

NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
SCHOOL OF LETTERS

MSC PROGRAMME IN COUNSELLING AND CAREER GUIDANCE

LABORATORY OF EXPERIMENTAL PEDAGOGY

CENTERS FOR VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 1st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ATHENS (23-25-1-04)

**PROMOTING NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANIZATION AND OTHER
COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND
EMPLOYABILITY**

With the Support of the European Committee

ATHENS 2004

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Foreword

Previous related conferences and research studies indicated that a) although some new forms of work organization were proven to be useful, they remain unused or under-utilized despite the gains that promise in the highly competitive global market; b) research on the various aspects of the subject was fragmented, and there were very few bridges between academics and practitioners; c) there were only a few agencies, programmes and initiatives concerned with work organization that existed across Europe as a whole.

This Conference has succeeded in meeting its main objective, which was to become a forum of ideas and experiences concerning new forms of work organization and other cooperative arrangements for competitiveness and employability, which *inter alia*, included life-long learning and career development, and work organization and work life balance. Furthermore, the participation and contribution of social partners' representatives from the U.K. and Greece, as well as the presence of many university students, gave hope of meeting the other important aim of the Conference, a closer cooperation of social partners' organizations with academic institutions, and make a more effective dissemination and awareness of purpose across Europe, through the publication and distribution of the Conference's proceedings.

Professor Chris Jecchinis, Ph.D

Chairman of the Scientific Committee

Notes for the Readers

The Proceedings of the International Conference, in this publication, contain the entire contents of the contributions, which were presented in English and Greek. Each Greek contribution is followed by a summary in English.

**PROMOTING NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANIZATION AND OTHER
COOPERATIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPETITIVENESS AND
EMPLOYABILITY**

SUMMARIES OF THE OPENING SESSION

CHAIRMAN, Prof. Michael Kassotakis:

Mr. Vice-Rector, Mr. Dean of the School of Letters, Mr. President of the Faculty, Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology, Mr. Andreasen, Representative of the European Committee, Directors of Departments, dear colleagues, dear students, in my capacity as **Director of the postgraduate programme "Vocational Guidance and Counselling"** have the pleasure of welcoming you all to the inaugural meeting of this Conference which has the title "Promoting New Forms of Work Organisation and Other Cooperative Arrangements for Competitiveness and Employability." First of all, I would like to apologize on behalf of the Co-Chairman of this meeting, Mr. Psacharopoulos, who has notified me that he is unable to be with us for reasons of health. I had hoped that he might be able to come to the presentation of his speech so that we could have the pleasure of hearing him. In order to gain time and because our Vice-Rector has other obligations, I would like to move on immediately to the greetings and to request the Vice-Rector of Economic Affairs, Professor Dermitzakis, to take the podium.

Prof. Michael Dermitzakis, Vice Rector of the University of Athens:

Honoured guests, with particular pleasure I salute today the organisation and realisation of this Congress on competitiveness and employment. I would like to direct attention to the fact that the Program of Competitiveness and Entrepreneurship has been taking shape over the last three years in the University Athens within the framework of the program EPEAEK and is one of the most successful and effective programs, despite the fact that all Faculties of University do not participate for other reasons. We have pin-pointed the fact that the usefulness and the efficiency of this Program is immense because it is related immediately to the association of Academic Education with the job market. It is more generally accepted today that higher education constitutes not only the institution of productivity and the transmission of knowledge, but also an area for preparation of scientists capable of dynamically undertaking professional and enterprising activity in the future. Through this particular Program what we have accomplished so far is that:

1. Our students are familiarized with the job market, the requirements of future employers and expected financial remuneration from the exercise of their profession.
2. They are familiarized still more with the object of their study henceforth not only theoretically but practically, being forced to solve problems that emerge during the practical application of what they have been taught and what they have absorbed in the educational operation.
3. Because of the above-mentioned they will develop skills and flexibility that will be essential to their future professional development.

4. They learn the job market in depth and cultivate contacts with persons and companies that are active in the field of their profession.
5. In the modern competitive job market they acquire precedence over those who have not dealt with the practical application of their knowledge and feel readier to face the challenges and the new data of the job market.

I warmly congratulate my colleagues and more specifically Professor Michael Kassotakis, who is responsible for Scientific Matters, for his valuable contribution to the success of this Congress. I wish you good success in the work of this Conference not only for the results, which will be useful both for this and other Universities, but also for the Program which is under development and which will be taken into consideration for the further planning of employment of our graduates. Many thanks.

CHAIRMAN: I thank the Vice-Rector, Mr. Dermitzakis, and I now call on the Dean of the Philosophical Faculty, Professor Theodore Pelegrinis, to address his greetings to the participants of the conference.

Prof. Theodossios Pelegrinis, Dean of the School of Letters:

On behalf of the Philosophical Faculty I welcome you all to the Congress that begins here tonight in the room of ceremonies at the University of Athens. It is said that the subject of the congress, Work, has a direct relation to the existence of the individual and more specifically to his quality of life, not only because through work can the individual acquire those commodities that improve his life, but also because work itself constitutes a commodity. Of course, the person who works also feels better in his life. In order to promote this commodity, the more the individual handles science in order to exempt himself from work, the more his labour makes it unbearable for him. Here, of course exists a contradiction, a paradox; many times the very science which the person invokes in order to improve his work is turned against the work itself. I will mention the case of Brecht who, in 1946, wrote *Galileo* precisely in order to stigmatize that warped course of science. Man imported science into culture, says Brecht, in order to alleviate himself from labour and he then used science in order to make the atomic bomb, which is directed against his very own life. I would like to say that over the last decades the individual has progressed much in the scientific field; this development, however, has turned itself against the right of the person to work. It is explicit that the machine substitutes the hands, consequently the possibilities of today's youth, and people in general, of finding work are very limited. Of course, society always finds the way to survive and it confronts the contradictions, the barbs and the difficulties that it must face. Specifically, I consider that this congress constitutes a contribution to the possibility of the individual to combine science and technology, as they develop in our days, with the right to work. Precisely because the congress addresses a vital part of our life, I hope that its work will be fertile and that it will help in the confrontation of this problem. I thank you.

CHAIRMAN: We also thank very much the Dean of the School of Letters, Prof. Pelegrinis, and I now request the President of the Faculty Philosophy, Pedagogy, Psychology, Professor Laurentios Delasoudas, to address his own greeting.

Prof. Laurentios Dellasoudas, President of the Faculty of Philosophy, Pedagogy and

Psychology:

Mr. Dean, Mr. Chairman of the Congress, ladies and main Presidents of the Faculties, ladies and main participants at a conference according to the various approaches the work provides in the person, between the other something from them reported previously Mr Dean, , work offers to the individual: a) the chance to cultivate and to develop fully his aptitudes, which in turn contribute to the growth and formation of his personality, and b) the possibility of contracting essential relationships with other members of society.

Therefore examining the aspect of preparation offered for this goal we recognise that economic growth, competition and integration into the job market constitute the sovereign objectives of education with parallel downgrading of its social and humanitarian dimensions. For this reason members of the Greek Parliament in 1997 in the debate concerning Secondary Education stressed in their allocutions that the demand for creating the essential prerequisites remains a constant goal. Namely, a) Education, on the one hand, "constitutes that professionals should be adequately prepared for a place in the world and the European environment, and it should promote every worthy person without bias ", and, on the other hand, be supported "in a mesh of values and rules, such as ... the healthy competition". b) Young Greeks "should acquire knowledge that will be essential in order for them to be able to compete and survive in the competitiveness that is shaping the new social and economic environment worldwide". c) The educational policy should not be "subjugated to any kind of technology", but "it should subjugate technology to the benefit of society, to the benefit of education, to the benefit of not only the present generation, but also future generations". With this prospect in mind the poor or the socially disadvantaged can seek the way towards prosperity.

Thus, while a such policy does not theoretically exclude prosperity, either economically or for any other reason, in everyday life the lack of equal opportunities in all sectors and levels has repercussions, as is natural, in the least-favoured social groups. It is progressively certain that inequality appears to limit itself, on the one hand, with the increase in the number of entrants to Third Degree Education and, on the other hand, with the operation of programs of professional training. However, the increase in the number of university entrants and the generalisation of additional educational help (in-school or out-school) do not put an end to competition, but on the contrary they bring it to even higher levels. In this way we are led towards a system of intensification of study with unremitting education and learning, so much so that **life-long education** and **learning** constitute a new and **additional problem**.

Turning now to the other side, we must take into account: a) the needs of the job market and b) the rights of employers who exclude or reject less productive workers, while we should not overlook the need to access information of high quality, which should be enriched and updated continuously.

With this data and keeping in mind the European experience with regard to employment we could, by formulating concisely a basic guide to the beginnings of equitable practice, say that the basic conditions of professional integration constitute the following actions:

On the side of the State:

- (i) the existence of a policy for professional education and training,
- (ii) the long-term planning of training and employment,
- (iii) the existence of strategy and infrastructure for sufficient briefing concerning the needs, the potentials and the requirements of the job market and, (iv) the organisation of School Career Counseling.

On the side of the job market:

- (i) its predispositions and readiness in view of the rapid change in orientation of the economy and, (ii) the obligation of services responsible for the exchange of information to include all

the interested parties. Taking into consideration that the relative processes should be distributed throughout the European Union, the translation of particulars into the various languages is essential.

Having therefore before us the problems and the weaknesses of both sides the following question forms itself: how much of the question of employment could be confronted with new approaches and conditions; that is to say, the subject for alternative or new forms of employment should be examined.

I consider that at least certain of the alternative forms of employment for the Disabled and Handicapped People are suitable for the general population. I could describe several of them, but I find myself here in order to address a greeting and not to make proposals. Simply I report indicatively the increase in aid to *individual and corporate employment*, pointing out the mounting tendency for the foundation of "social companies" in various forms, *telework (the creation and distribution of a product or services via computer or telephone)* and *the cooperation of organisations or institutions*.

With these data, the particularly important role of modern approaches to work with new or alternative forms of professional employment and, accordingly, the necessity and usefulness of the present congress are well founded and distinguished. There remains nothing further for me to do than to congratulate the Programme of Postgraduate Studies in the Advisory and Professional Orientation, the Laboratory of Experimental Pedagogy, and the School and Professional Department of the Faculty of Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology of the University of Athens, that is to say the colleague professors Mr. Kassotakis and Mrs. Nova, as well as all those who have contributed to the organisation of this congress, and to wish all present, including the foreign participants, a very successful Congress

CHAIRMAN: We thank you, Mr. President, and hope that you will be given the opportunity during the proceedings of the Congress to express your opinions, which you were unable to do now in their entirety. At this point, I would like to request the representative of the European Committee, Mr. Lars E. Andersen, to address a greeting to the participants of the conference on behalf of the European Committee.

