

The Economic Design of the European Union's Education Policy

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Introduction

The founding document of the European Community (EC), the Treaty of Rome of 25 March 1957, outlined the strategy for the creation of a single market system among those member states who were eligible and willing to participate. It provided the legal basis and political impetus for the increasing assimilation of numerous aspects of the participants' economic, political, cultural and educational policies. Throughout the subsequent history of the EC the drive for economic integration has been the premiss of all other policy development. From this catalyst, this infrastructure, initiatives relating to education, training and youth have had to be co-ordinated with the overall programme of industrial or technological regeneration within the emerging common market. In practical terms this process has, however, proved problematic for the participant states who have political and cultural conventions to abide by at national level, and who are protective of their education policy in particular. Since 1957 the imperative of economic integration has put pressures on the member states to slowly deconstruct their national educational policies and to incorporate them within the grander strategy of European economic unification. The effects of this, and the political sensitivities therein, have been such that it has taken over forty years to implement the basics of a pan-European education system. This article aims to look at the origins of the Community's education policy

arguing throughout that it has been shaped primarily by economic design.

Political contingency and Jean Monnet's economic plan

The European Communities' education policy has been dominated by the political tensions which have historically existed between the Council of Ministers - as the 'conscience' of member-state interests - and the Commission which has the duty of directing the converging of member-state policies. Throughout most of the phases of policy development this reciprocation of power has meant that there has been an integration of policy by stealth or, as the Commission viewed it, 'bit-by-bit' change. In this process the institutions themselves became central to the way in which policy was conceived and implemented. Under the Treaty of Rome the Council as the legislative authority was given the role of discussing and initiating policy (with the approval of the Parliament). It was then the task of the Commission in Brussels to carry through policies which have been endorsed. Through this triangle of power, tensions have arisen where proposals introduced by the Commission were revised or indeed stalled by the Council of Ministers. Alternatively, with its continual drive for integration, the Commission has often been seen to be working from an ideological, federalistic predisposition. The results of this institutional competition have been acrimonious at times, with long periods of inaction (as experienced in the mid-1960s) followed by dynamic movements typified through major policy advancement. Such institutional tensions were not peculiar to the question of educational policy development alone, but have been noticeable in this field more than most.

Political contingency has dominated the progress of the Community since as far back as the Schuman negotiations of 1950. Britain in particular, which had representation at many of the early debates, remained sensitive to the idea of contributing to what successive governments had perceived to be a broader economic strategy designed to benefit France and Germany. Jean Monnet, director of the French modernization plan after World War II and

architect of a federal Europe, along with Konrad Adenauer, the German Christian Democrat Chancellor, believed that political stability depended on 'ever closer union', the 'irreversible' linkage of all aspects of the participating economies¹. Due to political contingency, economic integration with Germany, as opposed to mere co-operation, was viewed as the only means of ensuring sustainable post-war regeneration. The intention of the Schuman Plan was to lock together those industrial and commercial interests which may have led to conflict and which many of its architects believed had been the cause of the previous two European wars. As Alan Milward pointed out in *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-1951*, the primary drive of Monnet and his associates throughout the early discussions was to ensure French competitiveness together with Germany as a single entity². The fear of an isolated German state dominated French strategic thinking and investment in the project, certainly until the accession of de Gaulle and his nationalistic brand of political economy in the 1960s. In *French Motives for European Integration* Francois Duchene noted that this whole early strategy was contrived for Franco-German reconciliation and by default would continue to depend on the French and German leadership³. The objective was to remove possible reasons for conflict or economic disputes between two of the most powerful states in Western Europe. The Treaty of Paris, the pilot of the Schuman Plan - signed on 9 May 1950 by France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg - set out seminal objectives in terms of principles which could be built upon:

"Resolved to substitute for age-old rivalries the merging of their essential interests; to create, by establishing an economic community, the basis for a broader and deeper community

¹ Desmond Dinan, *Ever Closer Union?*, (London 1997), p.1.

² Alan Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945-1951*, (London, 1992), pp.369-71.

