluation procedures
24. **Finance** gender mainstreaming in the field of vocational training