Lars-Erick Andreasen, Administrator Principal, European Commission:

I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. It is a great pleasure for me on behalf of the European Committee to assist in this meeting which really will be effective. A few words concerning the various programs that the Commission promotes so much: In November, we held a Conference in Barcelona and yesterday we had a similar meeting in Athens; we plan to have a new one in Rome and we are also preparing yet another in Poland. All these meetings concern themselves with the development of new forms of work and, as the previous speakers have remarked, it is a very important subject. In November, the Committee received the last report concerning European competitiveness and the first conclusions to which we were led, according to this report, render it explicit that the combination of organisational forms of work is a central characteristic of those enterprises which aspire to an increase in their productivity. It is precisely this subject which will be raised in your own congress here and is, as other speakers have already remarked, a vital question of our times. One and a half years ago, the Danish Presidency organised a meeting where Mr. Chris. Jechinis addressed himself to me, asking if the Committee would really be interested in a similar congress in Athens and I answered that, of course, yes, as it is something which interests us very much. You understand, therefore, that the Committee really is very glad because this congress is taking place in

order to raise and discuss all those questions that occupy businesses today. I would like therefore to congratulate all those who contributed effort in order for this meeting, this congress to take place. I congratulate your initiative and wish success in your work. I thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: We thank you, Mr. Andreasen, for your wishes. We would like also to thank you for your help and your support concerning the organisation of this congress

**Prof. Michael Kassotakis, Director of the postgraduate programme
“Vocational Guidance and Counselling”**

Your Excellency Mr Vice-Chancellor

Mr. Representative of the European Commission

Mr. Dean of the School of Letters of the University of Athens

Mr. Head of the Faculty of Philosophy, Education and Psychology

Mrs Directors of the Departments of the Faculty of Philosophy, Education and Psychology

Dear Colleagues

Dear Students

Dear friends

The view that the onset of the 21st century is consonant with spectacular changes in every sector of human activity has become a commonplace. These changes, which are due to a number of factors, the most important of which include the growth of the Information and Communication Technologies and the rapid increase of knowledge, have brought about the globalization of economy, culture and social life, thus creating new challenges to mankind.

Work has inevitably been influenced by the above changes, the consequences of which can be observed in its renewed nature, methods and technology. As a result, the traditional organizational models and structures in the working environments must be replaced by new organizational structures, which should be highly competitive and flexible enough in order for new working places and more chances for employment to be secured. It is evident that the new organizational structures of work will affect people's personal and social lives. Further, their application requires that the cadre of the enterprises and organizations as well as the workers and employers should develop new skills.

The flexibility and uncertainty, which can be created in a working environment like the one mentioned above, call for provision of continuous assistance to enterprises and workers. Such a perspective formulates the need for creating social and economic contexts, which will support the new models of work and their spread. They will also provide for equipping the counselors with new knowledge and skills through properly designed training courses. In view of the above, the role of education which is that of preparing the workers to enter the labour market and of forming links between them and various productive units along with the operation of the Vocational Guidance and Counselling should undergo radical changes. Vocational Counselling should stop being a simple process of assisting individuals to find a direction of studies or a job. Instead, it should aim at supporting individuals to obtain self-actualization, adjust themselves to new working environments, and acquire the skills required for the new working organizational structures.

The lack of comprehensive knowledge of the above issues in Greek reality was our main incentive for organizing the present Conference, the aim of which is a) to reveal the necessity of adopting new models of work and underlie the multiform cooperation that is required for the study and resolution of the issues arising from the application of the above working models, b) to reinforce the cooperation between the productive units and the universities, and c) to show the necessity of the contribution of the graduates of the postgraduate programme “Vocational Guidance and Counselling” to the realization of the above goals.

Before finishing this short address, I would like to thank the European Commission for sponsoring the organization of this Conference and particularly Mr Larse Eric Andersen for his precious assistance thus far. I would also like to thank a good friend and supporter of previous relevant events, Mr Kevin O’Kelly, as well as another friend and colleague, Professor Chris Checchinis, former President of the National Center for Vocational Guidance and instructor of our postgraduate programme. Professor Chris Checchinis was the first to have the idea of organizing this Conference and the one who undertook the writing up of the relevant proposal submitted to the European Commission.

Let me express special thanks to my colleague, Associate Professor Christina kaltsouni-Nova, President of the Organizing Committee of the Conference, who undertook the burden of its organization and worked with zeal and enthusiasm for its realization. Without her contribution and that of her collaborator Dr Eleni Konidari this Conference would not have been organized.

I would also like to thank the members of the Scientific and Organizing Committee of the Conference, the administrative staff of the university, the Senate, the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy of our university, the Head of the Department of Philosophy, Education and Psychology and the Director of the Sectors of the above department for their valuable contribution to the organization of the Conference.

Let me also thank my Greek and foreign colleagues for their participation. I am sure that their presentations will contribute to the promotion and enhancement of our knowledge of the issues addressed in this Conference. I also thank you all for being here. I am sure that the works of the Conference will meet your expectations.

Assoc. Prof. Christina Nova-Kaltsouni, Chairperson of the Organising Committee

Mr. Vice-Rector, Mr. Dean of the School of Letters, Mr. President of the Faculty, Philosophy, Pedagogy and Psychology, Mr. Andreasen, Representative of the European Committee, Directors of Departments, dear colleagues, dear students, in my capacity as Chairwoman of the Organising Committee I also welcome you to this Conference and I thank you warmly for your participation. I would also like to thank those who entrusted me with the organisation of the Conference, especially Professors Tsekini and Kassotakis. I am grateful to my colleagues and students who assisted me in any way in the organisation, as well as Mrs. Eleni Konidari for her important support.

I would like to thank our guests from abroad, firstly for their participation in our Conference and secondly for the support they have given us during the preparations. It is

an honour for us that Mr. Lars-Erik Andreasen from the European Commission is present and I would like to thank him personally for his valuable assistance.

Our Conference has as its theme the promotion of new forms of employment. Personally, I feel concern not only for the success of the Conference but also for the messages that we shall send to the working population, and in particular to the young, with reference to new adjustments concerning labour problems and their effects on our quality of life.

I. PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

George PSACHROPOULOS, Member of the Hellenic Parliament

Michael KASSOTAKIS, Professor at the University of Athens

THE CONTRIBUTION OF NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANISATION TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF CONDITIONS FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Chris JECCHINIS, Professor Emeritus of Economics at Lakehead University of Ontario–Canada and Corresponding Member of the European Academy of Arts, Sciences and Humanities.

Introduction

The European Council which held a special meeting on 23-24 March 2000 in Lisbon, set new strategic goals for the European Union in order to strengthen employment, economic reforms, and social cohesion as part of a knowledge based economy. The Council acknowledged the fact that the E.U. was confronted by both the positive and the negative aspects of globalisation, which on the one hand, required radical structural changes in order to make the European economies more competitive and take advantage of the new markets created, and on the other, to resist pressures for the virtual abolition of public social services, and to continue shaping social policies in a manner which is consistent to its values and concepts of social justice. More specifically, the Council suggested that there is a need of modernizing the European social model by investing in people and building a dynamic welfare state, which ensures that the emergence of the knowledge economy, does not compound the existing social problems of unemployment, social exclusion and poverty. The Council concluded that, inter alia, Europe's education and training systems need to adapt both to the demands of the knowledge society and to the need for an improved level and quality of employment.¹

The overall efforts for appropriate reforms concerning the improvement of employment and competitiveness, which followed the Lisbon Conference at the national and E.U. levels, included the promotion of new forms of work organisation that the European Commission had presented in a 1997 green Paper with the title of "Partnership for a New Work Organisation". This green Paper however, did not have the intended impact, because, for a number of reasons, many enterprises continued to apply traditional forms of work organisation, and the representative organisations of the social partners in many cases continue their cooperative efforts to improve the working environment and productivity performance through the enhanced Works' Councils at the national and E.U. Company levels.

Nevertheless, new forms of work organisation could be applied as a complementary effort to improve skills and the quality of European products and services, as well as to enhance the employability and job satisfaction for workers. The European Conference, which took place in Denmark (Roskilde 12-13/11/2002), focused on the problems and prospects of new forms of work organisation, designed to enhance the productivity of enterprises, and at the same time, contribute to the improvement of the quality of work

for employees. This paper of mine reviews the conclusions of the Danish conference, and presents a possible scenario concerning the future of work organisation in Europe.

A Review of Some Salient Points in the Danish Conference and Report

I was a member of the Greek delegation, which was invited to attend the Danish Conference of New Forms of Work Organisation in Roskilde, and have read very carefully the Report, which was published and circulated in the Spring of 2003. It is my belief that it had its negative and positive sides. On the negative side I would place the “blanket” statement, that if we were to sum-up the evidence of the case studies presented, “good work organisation results in win-win situations at personal, company, and community levels”.² It is my opinion that if the Editor of the Conference’s report wanted to be more prudent, he or she should have changed the word “results” with “contributes”, as there are certainly some other important factors involved in creating pre-conditions for “resulting” in win-win situations: public policy and social legislation, effective collective bargaining and the strength of trade unions, workers’ participation and works’ councils.

The second criticism I have is the undercurrent sentiment of the Conference, a certain degree of pro-American model, an admiration for the high rates of growth and the employment (official) record of the U.S. economy. We have been warned, however, by two distinguished Americans of not trying to copy and emulate the American model, which is based on a growing social disparities gap, the virtual elimination of social protection schemes, and the creation of many new low-paid and temporary jobs. (Nicholas Ashford of MIT at a special conference of the European Foundation in Dublin, and Jeremy Rifkin in a televised presence at a special conference in Athens during the Greek Presidency).³ We shall have the privilege to hear among the other distinguished foreign contributors, what Professor Ashford will have to say here in this conference.

I agree with the Greek European Commissioner, Mrs. Anna Diamandopoulou that our objective should be “not only more jobs but better jobs”.⁴ On the positive side of the Danish Conference, I was impressed by Alan Johnson’s assertion that “life-long learning is the key to sustained and high quality employment”,⁵ and that “there is a need to increase the number of high performance work-places with higher levels of productivity”.⁶ Higher level of skills not only increase security and choice for workers, “but also raise the potential of workplaces to achieve success by raising productivity”.⁷ With a few exceptions, the social partners in Greece were always interested to participate in efforts to increase productivity without making work “harder or cheaper”. In other words, the parties concerned in Greece are interested to participate in any negotiated complementary scheme, which to a certain extent guarantees job security and development for trade union members on the one hand, and improved competitiveness and profitability for employers on the other, while the Government reaps the benefits of increased productivity. That is why we are looking forward to hearing Kevin O’Kelly’s contribution. Just like we will be interested to hear the conclusions of Helen Tsipouris’ and Stavros Gavroglou’s papers, which are based on the research work they did with some of their colleagues in a number of European countries.