³ In Robert Bideleux and Richard Taylor, *European Integration and Disintegration*, (London, 1996), p.22.

among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts; and to lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforward shared."⁴

The British government's view of this strategy offered an early indication of attitudes to come regarding the integration process and its perceived motives. Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, noted quite categorically in his 'European Unity' policy document of June 1950 that the whole process was a conspiracy to benefit French and German industries. This alliance would invariably be at the expense of the British coal and steel industries and the jobs which they secured⁵. Britain already had stable trading partners around the globe through the Commonwealth coupled with a healthy economy which had been benefiting from post-war growth into the 1950s. As a result of suspicions of the Schuman Plan and the Treaty of Paris, Britain voluntarily withdrew from policy development within the European context. This was, however, the agreed consensus among British politicians, certainly until the applications for membership which were submitted in the 1960s.

The skilful diplomacy of Monnet throughout the 1950s, carried along by an almost zealous drive of supranationalism, ensured that a practice of federal economics would eventually evolve. The drive would be unity "through practical achievements" which would "first of all create real solidarity...through the establishment of common bases for economic development"⁶. The Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), operating from August 1952 until its broader incorporation within the Treaty of Rome, had set the pace for change and had also consolidated opposing federalist and functionalist positions around the overall integration strategy. On the latter issue Britain and the Franco-German partnership stood at opposite poles. What was to be formed by this early process was the nucleus of an economic reality and a

⁴ Quoted in Alex Noble, *From Rome to Maastricht*, (London, 1996), p.8.

⁵ Also see Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*, vol.3, (London, 1983), pp.731-33.

⁶ Preamble to the Treaty of Paris.

competitive base which could absorb all aspects of policy generation into a single programme. Monnet's role was to influence parliaments and governments into accepting a United States of Europe in a structural and operational sense. Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister and Monnet's successor as the Commissioner of the High Authority of the ECSC (its executive body), put forward two objectives for member states to move towards formal integration. The first was sectoral integration of energy policy - with atomic energy being prioritised as the eventual primary source of energy for industry and domestic use. More importantly for education policy, a second objective was to be the creation of a dynamic common market with supporting mechanisms for sustained economic growth among the participating states.

From the Left of the political spectrum, the trade union movement and the Communist Parties, the whole initiative was a Christian Democrat and United States attempt to consolidate the European market system as a protective zone against the Eastern bloc. Indeed the ECSC was generally acknowledged on the Left to be a product of the Marshall Plan. The European Economic Community was, in itself, backed up by \$435,000,000 from Washington. From the Right the argument was that the EEC project was a deliberate attempt to break down national competencies and cultures. Charles de Gaulle, and later Margaret Thatcher, in their own contexts came to represent this Eurosceptic interpretation of the EEC. For them Monnet's supranationalism was fundamentally flawed when it came to the actual job of running national governments. The critical Right favoured a more functional approach to the EC in general, limiting interstate contact to specific economic projects and little else. The early emergence of the influential (favoured by the Council of Ministers) functionalist perspective for was significant the way in which the whole system developed. This line of thought held, basically, that the removal of border tariffs was functional for economic development, but that a common market moving towards a single market was potentially destructive for national economics and politics. Although the Centre in European politics has generally worked as a dominant

lobby in relation to co-ordinated and integrated policy developments (in large part due to the Commission's federalist agenda) these aforementioned alternative Left and Right perspectives have caused repeated complications for much of the more 'advanced/progressive' clauses of the Monnet and Spaak strategy.

The mood of Westminster at the formation of the EEC, in particular, could be measured by the way in which the political leaders made no formal statements on the issue. The British media's reaction to the signing of the Treaty of Rome was also muted. For example, the *Daily Telegraph* on 26 March 1957 had a short, freelance report on page eight and stood in stark contrast with the states involved, which had the signing ceremony broadcast live and simultaneously on all national television stations. In the continental arena the integration process was profiled as the future of Europe. Its aims were impressive - as can be seen by the original Reuter's statement on the date: "The Common Market, an economic community of nations with 160,000,000 inhabitants, will be developed by stages over 15 years. Its basic aims are to allow free movement of goods, manpower and money and abolish customs tariffs among the six nations"⁷. The key concerns under which the Treaty of Rome obliged states to operate had a number of follow-through effects which would change the way in which member states viewed and developed policies, from infrastructural concerns such as agriculture and industry to less empowered briefs such as education.

Education and the Common Market

In the sphere of education policy there there had been an awkwardness in the Commission's approach to the role of "effective co-ordination" of the various tenets of national policies⁸. At times its proposals for the enactment of policy were cautious and in the long term many initiatives have proved ineffectual. Indeed, the very idea of

⁷ *Irish Times*, 26 March 1957, p.1.

⁸ Treaty of Rome, Article 41.

a co-ordinated education policy has never fully been resolved because of attitudes to education at the level of the Council. Originally discussed at the Messina Conference of June 1955, by the time of the framing of the Treaty of Rome (European Economic Community) on 25 March 1957, the idea of a common education policy was all but subsumed under a clause on the vocational training of employees. The link had to be very solidly grounded in the drive for economic development - yet nevertheless created the basis for further developments. Article 57 (i) cites an intention to work towards the "mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications", and towards a reconciliation of interests between the Council and the Commission. In the vague, but seminal Article 128 of the Treaty, another pillar of the policy was established:

"The Council shall, acting on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee, lay down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy capable of contributing to the harmonious development both of the national economies and of the common market"⁹.

Other relevant aspects of the Treaty of Rome (EEC) for the development of educational policy were contained within Article 41, which permitted the co-ordination of "vocational training" under the remit of the Common Agricultural Policy, and Article 118 which obliged the Commission to encourage "close co-operation between the member states in the social field, particularly in matters relating to... basic and advanced vocational training". These articles, in effect, were to become the legal basis for education within the common market process.

A central debating point for the Ministers of Education throughout the six original member states (France, West Germany, Netherlands,

⁹ Article 128, Treaty of Rome, Brussels, 1958; also see R. Gwyn, 'Towards a European Policy of Initial Teacher Training', *European Journal of Education*, 14:4, (1979), p.361. Gwyn argues that Article 57 was the most significant reference to education in the Treaty.

Italy, Luxembourg and Belgium) was the acknowledged role of education as a channel for social, economic, cultural and political change. Governments had been keen to retain control over what they perceived to be national educational systems. Education administration and curriculum development were considered to be the preserve of the governments in view of the fact that they had an obligation to protect national culture. Because of this complication the years from 1957 until 1969 proved difficult for the Commission in terms of influencing the direction of educational advocacy. Guy Neave in *The EEC and Education* noted these years to be marked by "a strange silence" when it came to education¹⁰. It is also no coincidence that these years fit exactly into de Gaulle's tenure as President of France, who was, by nature, Eurosceptic and functionalist in his involvement. His attitude towards European integration was diffident to say the least. De Gaulle's *Memoirs* give some insight into his approach to integration and the development of policy strategies. Of the EEC as an institution his view was strident: "the Common Agricultural Policy was a *sine qua non* of [French] participation" - and consequently all other involvement was put into question¹¹.

Such sensitivities had also to be appreciated by the Commission. It had the task under the Treaty of pushing ahead with common policy systems across the Community. Subsequently, the educational dimension to the process had to be handled subtly and to a large extent was shelved as a proposal until more favourable circumstances were to emerge. The general concern, which was tabled by the various Ministers of Education was that curriculum, school structures, teaching practice and higher education (although the latter was not perceived as important as the others to 'preserve') would be devolved, taking control away from the member-state governments and towards the Commission's offices. For them this was an unacceptable breach of established policy. As Neave pointed out in *The EEC and Education*, it was the variety and diversity of "structures, practices and customs"

¹⁰ Guy Neave, *The EEC and Education*, (Stoke on Trent, 1984), p.6.

¹¹ Charles de Gaulle, *Memoirs of Hope*, (New York, 1971), p.143.

as a "result of factors historical, political and cultural" that made member-state governments sensitive to any change whatsoever¹². It was the differences in terms of curriculum, institutional development and work culture which many of the politicians felt needed protection. A situation existed throughout the member-states where different emphases were placed on different aspects of the curriculum. France, for example, weighed heavily on academic endeavour (a legacy of the Napoleonic code), whereas Germany relied on the vocational development of students for educational attainment (a product of post-war industrial reconstruction). The ubiquitous nature of educational provision throughout the Community and the rather zealous attitudes taken by the respective Ministers for Education made the very concept of a common policy non-negotiable in terms of an early strategic development. G. Kloss in 'Education Policy' stated the problem quite succinctly:

"Education is of course a sensitive area; national traditions are particularly strong; education systems differ widely in their organisation, context and outlook; national governments are reluctant to sacrifice the individuality of their particular systems. This impedes progress towards an education policy of the Community, however modest; again and again objections to education measures have been raised by member governments on grounds of national sovereignty."¹³

Ostensibly the Treaty of Rome stood as a basis of, and precedent for, future provision. It facilitated the assimilation of a common policy of sorts, even though it was carefully avoided in rhetorical terms as an intention of the common market. Although education was not formally acknowledged as a part of the wider project, the provisions of the Treaty permitted some scope for related initiatives - usually under the auspices of training, research and intellectual mobility. Articles 57, 118

¹² Neave, *ibid.*, p.4.