A Possible Scenario for the European Union

The Greek Government had consistently, especially since the early 1980's, shown a positive interest in raising productivity mainly through the National Productivity Centre. In 1989 it sponsored an important national study on the role of improved working environment and labour-management relations in the concerted effort to increase productivity. The results of that study were published in a book in 1990. More specifically, the analysis of the results was based on a special questionnaire and interviews with management and trade union officials. The answers to the questionnaire distributed among managers and trade union representatives in the Greek Productivity Centre's research study, revealed some interesting beliefs. Both parties, among other things, rated highly labour-management cooperation (through participation/ involvement) as an important contributory factor for the improvement of the working environment and productivity performance:⁸

1. Those involved in the management of the enterprises and the administration of the trade unions who answered the questionnaire and gave related interviews, believe that workers could be more efficient and derive greater satisfaction from their work if both the working environment and labour-management relations are good or at least if concerted efforts are being made for their improvement. This conviction on the part of both labour and management representatives held generally, regardless of the size and kind of business, nationality of ownership or the leadership of the trade unions.
2. The role of the State in labour relations and the working environment is seen by business executives and trade union officials alike as ranging from adequate to excessive, depending on the existing conditions in individual enterprises. More importantly, the majority of managers and trade union officials do not want more labour legislation but rather the better implementation of the existing laws (including those related to health and safety committees and works' councils), through improved government assistance and the better performance of the appropriate State officials.
3. The quality of labour relations and the working environment, as well as the proper implementation of labour laws, are affected by the interest and efficiency of all those involved, personnel managers, social workers, medical officers, safety engineers, trade union officials, and members of workers' committees. In those cases where the parties concerned believed that their own attitudes and actions can really contribute to the improvement of the working environment and production, then constant and serious efforts are being made to achieve those desired ends.
4. The personal interviews with business executives indicated that the younger generation of businessmen, and especially those involved in small and medium-sized enterprises, are increasingly interested in issues of human resource management. Furthermore, the general conclusion reached at the very successful seminars organised by the Greek public authorities as part of the programme for the development of industrial enterprises, was that there is further need for businessmen to acquire better knowledge of the various aspects of management, including those related to human resource management.
5. From the comments included in the questionnaires, it became evident that what the parties concerned were interested in was not the provision for occasional benefits, but planned and ongoing arrangements.

6. It was also noted that in enterprises where the firm's policy involved representatives of labour as well as management, the results were clearly better, not only in efficiency terms but even more so in workers' satisfaction. However, these successful cases of labour-management cooperation were in the minority (about 25 percent of the sample) but there is an encouraging desire among the majority of the remainder to establish programmes of labour-management cooperation in the near future.
7. Works councils, and health and safety committees were set up in a number of enterprises under Acts 1568 of 1986 and 1767 of 1987. **These were much more successful in improving the working environment and productivity in those enterprises where the parties had had previous experience in informal joint consultation committees and where the representatives of both parties had received appropriate training.**
8. There was a great desire among the business and trade union officials for more government assistance in vocational education programmes and cooperation in technical training programmes with the support of educational institutions. There was a feeling that there is an urgent need to produce capable skilled workers and technicians, with better formal and practical qualifications, who will be able to cope with the technologies of the year 2000 and beyond.
9. An examination of the available data demonstrates that while there is an increase of strike action in the public sector, the private sector showed an impressive decline in the last few years. The personal interviews indicate that the parties concerned believe that the reduction of strike action in the private sector has come about as a result of improvements made in labour-management relations through informal or statutory forms of involvement/participation.
10. It is also significant that in cases where labour-management relations – formal or informal – were satisfactory, there was no disagreement among the parties concerned regarding the need for a cooperative effort to meet the challenge of new technology and its possible adverse effects on employment. The majority believe also that the introduction of new technology is necessary if Greek products and services are to become more competitive in international markets. It was further stated in the completed questionnaires that, if enough became known concerning the impact of new technology on employment, there could be more effective planning and concerted action by all parties concerned to reduce its adverse social effects.

Although it is difficult – if not impossible – to measure the contribution of involvement/participation (informal and/or statutory) to the **improvement of the working environment and productivity performance**, it is significant that the parties concerned perceive it to be an important contributory factor. In some cases, they have measured the cost to production of workers' adverse behaviour and action which resulted from unsatisfactory working conditions (that included the lack of any form of participation in decision-making), i.e. absenteeism, labour turnover, work stoppages, poor workmanship, and even sabotage of production. Furthermore, both parties place great importance on training and government assistance, not only to improve on skills, but also to prepare better for effective

involvement and participation in appropriate statutory and/or informal committees.⁹

In spite of the interest of workers and trade union officials at the enterprise level for participation/involvement, Theodoros Koutroukis and I have discovered and reported that the Greek trade union movement as a whole, was more comfortable in bipartite or tripartite national organisations than in statutory low-level forms of worker participation such as works' councils. They prefer to participate also in higher-level forms of participation as members in the board of directors of public or semi-public enterprises.¹⁰ It would not be impossible, therefore, to convince the majority of trade unions that new forms of work organisation will be good for them, provided they are not obligatory (statutory) and they are left to the parties concerned to negotiate the terms of their participation/involvement. Perhaps they will become an extension of the functions of the European works' councils. This latter possibility will have to be studied.

One more important point remains to be cleared, why giving this work organisation conference to a particular graduate studies department of the University of Athens? The answer is that I believe there is a connection of life-long learning and the improvement of skills with career counselling and development. I believe also that the Department could become the locomotive, the coordinating machine promoting the concerted efforts for the application of new forms of work organisation, not only in this country, but also at least half of the Member-States of the European Union, including Cyprus and Malta.

I am anxious, therefore, to hear what **Prof. Michalis Kassotakis, Prof. Th. Katsanevas** and **Mr. L. Toumbas** of EKEP will have to say in their presentations.

End Notes

1. See Presidency Conclusions, *Lisbon European Council*, 23 and 24 March 2000 (Commission documents under <http://europa.eu.int/comm/off/index.en.htm>); and Council of Europe (1994), *The Effects of Labour Relations of New Forms of Organisation of Work in Firms*, Council of Europe Press.
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NEGOTIATING NEW FORMS OF WORK

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Introduction

Recent years have seen a focus of EU policy makers on how to increase the number of people in good quality, sustainable jobs. These policies are based, in the main, on the European Employment Strategy, adopted at the European Council in Luxembourg in 1997, which set out three key objectives: full employment; quality and productivity at work; and promoting social cohesion and an inclusive labour market. ¹ A number of actions have been initiated towards realising these goals through the annual publication of employment guidelines by the European Commission, setting out policy priorities for the Member States, providing an open co-ordination of employment policies and agreement on national action plans. The Employment Strategy was further endorsed when employment was linked to the broader economic and social agenda agreed at the Lisbon European Council, and subsequent European Councils, to improve job security and, at the same time, make Europe 'most competitive and dynamic-based economy in the world capable of sustainable growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010.²

The European Employment Strategy identified four key pillars it considered necessary to meet the objectives: employability; entrepreneurship; adaptability; and equal opportunities. The third of these – adaptability – refers to the need for European enterprises to introduce changes which will help them to remain competitiveness in an increasingly global business environment while, at the same time, preserving and creating jobs so that the objectives of Luxembourg and Lisbon can be achieved.

In March, 2003, the European Council set up a European Employment Taskforce to undertake an in-depth review of progress, so far, identify employment-related policy challenges and reform measures which would have an impact on the ability of Member States to implement the employment strategy. The taskforce reported in November, 2003, ³ and its findings cover a wide range of employment macro and micro related issues. It calls for the promotion of greater flexibility in European labour markets, combined with job security. It recommends that this should be done through a

Better responsiveness of EU economies to change [which] requires a high degree of flexibility in labour markets, in particular through modern work organisation and a diversity of contractual and working arrangements. This can only succeed if combined with adequate security for workers in terms of their capacity to remain and progress in the labour market. Since flexibility is in both employers' and workers' interests, social partners' involvement is desirable.

The Taskforce urges Governments and social partners to:

- *Examine and adjust the level of flexibility provided under standard contracts;*
- *Review the role of other forms of contracts;*

¹ Revised at the European Council, Thessalonica, June, 2003.

² Conclusions of the European Council, Lisbon, March, 2000.

³ *Jobs, Jobs, Jobs: creating more employment in Europe* Report of the Employment Taskforce, chaired by Wim Kok.

- *Ensure there is adequate security for workers under all forms of contracts;*
- *Remove obstacles to the setting up of temporary work agencies;*
- *Promote the use of ICT and working time flexibility;*
- *Remove obstacles to part-time work;*
- *Adapt social protection systems to support mobility in the labour market and facilitate transitions between different statuses, such as work, training, career breaks or self-employment (job-to-job insurance).*

In identifying *increased adaptability of workers and enterprises* as one of four essential requirements for higher employment, the report says:

To create more jobs, the Member States and enterprises must increase their capacity to anticipate, trigger and absorb change whether cyclical or structural.

Enterprise must become more flexible to respond to sudden changes in demand for their goods and services and to the increasing demand for job quality which is related to workers' personal preferences and family changes. Workers must cope with new ways of working and changes in their working status and be prepared for lifelong learning. Governments must create business environments that support entrepreneurship, innovation and encourage investment in R & D and sufficient flexibility while ensuring genuine security on the labour market.

How are enterprises to meet these challenges to become more competitive and flexible while protecting the jobs of their employees? Some of them have been innovative in their approach and in many companies across the EU the negotiation of collective agreements to find an agreed balance between greater flexibility, the introduction of new forms of work organisation and, at the same time, taking into consideration the concerns of workers for the continuation of their jobs, in the face of such change.

Pacts for Employment and Competitiveness (PECs)

The European Foundation, Dublin, investigated this trend in collective bargaining and analysed the scope and nature of these agreements, 4 many of which dealt with arrangements for changes in work organisation. The Foundation research was based on the study of over sixty cases of collective agreements in eleven EU Member States. The project also included reports on the national context within which these agreements were concluded and a number of sectoral studies were also undertaken, for example, in the airline, railways and electricity sectors.

Examples of these types of agreements can be found in most EU Member States, at national level (in Greece and Ireland), and at sectoral and enterprise levels in most other Member States. In Germany, for example, around a quarter of all workplaces with works councils reported having negotiated such agreements, while in Spain nearly 10% of collective agreements in 1998 included clauses on employment preservation and 5% with employment creation as part of the deal. In France, again, in 1998 about 40% of agreements dealing with reductions in working time, to implement the 35-hour week legislation, had measures allowing for adjustments to handle fluctuations in workload. The key features of these agreements are, first, for employee representatives, to minimise reductions, preserve and/or stabilise employment and, second, for management, to reduce

⁴ *Handling Restructuring: collective agreements on employment and competitiveness* European Foundation, EF/00/73/EN

costs and improve the ability of the enterprise to adapt to changing economic and market conditions. From the European Foundation study, four different categories of PECs can be identified and, in reality, most of these agreements are negotiated to reduce employment levels rather than for job creation. All four categories include agreement on aspects of new forms of work organisation.

Redistribution of Work

The first category is of those agreements which set out to redistribute work, including changes in working time and lifetime working hours. These agreements might also include an increase in the use of part-time work as well as job rotation and/or changes to shift working patterns. Levels of employment are guaranteed or it is agreed that there will not be any compulsory redundancies. In Volkswagen (Germany), in 1994, the agreement included a temporary reduction in the working week to 4 days, with a 16% reduction in pay, an agreement which saved the company and secure 30,000 jobs. Subsequent agreements introduced greater working time flexibility, without overtime pay, up to agreed thresholds (Volkswagen are now in their third agreement since 1994). It is often agreed that, as part of the deal, extra investment in the location or establishment is dependent on reaching agreement, as in the Electricity Supply Board (Ireland) where the Cost and Competitiveness Programme agreement provided for substantial capital investment in the network over ten years. In some French and Spanish companies, there is agreement to transform precarious jobs into stable employment. In Essa-Polinyà, a Spanish auto components firm, 75 temporary jobs were converted into 'open-ended' employment.

Many of these agreements also included the provision of jobs for specific groups, such as young people or the long-term unemployed, for example in EDF-GDF, the French electricity and gas company, to comply with the loi Abrey the required reduction in working time was agreed in return for the creation of 18,000 to 20,000 new jobs for young people. Also, a feature was the re-location of workers within the company, either within the site where they were working or to another company site.

Cost Cutting

This group of PECs focused on ways of cutting production costs, such as wage costs, by introducing variations or reductions in pay levels and benefits or by introducing lower start rates for new employees. For example, in the Damm brewery in Spain different pay scales were agreed for permanent workers starting before and after 1 January, 1996. The Vauxhall (GM) (UK) agreement in 2000 which required that new production operators would be paid 82% of the full rate. In Xilinx (Ireland), a US based multinational microchip maker, faced with the technology 'melt-down' in 2001-2002, and to avoid job losses, agreed a sliding scale of pay cuts which averaged out at 6% across the company (the lowest-paid workers lost nothing), unpaid sabbaticals and a scheme for employees to swap a proportion of their salaries for stock options.

Very often there is a commitment by employees to moderate pay increases or to linking pay increases to key economic indicators, such as the CPI or, in the case of exporting companies, to exchange rates. Another feature of this category is the use of atypical employment contracts, such as temporary or fixed-term contracts or by sub-contracting out non-core work.

In addition, these agreements frequently included agreement on the introduction of financial participation arrangements, such as employee share ownership schemes or share options, in return for a limitation on pay increases, as in some of the Irish cases

(Electricity Supply Board, Irish Cement) or in Alitalia, where share-ownership was seen as ‘re-orienting the system of industrial relations and human resource management’.

Boosting Productivity

In some agreements workers have agreed to greater working time flexibility, such as an increase in working hours without additional pay, to boost productivity. In 1998 at the Philips television tube plant in Lebring (Austria) an agreement included the introduction of a 7-day continuous shift working, together with a reduction in weekly working hours from 38 to 36.5 hours, while in an electrical appliance company in France, Souitch, there was agreement to reduce working hours in exchange for working time flexibility and the creation of 40 new jobs. This agreement included no payment for overtime but a ‘time-off in lieu’ arrangement.

Improving Employability

While in most cases where a reduction in job numbers is required, it is invariably voluntary rather than compulsory but where redundancies are unavoidable a number of agreements address the problem of how to improve the employment prospects of workers who will lose their jobs. Work Foundations or employment companies are one way to assist and support workers made redundant with training in job-search skills or to undertake re-training and to provide a placement service. The German postal service (Deutsche Post) set up such a work foundation, under a restructuring agreement in 2002. Unfortunately, there are not too many examples of training and development programmes for employability but there are some. DLG-Alborg (Denmark), an agricultural products company, has a detailed agreement on vocational training but no explicit guarantees on employment levels. Howmedica (Ireland), a surgical equipment manufacturer, is committed to investment in training and the development of cross-skilling which would provide a resource for continuity of manufacturing, by having a broad band of skills available in the production process.

Work Organisation

Many of these collective agreements on employment and competitiveness contain commitments to changes in the organisation of work or the introduction of new forms of work organisation. These agreements have been negotiated to re-align enterprises to the new realities of global competition, changing market demands and re-structuring. While it is recognised that, to survive, companies have to become more competitive, this cannot be achieved without the involvement and commitment of the workforce. Attitudes have to change and old, outdated, work practices have to be reformed. Management and employee representatives are working together to find mutually acceptable solutions to these challenges, incorporating the concerns of employers to become more competitiveness, defend and increase market share, and the concerns of workers and trade unions to protect employment.

In Heineken (the Netherlands), for example, where there is a unionisation density of over 80%, an agreement on the re-organisation of the company included recognition of the role of the trade unions, working together with management, in redefining work organisation; a training plan designed to re-skill and re-qualify up to 80% of the

workforce; and redeployment within the same site to a different job or to another company site to a similar or different job. Any redundancies resulting from the re-organisation would be voluntary.

This agreement had three agreed objectives- a) to avoid compulsory redundancies; b) to cushion the financial consequences of redeployment; and c) to create a positive attitude to redeployment. The unions' main target was to save jobs or, at least, ensure the transfer of affected workers to jobs in other locations. A condition of re-location was that it should have regard to the family, social situation and medical condition of the individual worker. Similarly, in the Rover Cars (UK) 'New Deal' agreement, 700 workers transferred from the Longbridge site to the plant at Cawley and were re-trained for new jobs in their new site.

The Howmedica agreement resulted in a shift from 'control-type management to continuous improvement and team-working'. Supervisors were re-trained for their new role as team facilitators, instead of the traditional direct line-management role. A range of flexible working arrangements was also introduced and the agreed aim of the agreement was to develop a 'Quality World' culture into the plant. In this context, the agreement included commitments to a) job security; b) contracting out of non-core work; c) the establishment of a partnership forum; and d) gains for the workforce in terms of additional payments. The introduction of team-working in Fanco SA, the Greek sportswear manufacturers, assisted through an EU ADAPT project, also had a major impact on the productivity and expansion of the company.

A further example of an agreement which focused on new forms of work organisation is in Bonfiglioli, a car components firm. Here the agreement, negotiated in the face of a recession in the automobile industry and the introduction of 'just-in-time' systems by customers, provided for 'a fundamental and unavoidable condition for the consolidation and development of the company'. The agreement allows management to increase the utilisation of the plant, change work organisation and introduce greater working time flexibility. In return there was a reduction in working hours for shift workers and a commitment to increase employment levels. Within the context of this agreement, both management and the metalworker unions agreed to work together to review a range of issues, such as a) defining common objectives; b) improvements in production processes; c) the efficiency of plant and equipment; d) improving working conditions and the skills and competencies of the workforce; e) the design of training programmes.

Prerequisites for Success

PECs can be seen as a form of integrated bargaining, requiring higher levels of co-operation and involvement by all the actors affected – workers, management, trade unions, works councils and, in some cases, local communities and administrations. The European Foundation research identified three key prerequisites for the successful negotiations and introduction of these agreements:

A consensus about the need for change: Unless all actors agree on the need and direction of change, there is very little hope of finding agreement. However, pressure for change are hard to ignore and can, very often, be the difference between survival and closure.

Mutual recognition: Management has to recognise the concerns and the right of employee representatives to articulate these concerns. This means involvement, not only in negotiations on pay and conditions, but also on issues which, in the past, would have been considered management prerogatives. On the other hand, employee representatives

have to recognise the pressures on managers to make changes and be willing to agree to implement them.

Quid pro quo: Both sides have to be willing to make concessions. There is a temptation on management negotiators to emphasise the need for sacrifice by workers and to ignore the need for the employee negotiators to have something to show their members in return. Unless managers are willing to meet employee worries and aspirations, there is unlikely to be any agreement.

Participation and Involvement

Further to these three elements, a number of other ingredients need to be present to ensure success:

A joint problem-solving approach: Both parties need to work together to identify what the problems are and joint committees to gather information and propose a range of possible solutions and trade-offs. There has to be a willingness to jointly evaluate data and alternative solutions and, in the end, jointly reach mutually acceptable solutions – a ‘win-win’ result. The more input there is to these joint exercises the better the chance of success. In Blue Circle Cement (UK) management and unions met outside the normal negotiating machinery, in special working groups in the hope that the traditional adversarial bargaining approach could be avoided. These meetings produced an agreed agenda of issues to be addressed in the restructuring process.

Communications is of critical importance for the success of an agreement and there are many examples of both good and bad communications structures as part of the negotiation process. In Lufthansa (German airline), for example, a very elaborate communication and participation structure was put in place by the unions to keep employees informed of the restructuring measures under discussion, which made the ownership of the final agreement all the greater. On the other hand, in Telia (Swedish telecommunications company), there was a breakdown in communications between the local union negotiators and the representatives in the workplace, who were dealing with the unease of the workforce, which eventually led to an initial rejection of the deal.

Need for realism: No collective agreement for employment and competitiveness can work in the face of strong market forces, so negotiators have to be realistic about what can be achieved. Management cannot promise what it knows it can’t deliver, which would result in a break in trust and disillusionment. In Volkswagen, PECs have made a significant contribution to overcoming a crisis, while, in contrast, the agreement in Rover was too little too late: ‘If the product is not right, high-standard employment practices cannot redeem a situation. In the end the company collapsed because the British customers did not want to buy the cars Rover was making’.⁵

‘Prevention is better than cure’: PECs are not the only answer to the challenges facing business and workers but they can be part of the solution. As one manager in Telia observed, restructuring would have been easier had more ‘preventive’ work been carried out at an earlier stage in the reform process, in particular in the area of training and development of the workforce to prepare them for change. With the rapid changes in markets, technology and automation no organisation can hope to keep their workforce fully prepared without training. It has a fundamental role to play in improving performance, making people move adaptable and flexible, developing ‘learning organisations’ and in providing greater levels of employability, should jobs disappear.

⁵ *Lessons from Rover* IPA Magazine, editorial, (Involvement and Participation Association), May 2000.

Reinventing Collective Bargaining

PECs seem to indicate that there is a change taking place in collective bargaining. Management in many companies is working in close co-operation with employee representatives to move away from the traditional adversarial approach to finding greater consensus, moving from the old 'zero-sum' to a 'positive-sum' game. Collective bargaining, as an employment relations process, is being reinvented to cope with the increased complexities of managing employment relations, as well as dealing with issues of distribution. Also, for the first time a range of workplace items, concepts and practices are being introduced into the collective bargaining arena, which previously would have been considered as management prerogatives, resulting in comprehensive and detailed agreements.

The European Foundation shows a trend towards the mutual involvement of management and workers in meeting the challenges of globalisation and the common market, by working together to modernise enterprises, recognising the need to adopt new forms of work organisation, by minimising the impact of change on employment and in the need to invest in greater level of training, development and life-long learning. All of these can contribute to the realisation of the Lisbon targets, but business and unions need support from the European Commission and policy-makers in the Member States, in terms of a regulatory framework for standards of employee involvement arrangements, providing a stable macro-economic environment in which they can work together, which would result in the implementation of complementary set of policies at European, national and enterprise levels.

These are the key issues to be addressed during this conference, as it is of vital importance that all enterprises, large and small, in Greece and other Member States, to take on the challenge of the Lisbon Council and, in so doing, contribute, at the micro level, to making the European Union, by 2010

The most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion.

II PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

Chris JECCHINIS, Professor Emeritus at Lakehead University of Ontario-Canada
Ceorgios KROUSTALAKIS, Professor at the University of Athens

REVISITING QWL? THE PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF CONVERGENCE IN EUROPE

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Abstract

This paper argues that there is a stagnation of knowledge in European efforts at organisational change that calls for new discursive tools for participative action research interventions. Our prime interest, however, is organisational development that entails development in the organisation of work in humanistic and/or sociotechnical directions that not only takes heed of business dynamics but also takes equal regard of interests beyond those of owners and top management. Specifically, we contend that a rehabilitation of QWL would be a fruitful move in such a direction but that any such move cannot be detached from convergence with organisational competitiveness. Such a view is embedded in 'high road' organisational models that foreground innovation and creativity over cost-cutting and rationalisation.

We argue that action research based OD is a legitimate goal of critical management research – but the key issue is in whose interests are change and development processes conceived and played out – and how. In an era of market deregulation and the globalisation of capital, the apparent priority is for generating organisational knowledge on products and processes that enable competitiveness in high-value markets. Accordingly, a dynamic but loose conceptualisation of QWL is called for that emphasises local knowledge, and local progress. The challenge, therefore, is to provide discursive tools for dialogues on change among the social partners that help develop new perspectives on reality.