¹³ In S. Bulmer, S. George and A. Scott (eds), *The UK and the EC Membership Evaluated*, (London, 1992), p.239.

and 128 became grounding principles for a sequence of directives which, if not in name, certainly in intent, moved towards a concerted community-sourced education policy¹⁴. Although ambiguity remained a problem over the whole question of education, efforts were repeatedly made from the 1950s onwards to clarify the terms of reference for policy development. This was especially evident in relation to the flexible concepts of "training" and "the mutual recognition of qualifications". Paradoxically, it was the Council of Ministers, or more correctly 'the Meeting of the Council of the European Communities and of the Ministers of Education Meeting within the Council', which was allocated the function of refining the responsibilities which member states had in order to train the workforce for market competitiveness. After a protracted consultancy period in 1963 a Resolution was reached which clarified the vagaries over vocational training in Article 128 of the Treaty of Rome. This was a recognisable breakthrough. The Resolution aimed to ensure that:

a) all workers should have access to adequate and additional training;

b) that retraining should be a part of working life;

c) a holistic approach should be adopted which would combine economic and technical requirements with personal development;

d) general and vocational education should complement transitional economic processes;

e) career guidance should be given; there should be appropriate training for teachers;

f) and finally, future training needs should be conveyed to a Commission data base¹⁵.

In practice the Resolution pushed the Commission into a position where, as an institution, it could specify the nature and extent of

¹⁴ See the detail of the various subsequent articles in Joseph McMahon, *Education and Culture in European Community Law*, (London, 1995), pp.203-4.

¹⁵ *Official Journal of the EC*, 2 April 1963; also see John Field, *European Dimensions*, (Gateshead, 1998), p.27.

'training' within the ambit of economic development and could define the standards of technical education which workers subject to a common market would need to be equipped with. It was accepted that in the field of training, at least, a common purpose would have to be reached across the member states. It also provided for the inter-state exchange of specialists who could encourage training techniques and advocate similar methods of delivering training material.

This precedent was further refined by a number of high profile cases which went through the Court of Justice looking specifically at Article 57 of the Treaty of Rome and what "the mutual recognition of qualifications" actually meant in practice¹⁶. The Court was established to ensure that the interpretation and application of the EC Treaties was upheld by member states. In most of the cases relating to educational policy actions have been brought by individuals (amongst the earliest to be permitted under Article 173 of the Treaty of Rome) against member states for restrictions on the freedom of movement and the freedom of establishment. The freedom of establishment gave EC citizens the right to work in a self-employed capacity or business in another member state. Although restrictions on this have been forbidden since 1 January 1970, differences in the recognition of professions have continued to hamper the practice of free establishment. The clause specifying freedom of movement for persons gives the right of EC citizens to live and work in any other member state "without discrimination on the grounds of nationality"¹⁷. The result of these Court decisions was that each member state had to accept that, when a citizen of the EEC had received a stated qualification he or she should, in law, be able to move freely throughout the other states to work or to provide commensurate services. The Court, in a sense, was left to clean up the inconsistencies which patently existed in the policy. In refining what was meant by mutual qualifications the Council reciprocated by introducing a list of formal qualifications which would

¹⁶ Case 24/67, *Parke Davis v. Centrefarm* (1968) ECR 55: 124; 125 and Case 7/68, *Commission v. Italy* (1968) ECR 423; 123.

¹⁷ Werner Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels, *Europe from A to Z*, (Luxembourg, 1997), p.235.

be accepted as mutually applicable. These could then be supplemented by directives relating to further professions. The likes of pharmacy, accountancy, dentistry, architecture were included to permit these professionals the freedom of establishment throughout the Community. Since the formative 1968 directives this list of accepted professions has steadily increased. The whole question of formal qualifications was largely resolved later in a 1974 Resolution in which the Council agreed to guidelines for mutual recognition¹⁸.

In the early years of the Community and certainly up until 1969, the very question of education was vexed by a protectionism which attempted to isolate it (together with social policy) and draw it away from the competency of the community institutions. Policy was driven by political constraints. Whereas policies directly related to market expansion were encouraged - arguably to the point of recklessness throughout the 1960s with the Common Agricultural Policy - policies which could not augment the political intentions of the member state governments were deliberately stunted within the context of the Community. With budgetary allocations reflecting political intentions, education and training remained as some of the lowest priorities when it came to funding. This situation was to change quite dramatically as the EC entered the less stable environment of the 1970s where political turmoil and economic recession opened up opportunities for movement on a wide number of other fields - of which education was one.

From Rhetoric to Action

Moving into the 1970s a sea-change in the political atmosphere throughout Europe opened up the attitudes of member-state governments (notably France through a referendum) to the concept of a single market and the ongoing drive towards political reconciliation. With the development of this more favourable political environment, and a willingness to open policies beyond the restrictive confines of

¹⁸ *Official Journal of the EC*, C98/1, 1974; paragraph 1 and 2.

market expansion, precedents regarding education and training - which had been muted in previous agreements - were selected by the Commission for reconfiguration. At the influential Hague Summit of December 1969, the first EC Summit without Charles de Gaulle, a Communiqué was released which reasserted the social policy antecedents of the Treaty of Rome¹⁹. By implication education was included within this package of measures. This was compounded by the Council of Ministers' adoption of guidelines, in July 1971, inaugurating a strategy which provided "...the population as a whole with the opportunities for general and vocational education, further education and life-long education which" would "adequately allow individuals to develop their personality and to follow a skilled occupation in an economy of which the needs are constantly changing"²⁰. This important stamp of approval broke the mould in regard to the acknowledgement by the member-state governments of the actual relationship between vocational training and education. It was a significant statement in that it laid the foundations for further initiatives which were more thorough in engaging with the previously contentious issue of an integrated policy.

The 1971 guidelines were acted upon in the November meeting of the Ministers of Education, the first such gathering, which aimed at establishing 'general education' as opposed to 'vocational education' as the cornerstone of cross policy development. Building on the Hague Communiqué a Resolution was adopted which stated: "Considering that the Treaty of Rome has already provided for and organised activities concerning inter alia the right of establishment and vocational training ... they should be supplemented by greater co-operation in the fields of education as such"²¹. This revealed a policy intention which was inclusive in terms of carrying the different sectors within the educational system to a more responsible position within

¹⁹ *Bulletin of the EC*, 1/70, point 4.

²⁰ *Bulletin of the EC*, 3/74, p.5.

²¹ *Bulletin of the EC*, 12/71, pp.28-30; also in *European Educational Policy Statements*, Council of the EC, Brussels, 1987, p.11; also see the Press Release, No.2257/11, Secretariat General of the Council, 16 November 1971, Brussels.

the common market system. It was an acceptance of the interrelation which had existed but was largely overlooked because of political expediency prior to 1970. It is notable that two senior Council of Ministers' educationalists, Olivier Guichard, French Minister of Education, and Professor Henri Janne, Belgian Minister of Education, viewed co-operation in the field of education in what could be seen to be a very progressive way. They positioned education policy as a linkage between the respective economic policies and integration in a political sense. At this stage education had come to be recognised as a key aspect in achieving Monnet's "ever closer union".

Guichard's input was largely in relation to the belief in the need to establish a European Centre for Educational Development. It was no surprise that Janne was approached by the Commission in July 1972 and offered the task of reviewing the community educational policy with the intention of instigating a future action programme. Working from the Hague Summit's recommendations, the Commission, which was at this stage under the guidance of Sicco Mansholt, was given the brief of assimilating educational policy on a community-wide basis. He began this process by securing agreement on the formation of a European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, and gaining a consensus on the need for a common policy across what was to become the nine member states - including the UK, Ireland and Denmark from 1 January 1973. This Institute, which was an adaption of Guichard's idea, was eventually to become the focus for EC-led education programmes through to the 1980s. It had the provisional task of promoting interstate initiatives and giving credence to possible policy changes. Along with the possible broader scope of education policy these ideas were not even discussed at the Heads of State Summit in Paris on 19 and 20 October 1972²². The question of enlargement dominated the debates, thus leaving 'peripheral' policies to work away without ministerial check.