Despite all the rhetoric surrounding transformation and major change programs, the reality is that today's managers have not yet encountered change programs that work...the change programs that could create high levels of internal and empowerment in corporations do not yet exist (Argyris, 1998: 104).

Introduction

Within the last decade or so the discourse of learning and knowledge appears to have acquired a primary role in organisations (Prichard et al, 2000). Arguably it has reached a 'normalising' status in certain quarters (Gherardi, 1999). On the other hand it is something of a paradox that theoretical knowledge of normative organisational development and change appears to have stagnated. Organisational quick-fixes, often

packaged as off-the-shelf consultancy products or reproduced through popular management texts have offered a multitude of 'solutions', (Collins, 1998). Yet despite the mountains of literature produced and commodified, practitioners committed to organisational development enter the new millennium none the wiser. What conceptual approaches, then, should guide future of action research in this area?

One option, apparently advocated by some critical theorists, is to reject what is termed 'performativity' altogether (Fournier and Grey, 2000) and concentrate on deconstruction. Whilst this has its place in organisational research, we are unpersuaded on the case for giving up on interventionist work or dumbing down the prospects of organisational change that benefits wider constituencies than owners and top management. The central questions for critical research remain the same: In whose interests is OD undertaken? How is organisational change conceived and put into practice? What kinds of knowledge do such endeavours presuppose? How generalisable can such knowledge be in a European context (Gustavsen, 1992)?

The central argument of the paper is that we need a new language for conceptualising actionable knowledge that involves a discursive rehabilitation of the quality of working life (QWL). But we also argue that in contrast to earlier work on QWL, such a discourse cannot easily be detached from business dynamics (Adler and Docherty, 1998). Accordingly, sustainable organisational change requires a convergence between QWL, however defined, and competitiveness. We present considerable evidence to refute the scepticism of certain critics who doubt that convergence is possible. We also contend, however, that we are now facing a stagnation of knowledge in European change efforts – a state of affairs that calls for new discursive tools to guide change efforts (Gergen and Thatchenkerry, 1996; Hague et al, 2002). Such stagnation is evident both in the area of top-down managerialist interventions and in interventions of a more participative nature that are often promoted by governmental programmes and supported by the labour market parties (Gustavsen, 1992). Although QWL can be critiqued as being an organisational ideal (Alvesson, 1987; Pruijt, 2000), we nevertheless argue for exploring the extent that it can be reintroduced as a discourse for informing change efforts through action research.

Historically, QWL has been used in two ways. Initially the concept was developed by researchers not unsympathetic to labour as a one-sided ideal totally detached from any notions of organisational performance. For example, Walton's conceptualisation from 1973 contained nine points of benefits and rights to be enjoyed by workers without offering any reciprocal obligations in terms of duties to the employer (Walton, 1973). In so much as there was any linkage to performance in early versions of the idea, this was through the confident belief that a higher quality of life at work would lead to higher quality products (see eg O'Toole, 1974). Alternatively, QWL has been appropriated by prescriptive managerialist writers as being a more or less certain outcome their recommended (top-down) ideal solution that unproblematically falls into place so long as the prescription is correctly managed and properly understood (eg Peters and Waterman, 1982; Womack et al, 1990; Hammer and Champy, 1993). Given the political naivety of the first of these approaches and the political arrogance of the second, it is hardly surprising that QWL had fallen out of favour by the mid-1990s.

In this paper we aim to argue for the rehabilitation of QWL neither as an ideal in its own right nor as a potential performance outcome of the ‘correct’ prescriptive blueprint. Rather, we argue that QWL should be explored as a discursive tool for participative job redesign that is sustainable when there is convergence with competitiveness. In our view, it is more useful to conceptualise performance in terms of competitiveness than efficiency (cf Marcuse 1941; Pruijt, 2000) as efficiency or cost leadership are rarely bases for sustainable advantage in the longer run. The nature of contemporary business dynamics are such, however, that the focus of competitive advantage should be on the capacity of the organisation to innovate rather than finding cost leadership solutions (Porter, 1980).

Specifically, we argue that there are two quite distinct options for the pursuit of competitiveness, the ‘low road’ and the ‘high road’. Low road solutions focus on the traditional options in work organisation of cost leadership, flexibility, speed and quality. In increasingly fierce global markets there is continuous pressure to deliver faster and better products and services at lower prices. But these are no longer seen as sufficient means for adding value; they are mere ‘entrance factors’ to the competitive game and offer no guarantee of winning it. Rather, sustainable organisational change needs to embrace high road solutions whereby organisational spaces are created that liberate human creativity in ways that achieve a dynamic balance between product and process innovation.

The paper proceeds by showing how knowledge informing organisational change efforts has stagnated. We then present evidence from various European countries to show that scepticism towards the prospects of convergence is misplaced. The picture is not one of universal failure, but, rather, one of a limited number of success stories and thereafter a failure of diffusion. From this we then discuss briefly the contemporary context for organisational change in Europe and conclude that recent changes underscore the need for new discursive tools for informing interventions. In the subsequent section we then proceed to develop an alternative agenda for intervention based on seeking convergence between QWL and competitiveness. The paper concludes that although such an alternative might open up possibilities for micro emancipation (Alvesson and Willmott, 1996), there is nevertheless a need for caveats emphasising that QWL remains problematic hence the need for critical reflexivity in our action research endeavours (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000).

Intervening in Work Organisation – The Stagnation of Knowledge

Managerialist efforts at change, typically emanating from consulting quarters, have had a patchy history often culminating in failure (Buchanan and Badham, 1999). Invariably, such efforts are guided by top-down ideals that are reduced to three letter abbreviations or acronyms – TLAs. Ideas such as BPR (business process engineering) (Hammer and Champy, 1993) have been enthusiastically embraced only to fall far short of their various claims in practice (Knights and Willmott, 2000). There are indications that BPR is a passing fad (Jones and Thwaites, 2000). Not least, this can be attributed to its high failure rate. For example, Knights and Willmott (2000: 27) refer to a survey conducted by consultants Arthur Little in which less than one-sixth of executives reported favourable outcomes and 60% of respondents indicated encountering unanticipated problems or unintended side effects. If BPR has (had?) any contribution to make to QWL it is through

its claims to empowerment. However, as the critics have argued, any such claims are profoundly fanciful. The BPR conception of empowerment must necessarily entail workers making decisions and rules (within teams) through the internalisation of dominant corporate ideological norms and this is difficult to reconcile with notions of increased employee autonomy.

Other innovations such as TQM have only offered a one-sided view of development and frequently the claims of TQM with regard to skill broadening and empowerment are bogus (Wilkinson and Willmott, 1995). In reality, the establishment and formalisation of procedures involved in quality programmes is essentially Tayloristic by involving a clear separation of conception from execution. Indeed, if TQM is a hegemonic project for control through consent, it is thereby a means for control over employee subjectivity. Clearly, therefore, TQM is by no means congruent or even overlapping with QWL. In any event, empirical studies of TQM have rarely generated any bottom-line performance improvements (see eg Schaffer and Thomson, 1992). Similar stories of failure are evident in the case of CIM (computer-integrated manufacturing) and MRP (materials requirements planning) (Majchrzak and Gasser, 1991).

A further fashion imported from Japanese manufacturing is lean production and its closely related acronym JIT (just-in-time). But lean production has been critiqued on a number of grounds. It necessarily segments the workforce undermining solidarity; it involves a broadening of skills but not a deepening of them; the kaizen process implicitly involves the establishment of a new division of labour with an elite performing the kaizen tasks; growing wage differentials between core and peripheral (largely female) workers; unrestricted duration and flexibility of working hours; and a lack of a role for unions in work design (Sandberg, 1995: 21). If such criticism is an accurate depiction of organisational realities under lean production, it seems difficult to envisage how it might be compatible with improvements in the quality of working life.

Although there is evidence that changes in work organisation are afoot, there is thus also evidence that many innovations represent little more than token change (EPOC, 1999; Smith and Thompson, 1998). Some organisations may indeed have embraced change, for example, in the form of teamworking, but in many instances such change actually involves more subtle forms of control (Delbridge et al, 1992) rather than a climate that nurtures employee innovation and creativity. These are low road workplaces, as exemplified by many call centres, and they offer a continuation of Taylorism rather than its demise and, we argue, should not be the model to guide practitioners and policy makers.

In other words, many managerialist ideals have formed a flimsy basis for organisational development. Not only are the linkages to performance improvements questionable, but they also tend to serve the narrow interests of top management and shareholders without concomitant advance in the micro emancipation of employees. It would thus be easy to adopt a sceptical view, adhered to by some critical theory purists, and dismiss the prospects for sustainable, balanced interventions out of hand. But this ignores a major research tradition in Europe that can point to nearly three decades of action research that is participative and not driven by managerialist ideals (Gustavsen, 1992). Such work has aimed at organisational change in humanistic and/or sociotechnical directions that simultaneously facilitates employee interests with those of the organisation in a

developmental context.

Yet how do we conceptualise and operationalise ‘employee interests’ without falling into the trap of essentialism? For some decades now researchers and some practitioners have sought to do this by using the concept of the quality of working life. Yet it is difficult to pin a precise meaning on to QWL. Nevertheless, it does appear possible to categorise QWL into three distinct groups (Abdeen, 2002): organisational factors including fair compensation, individual training and development opportunities, knowing and defending rights at work, work-life balance, participation, trust and equal opportunities; work environment factors including health and safety, ergonomics, parental leave and day care facilities; and job-related factors such as working patterns and rhythms, task design and control, job content and voice.

Our argument is that QWL, conceived in such a fashion, is consistent with and supportive of developing the types of human resources that are increasingly central determinants of competitiveness. But what evidence is there of such convergence between QWL and performance? Although the chronological origins of the QWL movement and sociotechnical systems theory were to be found in the UK, the real pioneers in terms of putting the ideas into practice were in Norway, under the leadership of Einar Thorsrud in the 1960s, and then elsewhere in Scandinavia. Thorsrud, drawing directly on the influence of Fred Emery of the Tavistock Institute, believed that democratisation of industrial relations had to be embedded in the structure of work organisation and job content. Accordingly, sociotechnical systems design could be used both for democratisation and for organisational effectiveness (den Hertog and Schröder, 1989). Yet as we will show in the next section, the evidence of successful change in Europe is patchy (EPOC, 1997; Hague et al, 2002); moreover, there is also evidence that new contextual conditions are calling into question the sustainability of previous ‘success stories’.

QWL and Competitiveness in Europe – The Evidence

Are there really alternatives to traditional, low road forms of organisation and do they actually work? Clearly, ‘evidence’ in organisational change has a different meaning than in the physical sciences. Change initiatives and organisational experiments never take place under uniform and controlled conditions. Evidence here emerges from real life in an enormous variety of social and economic contexts.

Pioneering Cases

When the Dutch Philips engineer Frederiks moved in 1986 to the Northern city of Stadskanaal he knew that his new job as plant manager of the semi-conductor factory would be a tough one (Haak 1994). During the mid-eighties the economic tide was still low and competition in the components market was severe. He knew that his last job before his retirement could involve the closure of the factory. At that stage Philips had no intention of investing substantially in the plant. Employment creation had been one of the original considerations for building the factory in this location, and unemployment was still a major problem in the region. Frederiks and his new team became strongly committed to keeping the factory open. They won company support to develop a strategy

that could make the plant competitive again. Their final plan was not based on technological measures, rigorous cost cutting and downsizing but upon a form of sociotechnical redesign which Frederiks had already implemented in another Philips factory. Components of this approach were:

- The change from functional to flow- and product oriented structures.
- The development of self-managing production teams with each team responsible for a rounded ('complete', or 'whole') task.
- A shift of part of the staff functions to the production teams.
- The formation of integrated staff teams working close to the shop floor.
- Shortening of hierarchical lines.
- Opening and sustaining dialogue with the teams.