The Janne Report itself, *For a Community Policy on Education* (February 1973), instigated the beginnings of a formal action

²² See Guy Neave, *The EEC and Education*, *op. cit.*, p.7.

programme²³. Drawing on the experiences and expertise of 35 key educationalists from across the nine member states a template was designed to carry the policy forward. The report worked on two fronts. The first so-called 'Background Note' made the call for a community policy in line with the integrationist intentions of the framers of the Treaty of Rome. The second section of the report dealt more practically with the consensus of the Ministers of Education on extending community competence into various areas of policy. In effect, Janne utilised the member-states' agreement on the issue to justify a more advanced stance where there were opportunities for progress. Indeed, an overall harmonisation of policy was advocated instead of the piecemeal form which had been envisaged by the member-state governments throughout the 1960s²⁴. The clarification which came with Janne's work brought with it the awareness that, for economic development to be fully effective, it would have to incorporate a shift in thinking over the provision of education from the early schooling of children through to the retraining of those employed. At this stage the concept of a process of life-long learning was fixed to the agenda. The assertion was for the emergence of a culture of learning which would be appropriate to the dynamics of a technologically intensive and diverse economy and society. Workers would have to be trained and retrained to ensure that there was a diversification in labour skills appropriate to market and industrial trends. Thus, Janne concluded in his report: "It is advisable scrupulously to respect national structures and traditions where education is concerned, but to promote a necessary harmonisation by means of permanent concerted action at all levels and through more and more educational exchanges"²⁵. This approach opened up the spectrum of community competence in terms of provision through the harmonisation of qualifications, the mobility of labour, the link between economic integration and vocational training, technology, language proficiency and Europe as a topic in itself. Janne's key

²³ *Bulletin of the EC*, Supplement 10/73, Luxembourg, 1973.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.5-8.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.10.

recommendation was for a community-based Educational and Cultural Council/Committee (an institution within the structures of the EC itself) working towards a European Charter of Education which could encompass as many aspects of education policy as possible within the limits set by the Treaty of Rome²⁶. Joseph McMahon in *Education and Culture in EC Law* saw these proposed structures as conveying something more permanent with its "overall goal" being "the gradual harmonisation of the educational policies of the member states"²⁷.

By the time the Janne Report had been tabled the Commission had also moved to solidify the policy within the common market programme. Directorate General XII (DGXII), responsible for co-ordinating research and science policies, from January 1973 onwards was given the additional task of incorporating education. Significantly, this DG was to come under the capable direction of the first Commissioner for Education, the social theorist Professor Ralph Dahrendorf. He had a specific conception of the direction in which the common market should move, and education was at the hub of the process. Within a year the Directorate for Education, Research and Science had produced a policy strategy entitled 'Education in the European Community'²⁸. Central planks of this initiative concerned; firstly, the need for academic mobility and the exchange of intellectual capital across the community. Secondly, there was the belief that member states should move towards the codified mutual recognition of academic qualifications. This was later to be highlighted again through a number of decisions taken by the Court of Justice. Thirdly, the controversial topic of educating the children of migrant workers was brought to the fore. With some 13,500,000 immigrants residing in the EC by 1975 and an estimated 1.5 million children to educate this was to become a highly sensitive element to education provision²⁹. In terms of social policy migrant families were an acknowledged priority,

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.56; p.12.

²⁷ J. Mc Mahon, *Education and Culture in EC Law*, (London, 1995), p.5.

²⁸ *Bulletin of the EC*, Supplement 3/74, 1974.

²⁹ See, 'The Education of Migrants and Their Families', in Guy Neave, *The EEC and Education*, *op. cit.*, pp.40.

with resources already being committed for the alleviation of the disadvantage to which these communities were subject. The life experiences of such communities contradicted the ethos of inclusiveness under which the Treaty of Rome was constituted - and the basic right to social security. Whereas it was the DGV on Social Affairs which had the immediate task of alleviating the poverty and improve the built environment where migrant communities lived, DGXII was drafted into this agenda because of the numbers of children involved and because of the possibilities education offered for a fuller integration within European society. In this context the Social Action Programme, as formulated by a Council Resolution on 21 January 1974, was complemented by the Educational Action Programme set up on 9 February 1976 by the Council of Ministers for Education. Both would act in concert to target migrant disadvantage.

Finally, following on from the example set by the Council of Europe in its attempts to get its members to include a European dimension within respective curricula, Dahrendorf suggested that a similar approach be taken by the EC itself. From its outset on 5 May 1949 the Council of Europe had been committed to promoting a European identity. Its aims were to "work for greater European unity; to uphold the principles of parliamentary democracy and human rights; and to improve living conditions and promote human values"³⁰. The very nature and scope of these original aims meant that an educational dimension was essential. For its part the Council of Europe endorsed the cultivation of the sense of Europeaness. Its methods of doing this were by providing moderate resources, advice and experts to national governments to implement a European dimension into the curriculum. Similarly for Dahrendorf, the teaching and learning of other member-state languages, the study of the history and culture of Europe, and the establishment of partnerships between universities across the EC was to be encouraged. There was also an additional idea, although less likely to be accepted, of establishing

³⁰ For a detailed look at this see Margaret Shennan, *Teaching About Europe*, (London, 1991), p.xvii.

what were to be called 'European Schools'. This was a concept which did not prove popular with the Ministers of Education who were set to discuss the draft paper for the Resolution. Along with this there was a draft proposal on the creation of a European Committee for Educational Cooperation to pilot schemes and assess the feasibility of selected areas of integration³¹. Together, the Janne and Dahrendorf papers presented a vision of where policy should evolve and what level of commitment it could eventually undertake.

To proceed, the Council of Ministers of Education, which was to meet in June 1974 to discuss the proposals, would have to mark the extent of cooperation to date and agree on the future strategy and degrees of cooperation³². The agreement that was eventually reached ensured that the intentions which were stated in the past would be put into practice with the full support of all member states. The resultant Resolution put in place the legislation for a proactive cooperation process across the full spectrum of educational provision. This point marked the beginning of a new era of advancement for education policy within the EC context. In order to implement this strategy seven priorities were identified by the Ministers which were to become the basis for action. Point two of the Resolution detailed these fields of co-operation:

"(i) better facilities for the education and training of nationals and the children of nationals of other Member States of the Communities and non-member countries;

(ii) the promotion of closer relations between educational systems in Europe;

(iii) the compilation of up-to-date documentation and statistics on education;

(iv) increased cooperation between institutes of higher education;

(v) improved possibilities for academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;

³¹ *Bulletin of the EC*, Supplement 4/74, 1974, pp.21-2.

³² See *Official Journal of the EC*, C98/2, 20 August 1974.

(vi) the encouragement of freedom of movement and mobility of teachers, students and research workers in particular by the removal of administrative and social obstacles to the free movement of such persons and by the improved teaching of foreign languages;

(vii) the achievement of equal opportunity for free access to all forms of education."³⁵

This approach offered a direction and administrative purpose to the policy. It encouraged harmonisation while still holding to the seminal remit of economic reconciliation between member states. Darhendorf's role in the shaping of the strategy cannot be underestimated. The mechanisms which he developed predated similar techniques which were to be employed by Jacques Delors in his reconfiguration of economic policy in the 1980s. In short, education was introduced as a right for all citizens of the Community. The problem remained, however, between political perceptions of education, its role within society, and economic development. It was generally accepted that the sequential link between school and vocation, while important, did not adequately represent the perceived, or desired, role of education (a cultural element) within society. The Resolution, in deference therefore, sought to acknowledge allowances in relation to cultural precedents, the diversity of educational policies and systems throughout the Community. To overcome this concern member states would maintain their right over legislative change and would have the responsibility therein to implement decisions taken at the Community level³⁶.

The First Action Programme

To facilitate the policy strategy, which was to be put into operation because of the 1974 Resolution, an ad hoc Education Committee set about drawing up a 'Community Education Action Programme', the

³⁵ *Official Journal of the EC*, C98/2, 20th August 1974.