Implementing such basic changes in a large and complex organisation did not prove to be easy. Building trust between production workers, staff, senior management, middle management and customers was crucial but painstaking. Yet eventually the project became a success and for many years the company was an iconic example of organisational innovation in The Netherlands, providing the focus for several postgraduate theses and conferences on organisational change. The approach appeared to provide a real answer to severe problems in a harsh economic environment.

In 1993, just at the moment the Stadskanaal factory seemed to be on track again another factory was closed. It was a factory which enjoyed far wider, even world-wide fame in the field of organisational innovation: Volvo's revolutionary car plant at Uddevalla. This factory, opened four years earlier, was arguably the most ambitious attempt at introducing mass vehicle manufacture according to sociotechnical design principles (Sandberg, 1995). Here self-managing teams did not produce a tiny electronic component but a whole car. Volvo put all its technical and organisational know-how into developing a real alternative to the assembly line delivering the prospect of genuine improvements in quality of working life. The plant had enormous symbolic significance in the search for new organisational forms, combining attractive work in a tight labour market with high levels of productivity in a very competitive environment (Sandberg 1995, Huzzard, 2000). But Volvo nonetheless hit hard times. Car sales declined especially in the home market and production capacity had to be downsized. The subsequent closure of Uddevalla led to fierce debates about the fundamental question of whether improvements in the quality of working life are compatible with competitiveness (see for example: Adler and Cole, 1993, Berggren, 1994).

So when we compare both cases, what *evidence* is there for the value of new organisational forms based on innovation and flexibility? Two possible answers are certainly wrong. The first wrong answer is that Philips finally solved production problems in the semiconductor industry. The second is that the closure of the Uddevalla plant signified the demise of Volvo's QWL policies. Organisational innovation remains a continuous process in both firms, in good times and bad. Both cases undoubtedly played a highly important role in the diffusion of organisational innovation on a national or even on a world-wide scale. There will always be a need for inspirational stories from pioneers showing that boundaries can be moved. However cases like these lose their impact when they are used as 'real and final proof' of the effectiveness of new organisational practices. At best, these stories represent challenges, offering propositions to be tested

and adapted in new situations.

The two cases show how difficult it is to compare complex change processes and evaluate their outcomes, especially when we lack insight into the context in which change is happening. This clearly limits the value of comparative research of a quantitative nature. A recent literature review (Savage, 2001) shows that the volume of hard data on the benefits of new forms of work organisation is still very limited.

Savage offers a number of possible explanations:

- differences in the definition of new organisational forms;
- limitations in the scope of the studies;
- differences in time perspectives (long term versus short terms effects);
- the variety of performance indicators used.

In addition researchers often have to rely on the *words* of the actors involved – and of course the words of individuals don't always give the full story.

However the number of comparative studies and cross-organisational surveys appears to be on the increase. Part of this growing body of research is carried out in the context of EU initiatives or (in the case of many Northern European countries) of national policy programmes - see for example the Employee Participation and Organisational Change study (EPOC, 1997) and the evaluation of the Swedish Working Life Fund (Gustavsen et al., 1996). We shall focus here on a few significant findings from these studies.

Organisational Innovation: On the Management Agenda?

The origin of 'work reform' or 'organisational reform' can be found somewhere in the late sixties, typically in environments experiencing high growth and a tight labour market (Hague, 2000; Huzzard, 2000). For many managers this 'human centred' approach to organisational change seemed out of place by the early 1980s when the Western economy was hit by a serious recession. However, many realised in the middle of recession that a new perspective on the organisation was a basic condition both for recovery and for sustainable competitive advantage. Flexibility and quality suddenly became high priorities, challenging the inertia embedded in traditional organisational cultures. More recently, managers are coming to realise that innovation is not an event but a continuous process. These conclusions are amplified by a number of findings from research as set out as table 1.

Table 1: Innovation and human resources in Europe – a research summary

- The EPOC study (1997) indicates that 4 out of 5 workplaces in ten European countries practice some form of direct participation by employees.
- A study of 10 leading European steel companies published by the European Federation of Steelmakers (Eurofer) indicates that the management of organisational change and human resources is a crucial factor in achieving competitive advantage in an increasingly knowledge-intensive industry (den Hertog and Mari, 2000).
- A Swedish survey by the National Institute for Working Life (Wikman et al., 1999) revealed that three quarters of the respondent firms had implemented changes involving the delegation of responsibility and job enlargement.
- A local survey of 200 organisations in the United Kingdom (Hague and Aubrey, 1999) demonstrated that between 1995 and 1998 some 30% of the sample implemented working practices including multi-skilling, teamworking and problem-solving groups. The early 1990s appears to represent a turning point in which the diffusion of these practices became significant, at least amongst larger firms.
- 65% of British managers were reported in the 1998 UK Workplace Employee Relations Survey (Cully, 1999) to use teams in their work places.
- According to a case survey of 35 Dutch software firms (Huizenga, 2001) teamworking has become the standard both for daily operational tasks and for product and service innovation. Multifunctional groups proved to be critical for the latter task.
- An American survey of Fortune 1000 companies (Lawler et al., 1995) showed that 68% make use of self-managing teams.

A growing number of studies indicate that organisational innovation and new forms of work organisation have a positive impact on organisational performance. This is different from saying that new organisational forms are in themselves more effective. Rather, it is recognised that new approaches *create the conditions* for wider and more fundamental changes. Illustrative in this respect is the Eurofer study (den Hertog and Mari, 2000) in which ten leading European steel firms participated. The study shows that the radical reconstruction of the steel industry would not have been possible without multi-skilling, investment in competence building, flattening of the organisational structures and removing functional boundaries. The same applies to the implementation of new information and communication technology (ICT). Several studies, reported on in literature surveys on convergence from Denmark, France, Sweden and The Netherlands, (Banke and Norskøy, 2000; Sacquepée and Dufau, 2001; Huzzard, 2000; den Hertog and Verbruggen, 2000) indicate that new forms of work organisation enable firms to profit from the implementation of new technology. *At the same time it also appears to be true that it also works the other way round: new information and communication technologies can strengthen the positive impact of new organisational forms. This combination proved to be key in the development of customer-focused teams in an insurance company and of multi-disciplinary product development teams in a Dutch pharmaceutical firm (den Hertog and Huizenga, 2000).* New organisational forms are not 'stand alone' systems but only appear to work as part of a larger integrated configuration. Some examples from the growing stream of research findings are given in table 2.

Table 2: New organisational forms in Europe – selected research findings

- A survey of production supervisors in 104 Danish companies indicates that the most important drivers for teamworking in production are increased productivity, efficiency, flexibility, employee satisfaction and motivation (PLS Consult, 1999). The most significant results in practice appear to be related to flexibility, productivity and employee satisfaction. Only 10% of respondents claim that the aims were not fulfilled completely.
- A recent study commissioned by the Swedish Ministry of Industry (NUTEK, 1999) examined the ability of flexible work organisation to increase productivity. Flexibility was defined in terms of the organisation of human capital, the distribution of responsibility and reduced bureaucracy. From the study, flexible organisations emerged strongly as more productive with lower levels of labour turnover and absenteeism. These organisations also tend to have greater capacity to realise basic transformations such as the implementation of new technologies and organisational innovation.
- The evaluation of the Swedish Workplace Development Programme (Gustavsen et al., 1996; Brulin and Nilsson, 1995) revealed important facts about the impacts of innovation in work organisation. A random sample of 1500 projects indicated that workplace development and productivity improvement go hand in hand. Projects resulted in increased job rotation, greater involvement of shop-floor employees in planning, control and participation in change activities. Key figures on lead times, throughput times, supply times and retooling times were discernible as being higher at fund-supported workplaces than in a control group.
- Researchers in The Netherlands (Dhondt, 1998) tried to explain organisational performance on the basis of two sets of change: organisational and technological. The study was carried out by means of a national survey involving 3,600 companies, set up to establish the state of workplace reform in the country. Results indicate that high performance is strongly affected by a combination of both forms of change. The report argues that the combination of advanced technology with modern sociotechnical organisational forms is a precondition for high performance.
- A study of 63 medium-sized Dutch firms (Cobbenhagen, 1999) demonstrates that well developed horizontal (or lateral) organisational structures which cross functional boundaries and are based on multifunctional teams and cross functional career paths can be crucial for product, service and process innovation.

At the level of the workplace, convergence is well illustrated by the experiences gained from The Swedish Work Environment Fund. The Fund supported the establishment of a new body, AMBIV, The Joint Committee for Action Against Repetitive Strain Injuries in Industry. This group set up nine sub-projects at workplaces between 1989 and 1995 where there was local agreement on the desirability to introduce innovative reforms to the work organisation and review payment systems in directions that were of mutual benefit to both sides (Huzzard, 2000). Reports on five of the projects were published, and an overall summary of these is set out in table 3.

Table 3: The Swedish AMBIV Project - summary of outcomes in cases published

Workplace	Change motive	New work organisation	Result
ASSA AB, Eskilstuna	High turnover rates; high levels of repetitive strain injuries; poor supply precision.	Flow production: teams with full assembly responsibility, customer contact and work planning.	Reduced turnover from 50% per year to 3%; improved supply provision from 20% to 99%.
Nokia AB, Motala	High levels of industrial injuries; high costs; poor quality; low effectiveness.	Teams of ten assembling diverse products. New responsibilities included supply quality, materials handling, maintenance, fault finding and reporting and production technology.	Number of strain injuries reduced from 150 per year (1980s) to zero at completion of project. Savings of 15% in indirect time. Increased individual flexibility.
Norwesco AB, Öregrund	Industrial injuries; mutual dissatisfaction over payments system.	Some teamworking in high-volume production. General extension of job content linked to product development.	Steady increase in productivity compared with constant level pre-project. Job enlargement and greater openness.
TVAB, Töcksfors	High turnover and sickness absence; high quality costs; increased customer demands on quality and supply precision; rapid company expansion.	Stimulation of teamwork via organising production around products. Weekly and daily planning in teams; also responsibility for results, quality, supply times and working hours.	Reduction of 80% in sickness absence and 75% in injuries. Improved quality, supply precision and productivity. 80% reduction in throughput times.
Volvo Trucks, Umeverken	Need for creation of greater effectiveness in production; high levels of strain injuries.	Nine independent teams in the press shop each having 10-12 members. Team duties included all direct manual duties as well as some indirect duties. Pace governed by human capacity and time to learn.	Improved psychosocial environment through greater skills development, job enlargement and delegation of responsibility. Inclusion of more indirect duties in the teams. Holistic view of operations and learning.

Closing the Gap Between Leading Edge-Practice and cCmmon Practice

The extensive Employee Participation in Organisational Change (EPOC) survey undertaken by the European Foundation clearly demonstrated that new working practices were emerging across Europe. Other research also points to a widespread reappraisal of traditional working practices, (Cully, et al, 1999; Hague and Aubrey, 1999; NUTEK, 1996; Pettigrew and Fenton, 2000). However, there is considerable variation between emerging organisational practices. Some have sought organisational renewal through a radical reappraisal of job design, employee involvement and process innovation and this

has been described as the ‘high road’ to organisational change. However, it appears that many organisations have tended to follow a more limited, or ‘low road’ adaptation of existing organisational forms.

While this trend would appear to be of concern, perhaps it is more worrying that many organisations have yet to implement *any* strategies of organisational renewal. But why is this the case? Why have many organisations, and smaller enterprises in particular, seemed to have taken the ‘no road’ option when it is clear that working practices based upon ‘divide and rule’ principles and the division between ‘mental’ and ‘manual’ tasks are no longer a sustainable option? This would seem particularly surprising for a number of reasons:

Firstly, it has been recognised for many years that technology alone cannot provide a competitive edge. Mistaken approaches to restructuring by Fiat in the 1980s (Sisson, 1996) plus the various studies of anthropocentric and human-centred manufacturing clearly illustrate how vital it is to develop the skills and competencies of individuals (Brodner, 1990; Corbett, 1990). At the same time, individual competencies do not represent an effective asset unless they are deployed in an organisational environment where they can be realised to the full. The importance of developing an organisation’s *collective* competence needs therefore to be recognised, while ‘organisational memory’ and workforce diversity can be a vital resource for problem-solving, creativity and innovation.

Secondly, it has become a cliché to hear managers pronounce that ‘people are our greatest asset’. However, an increasing amount of research evidence demonstrates that innovation in work organisation based on greater employee involvement can have a significant influence on business performance. A ten year longitudinal study undertaken by the Chartered Institute for Professional Development (CIPD) in the UK has identified that the contribution of people management practices (i.e. a focus on employee involvement, culture and work organisation) account for as much as 17% variation in the profitability of companies (West, 1998).

Thirdly, demographic change coupled with economic growth has resulted in a labour market that has become increasingly tight in some countries and sectors of the European Union. Companies are therefore seeking to provide working environments that both attract and retain labour and meet the growing requirement of many employees to have more varied and meaningful work (Giddens, 1998). In addition, employees are seeking greater opportunities to pursue leisure interests or to find a better balance between their work and home lives. *In knowledge-intensive service sectors one can even observe firms trying to attract customers by displaying their own internal policies in this field. From a promotional text of a Dutch software service firm: “Well-informed and motivated personnel are beneficial to the customer, it translates into low personnel turnover, extremely low absenteeism and thus maximum employability, productivity and continuity, based on extra attention and coaching”* (den Hertog and Huizenga, 2000).

The evidence suggests, therefore, that scepticism of convergence could well be misplaced. But at the beginning of the current decade, however, the pattern of change programmes across Europe looks very patchy and inconsistent. Many parts of southern Europe remain untouched by such programmes while in the north there is little continuity

in most countries. Even in Scandinavia the prospects for convergence appear to be threatened by ongoing pressures for rationalisation (Huzzard, 2000). Yet the evidence here suggests that a blanket dismissal of convergence is too pessimistic. But as we will proceed to argue, the conditions mediating researcher interventions are changing – hence the need for action research to be informed by new discursive formations.

New Pressures and Conditions in Europe

There can be little doubt that radical change is afoot in Europe's labour market. New conditions are facing commercial firms and public sector organisations and these conditions are having major implications on employment prospects throughout the continent. The high employment levels and stable occupational patterns that characterised the post-war era have now given way to something more uncertain and subject to change. For European employees, job security in a relatively stable labour market with few, if any, occupational changes over the life-cycle has been superseded by a world of uncertainty, change and in many cases periods of unemployment. We should of course be careful not to simplify history by saying that change never happened in the past; nevertheless there is evidence that the changes we are now witnessing are fundamental.

A number of drivers of change are having a profound impact on employment in Europe (see eg Snowden, 1998; also quoted in Mazzanti, 2001: 11). First, *changes in physical capital*. In the first part of the twentieth century the introduction of capital goods prevailed. This gave rise to economies of scale and enhanced the production of standardised, undifferentiated consumption goods and enabled high increases in labour productivity. More recently, capital equipment has become much more flexible and thus given rise to economies of scope. The introduction of newer capital equipment and the development of information technologies have radically changed the nature of work. In vehicle manufacturing, for example, long assembly lines have been replaced by small working groups, with a high degree of job rotation and task variety (EPOC, 1999).

Secondly, we are witnessing *change in information technologies*. New technology has enabled firms to process information flows promptly and make rapid adjustments in behaviour in response. Moreover, it has had the effect of lowering transactions costs thus making outsourcing an increasingly attractive strategy. The rapid development and diffusion of information technology has also become associated with the rise of the so-called 'new economy'. Gordon (2000) sees the new economy as being linked to three different trends: i) the development of the internet; ii) the increase in computational capabilities of both computers and telecommunication networks; and iii) a decline in the level of prices of both hardware and software. Above all, knowledge is increasingly seen as the key source of added value.

Thirdly, *changes in human capital* are evident. The structural dynamics associated with the two drivers outlined above will almost certainly tend to generate a shift in labour demand. The demand for skilled workers has increased steeply with respect to the demand for unskilled workers. Machin and Van Reenen (1998) show that in the last 25 years the percentage of employees with medium-to-high educational backgrounds has increased remarkably. A consequence of this shift in the demand for labour is the dramatic change in the structure of relative wages between skilled and unskilled

employees. Moreover, the ratio of unemployment rates between unskilled and skilled workers has increased sharply.

Fourthly, markets are being transformed by *changes in employment and consumption preferences*. The increase in the average educational level of employees has transformed employee preferences away from monotonous and fragmented jobs and in favour of more varied, creative and challenging work. So far as the demand for consumption goods is concerned, consumer tastes increasingly favour product variety and personalised goods and services.

It can easily be concluded that the extent of change in the European economy is profound – but mapping out the final destination is less easy. Previously, policy makers sought to maintain employment through the macroeconomic techniques of demand management by national governments and efficient and effective management of firms and other organisations through rational techniques such as planning. However, it is the central argument of this paper that as we enter the early years of the new millennium these approaches no longer seem appropriate.

Above all, the forces for change discussed above are changing the terms on which European firms are competing. There is evidence, however, that ‘low road’ concerns currently dominate the thinking of many if not most managers and policy makers. Such thinking is also evident in public sector organisations where cost-cutting has been prioritised over the development of service delivery. From a long-term perspective, however, such an approach to strategy will not be enough as a means for underpinning economic growth and securing employment. At best, the approach can be regarded merely as a defensive reaction to competition from outside Europe. The key to competitive success, rather, is innovative capacity, which relies on unlocking intellectual capital and human creativity throughout the organisation. This, in turn, switches the focus onto innovations in work organisation as being central to Europe’s innovative potential.

Towards a new agenda for critical intervention: the rehabilitation of QWL

Competition and Innovation

An innovation-based model of competitiveness implies the need for radical approaches to workplace and job design. Research suggests that organisational innovation depends on a number of factors (Rogers, 1995: 379ff). First, leaders should be positively disposed to change personally. Secondly, organisations should have a number of internal design features, ie they should have decentralised structures, be composed of diverse individuals with high levels of knowledge and expertise, should not be governed by over-reliance on formal rules, should have effective interpersonal networks connecting the various operational units, should have some degree of slack, that is, the availability of uncommitted organisational resources, Thirdly, innovative organisations should exhibit openness towards their external environments (ibid). Clearly, therefore, choices on work organisation have a major impact on competitiveness and the generation of added value.

There is, however, a need to distinguish between different types of innovation. Moreover, as the research on organisational innovations suggests, the two contrasting low road and

high road options imply radically different approaches to the organisation of work. Some innovations can of course be motivated by low road options such as rationalisation and downsizing. Such innovations are likely to reduce the demand for labour as well as the quality of working life. On the other hand, high road innovation strategies geared towards the development of new products, markets or processes are more likely to have the opposite effect. Such development in basic aspects of the business, moreover, occurs in parallel with individual development of employees. The type of work organisation associated with high road innovation, as opposed to the low road alternative, is therefore likely to consist of more functional flexibility including job enlargement and job enrichment as well as greater autonomy and empowerment. In other words, high road options potentially entail the convergence between improved competitiveness and improvements in the quality of working life.

Re-Thinking QWL for the 21st Century

In the 1970s and 1980s, issues relating to the Quality of Working Life received considerable research attention. However a large amount of the QWL debate focused on job redesign within individual enterprises. Much of this research was targeted at large-scale manufacturing, and in the area of teamworking, automobile manufacturing has enjoyed an almost obsessive level of academic interest. However as manufacturing throughout the EU restructures, there is a need to reposition the QWL debate to encompass the changing labour market and the emergence of the so-called 'new economy'.

Early discussions about QWL in the 1970s were built upon the premise of humanising working conditions in an era of mass markets. In addition, labour markets were particularly tight, resulting in attempts to differentiate conditions of employment. However, as competitive pressure grew in the 1990s for adaptability, high quality and responsiveness, the QWL debate was re-contextualised around issues of 'empowerment' and the development of 'high performance work systems' and the term QWL somewhat fell out of fashion.

Buchanan and Huczynski (1997) have illustrated how QWL issues had been redefined during the 1990s, and a key objective of action research activities now is to ensure further re-appraisal relevant to the new century. Traditionally QWL has encompassed a range of issues including workplace partnership, reward and recognition, and employee involvement. However the transformation of Tayloristic working practices through job redesign has been a core preoccupation. The 'up-skilling' of work through job enlargement and enrichment processes, and the development of self-managing (or semi-autonomous) teamworking has provided benefits for both companies and employees in traditional organisational settings. But employment patterns are changing and there is evidence to suggest that traditional organisation and career structures will be challenged by more flexible modes of employment. So what types of change might emerge and how can the concept of QWL develop to meet emerging challenges in the world of work?

The rapid change in demographics, technology and global markets will be a continuous challenge to manufacturers and service providers. Research evidence from the European Commission (2001) suggests that :

- Innovation and technological change are (and will remain) the principal driving forces in job creation.
- 1 in 4 EU countries see labour shortages as a barrier to expansion.
- While 80% claim to be ‘satisfied’ in their work, there is recognition that job quality must be improved in a sustainable way to avoid people falling into unemployment or leaving the labour market.

A contestable area in recent debates concerns the way in which employees themselves will view work. Richard Scase (1999) argues that work will become a ‘central life interest’ with a proliferation of the ‘long-hours culture’. While some may indeed choose or feel coerced into working long hours, we have already noted that other commentators such as Giddens (1998) foresee problems for employers who cannot provide ‘meaningful work’ in an age when opportunities for travel, leisure pursuits and concerns for work/life balance are increasingly significant in employment options. For some, traditional forms of employment are too restrictive and new patterns of work are beginning to emerge, notably in the ‘creative industries’. But what these organisational forms will look like, and the extent of their diffusion in coming years, is the subject of much conjecture.

A recent study led by the Future Unit of Britain’s Department for Trade and Industry (DfTI) attempted to envisage the UK economy in 2015 and engaged a number of academics and policy-makers in predicting possible patterns of ‘work in the knowledge-driven economy’. Two leading scenarios were devised to provide a context within which policy makers, social partners and others could develop future-orientated thinking about their own spheres of competence; these are entitled *Built to Last* and *Wired World*. In 2001 the DfTI launched its *FutureFocus* centre as a high-technology locus for such dialogue.