³⁶ Neave, *op. cit.*, p.10.

first of its kind. Building on the stipulations contained within the Resolution key recommendations were adopted by the Ministers at the Education Summit on 9 February 1976 and were accepted by the Council of Ministers formally. They were, in turn, to be implemented by the member states respectively. The measures which were to be carried through by the Action Programme put flesh on what had previously been merely policy intentions, and to some degree rhetoric³⁵. It clarified the necessary twin approach to education policy and ensured that member states on the one hand had autonomy over those aspects of the curriculum which they believed were distinctive to national culture, and on the other hand that they could participate in the macro-economic system which the EC was set to create. The initiative also placed the Commission in a reserve position in relation to policy change, with DG XII given the more intricate task of working on those sectors of the educational system which had a direct impact on the common market. The Action Programme, in practice, legitimised the role of education within the common market. Paragraph 2:2 of the 1976 Resolution gives an indication of the undertakings of the Commission after 1976:

“(i) the measures to be taken in the field of education to prepare young people for work, to facilitate their transition from study to working life and to increase their chances of finding employment, thereby reducing the risks of unemployment;

(ii) the provision, in the context of continuous education and training, of further education to young workers and young unemployed persons to improve their chances of finding employment.”³⁶

In practical terms each of the member states would continue to develop their own policies, but could incorporate Community initiatives where it was deemed beneficial or in accordance with

³⁵ *Official Journal of the EC*, C38/4, 19 February 1976.

³⁶ *Official Journal of the EC*, C38/2.

agreed common policy. One unlikely aspect of policy development which encouraged a more favourable environment for the action programme was the global recession. John Field in *European Dimensions* noted that the oil crisis of 1973 and the resultant industrial turmoil across Europe meant that there were increasing numbers of unemployed people, particularly the young³⁷. Training for a changing labour market became ever more important as the industrial and technological landscape shifted. The strategic aspect of the Action Programme supplied it with an unexpected level of support in an attempt by member-state governments to deliver a response to the growing problem of unemployment.

For administrative purposes the Education Committee, drawn from the member states' representatives and the Commission, would act parallel into the Directorate General to extend the activities of the plan itself. It would also carry with it a modest budget allocated to educational planning³⁸. This structure oversaw the implementation of pilot projects and commissioned research which would assist member-state governments in advancing the whole area of education and vocational training. It was expected that the first series of pilot schemes would run until 31 December 1981 to be followed by the evaluation of the Action Programme - which was agreed at Council on the 27 June 1980³⁹. Covering problems such as special arrangements for the education of disabled children, pre-primary provision in general, equality of support between girls and boys, and the link between unemployment and school leavers, all were prioritised for attention and investment. With this specification to deliver it was decided that education as a Commission brief should be moved under the control of DGV which also covered employment and social affairs. This was to give education access to the weighty European Social Fund. Established as the main focus of social policy its role progressively came to be that of providing finance for job-creation

³⁷ Field, *op. cit.*, p.33.

³⁸ Currently DGXII, covers the fields of science, research and development, the Joint Research Centre, human resources, education, training and youth.

³⁹ *Bulletin of the EC*, 6/80, pp.64-77.

initiatives, which included training. Correspondingly, the financial weight of the Fund has steadily increased with the target areas largely remaining the unemployed - with a special remit of youth. Further to this the Fund's aim was to help labour sectors in socio-economic need to adapt to industrial change and what it labelled "changes in production systems". In effect this latter point has meant a strategy for retraining. The European Parliament also established a corresponding committee, Number 12, to cover the areas of culture, youth, education and the media. From then on education was tied to the questions of unemployment and equality of opportunity.

Equipping young people for a competitive employment market within a transitional economy and altering methods of working, placed the EC in a developmental role on which member states were to become increasingly reliant. The approach of linking departments and sectors vindicated the opinion of the Commission through its 'Cooperation in the Field of Education: A Progress Report', which noted that: "Even the overall objectives of employment policy are being revised in relation to the development potential of the education sector. The Community Action Programme ...has therefore more far-reaching implications than originally envisaged in 1976"⁴⁰. By the time of the review of the 1976 Action Programme in June 1980 there was a general acceptance among the Ministers of Education that education was a key component of the wider European economic design. Vocational training had been deepened in its scope to the point where every field of the education system could have an input into the integration process. From this acceptance, student exchanges, offering the unemployed the potential for diversification of labour skills and research, were added to the options presented in the original Janne and Dahrendorf documents.

⁴⁰ Document R/2797/78 (EN61), 31 November 1978.