Built to Last is based on fairly traditional company structures but prioritises knowledge as a principle source of competitive advantage. A challenge for *Built to Last* companies is to find ways of capturing and internalising such knowledge. New forms of work organisation and employee retention are therefore key constituents of business strategy; characteristics of the *Built to Last* landscape will include the use of incentive packages (opportunities for education, share ownership, pension and healthcare), the importance of branded products and the utilisation of networking technologies.

Wired World assumes the growth of coalitions of individuals and small firms able to form and re-form on a project-by-project basis to meet the requirements of particular customers, contracts or projects. Organisations, real or virtual, are set up on an ad hoc basis in response to contingent opportunities and needs. Individuals involved are often self-employed portfolio workers linked by strong inter-personal networks. High speed Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a critical role in ensuring the cohesion and responsiveness of these networks.

These scenarios are not seen as mutually exclusive: rather a key task for future-focused dialogue is to explore how elements from each scenario might combine to form a ‘matrix’, and to identify ways in which key actors can influence that process. For example organisational structures at the centre of *Wired World* tend to fall outside traditional debates on quality of working life or job redesign; they provide able knowledge-workers with exciting opportunities for variety, personal development and

entrepreneurship, but at the expense of considerable insecurity. As the emergence of *Wired World* begins to offer more attractive ways of working for talented knowledge workers (even if largely restricted to people in high technology or design-based sectors) conventional companies will need to transform management styles and cultures if they are to recruit and retain able staff. Indeed there is increasing recognition that employees are seeking a better balance between work and leisure, forcing many employers to introduce benefits such as guaranteed TOIL (time off in lieu), sabbaticals and career breaks.

Towards a Pluralistic Discourse for Change

It has already been observed that the focus of QWL debates has changed over the past thirty years or so, and table 4 incorporates Buchanan and Huczynski's (1997) attempt to illustrate this evolution. However the table has been amended to translate the principles of historic QWL debates to match emerging challenges in the 'new economy'. As the table shows, issues such as 'flexibility', 'autonomy', and 'training and development' may become even more of a concern as people opt to shape their own careers and working lives. As ICTs increase opportunities for interconnectedness between individuals and organisations, so may opportunities grow for more autonomous working. This represents a serious challenge for traditional models of organisational development and QWL. Similarly, organisations that continue along the 'built-to-last' track may not only face demands for participation and partnership from workers seeking greater opportunities for self-fulfilment and gainsharing, but will also answer to an increasing body of customers and investors who recognise that employee involvement is a key constituent of organisational effectiveness.

Accordingly, our belief in the need to refocus the debate on competitiveness in Europe includes the rehabilitation of QWL. In doing this we are advocating a balanced approach to the employment relationship. This not only encompasses conditions at the workplace, but also sees the relationship as being inextricably bound up with external factors such as the support frameworks of policy makers, the issue of work-life balance and the linkage between value creation at the workplace with the broader components of social capital (Putnam, 1992).

Yet each country in Europe has different institutional, cultural and employment traditions and such differences are reflected in differences in how QWL is defined and how debates on working life have evolved throughout the continent. In France, for example, QWL is seen in terms of the relationship between remuneration and working hours on the one hand and learning and achievement in organisations on the other (Sacquepèe and Dufau, 2001). In Scandinavia, debates on 'Good Work' have tended to focus more on objective parameters of work organisation (Banke and Norskø, 2000; Huzzard, 2000). The debate in Spain has focused more on occupational health and participation (Oncins et al, 2002). Other versions see QWL as being more of a subjective concept rather closer to notions of job satisfaction. Because of these differences, we do not think it productive to adopt a tight definition of QWL in the point of departure for our research.

We also argue that QWL and competitiveness should be seen dynamically – as central concepts in processes of change management. Crucially, we reject the view that the

management of change in organisations has to require the concentration of power within top management. Indeed, the history of change programmes across the continent provides ample evidence that such approaches are often doomed to failure. We also wish to avoid arriving at conclusions on change that comprise of simplistic checklists drafted around supposedly tried and tested change parameters. The challenge, rather, is to provide discursive tools for dialogues on change among the social partners that help develop new perspectives on reality. For this reason, too, we do not intend to proceed with a tight, closed definition of QWL. Rather, it is more useful to see QWL and convergence as an alternative discourse for critically inspired interventions (Gergen and Thatchenkerry, 1996).

Table 4: Re-positioning QWL for the 21st Century

QWL in the 1970s	Empowered teams in the 1990s	Aspirations for work and leisure in 2010	
		Built-to-last	Wired-world
Aimed to reduce costs of absenteeism and labour turnover and increase productivity	Aims to improve organisational flexibility and product quality for competitive advantage	Recruitment and retention strategies key issues in a tightening labour market. Organisations seek to differentiate their working conditions and allow for greater work life balance.	Individuals and organisations develop 'networking' abilities. Virtual organisations may form to provide custom services.
Based on argument that increased autonomy improves quality of work experience and job satisfaction	Based on argument that increased autonomy improves skill, decision making, adaptability and use of new technology	Team autonomy, the development of organisational creativity and the use of collective memory central to product and process innovation.	Individuals have autonomy to design portfolio careers in locations of their choice, and which coincide with leisure aspirations.
Had little impact on management functions	Involves redefinition of management function, particularly for supervision	A loosening of 'command and control' management approaches. Employees may be invited to participate in decision-making, strategic thinking and financial gain-sharing initiatives.	Individuals become self-managing and are the architects of their own networks, employment patterns and career paths.
'Quick fix' applied to problematic groups	Can take significant time to change organisational culture, attitudes and behaviour	Organisational culture aims for trust relationships built upon dialogue and partnership. In addition, the diversity of employees will be seen as a key organisational resource. The organisation may offer opportunities for social and community initiatives.	Network culture based upon mutual trust. The Internet will link individuals and small enterprises, but social contact will remain vitally important. There may be a blurring between work and leisure pursuits which will occur both through electronic and physical contact. There may be a blurring between work and leisure pursuits.
Personnel administration technique	Human resource management strategy	Holistic people management techniques, such as work organisation, job enrichment, family friendly policies will provide measurable 'bottom-line' benefits.	Career development may be self-directed but intermediaries such as government, business support agencies and universities, may broker contacts, knowledge and facilitate both technological and geographical networking.

Adapted from Buchanan, D., and Huczynski, A. (1997) *Organizational Behaviour*. London: Prentice Hall.

Discussion: Some Critical Caveats

Researchers arguing from what could be described as a ‘purist critical theory’ standpoint are sceptical about the prospects for intervening on change at all in ways that serve any interests other than those of capital or managers as agents of capital (Pruijt, 2000). The view is that short of some sort of systemic shift, efficiency and emancipation are fundamentally in conflict and that intervention attempts that aim to promote the latter are ultimately doomed to fail. So job redesign is dismissed as mere adaptation to turbulent product markets that in reality involves work intensification (Kelly, 1982) or is just another ‘control strategy’ (Doorewaard, 1989). Work reforms are little more than ephemeral tactical concessions by managers (Ramsay, 1985). Similar scepticism is evident in union quarters – for example, Parker (1985), writing from the experience of the early QWL programmes in the US, saw QWL-based change initiatives as company driven and amounting to ‘shotgun weddings’ that taught employees how to ‘Think the Company Way’ and undermine pluralism at the workplace.

In this paper we have shown that such views are too dismissive not least because they do not stand up to empirical scrutiny. Having said this, our advocacy of a rehabilitation of QWL as a discursive tool for intervention is not unproblematic and as we proceed we should be mindful of a number of caveats:

- The spaces for innovation that are opened up in high road firms may simply involve temporary organisations or projects that become uncoupled from the main organisation wherein routine Tayloristic labour processes remain untouched.
- The greater empowerment associated with high road solutions may not reduce control, but simply involve the replacement of traditional control with new forms of control based on culture and cognition. These can have the affect of closing down alternative voices and calling into question the true nature of ‘autonomy’.
- Greater empowerment in certain occupations with people-centred services such as health care may *increase* stress through greater emotional intensity as empowered workers find it harder to detach themselves from the objects of their labour during non-work periods.
- In many organisations low road solutions will still make good business sense, particularly where entry barriers are robust.
- The ‘new economy’ may in fact be more accurately depicted as a switch from manufacturing to low skill service work rather than a universal spread of ‘knowledge work’. Hence scepticism of knowledge discourses could well be warranted.
- As with all action research, we should be mindful of our own roles as interventionist researchers in constructing organisational realities.

Accordingly, what we are advocating here should be seen as a tentative move, but one worthy of exploration. At the end of the day, the most appropriate response to the convergence debate is to get out into the field and do the research. Surely, however, the advice of Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2000) for critical reflexivity in such endeavours would be well taken.

Conclusion

Many researchers argue that action research interventions aimed at workplace development in Europe have been most successful where they were concept-driven and, above all, that the 'how' (process) of change has been of more significance than the 'what' (content) of change (den Hertog and Schröder, 1989; Gustavsen et al, 1996). Research in the 1990s emphasised network building rather than field experiments (Gustavsen, 1998). But the challenge now is to enter a new phase where networks and other tools are created that enable workplace development in the new context of the knowledge-based economy and the business focus on high value markets. Above all, network building should be a means for facilitating inter-organisational learning not just on the content of new workplace innovations, but also, and probably more importantly, learning on the processes of how to learn from others.

The quality of working life concept disappeared from organisational discourses in the middle of the 1980s as a neo-liberal ascendancy sought to usher in a period of employer prerogative. Yet 'hard' options, based on unitarism, assorted TLAs and a relegation of union influence failed to boost Europe's competitive standing. Given that the competitiveness of European organisations now rests upon harnessing people's competencies as the driver of innovation, it is time to develop new methodologies for workplace intervention by rehabilitating and reinventing QWL as a central plank in the high road strategy.

We remain of the view that action research based OD is a legitimate goal of critical management studies – but the key issue is in whose interests are change and development processes conceived and played out – and how (Gustavsen, 1992). In an era of market deregulation and the globalisation of labour, the apparent priority is for generating organisational knowledge on products and processes that enables competitiveness in high-value markets. This requires a dynamic but loose conceptualisation of QWL and an emphasis on local knowledge (Engeström, 1992) and local progress (cf Lyotard, 1984). Accordingly, a key role of action research is to establish arenas and discursive tools for local actors to define local progress themselves as well as building networks for learning from each other (Gergen and Thatchenkerry, 1996; Gustavsen, 1998).

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SUBSTAINBLE DEVELOPMENT AND GLOBASISATION: NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORD ORGANISATION

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Abstract

The relationship between industrialization and its effects on the environment has captured the serious attention of national governments and international organizations, especially in light of increasing globalization. Sustainability in products, processes, and services has been increasingly emphasized by placing environment at the center of some industrial transformations -- or at least on a par with competitiveness. The key to *environmental* sustainability was recognized early as involving the design and implementation of environmentally sound products, processes and services, rather than addressing environmental concerns as an afterthought in industrial systems. At the same time as the environment has become more important in economic policy, European, as well as American, industrial economies have also begun to pay attention to the restructuring of labour markets reflecting changes brought about emerging technologies, new environmental priorities, and globalization. However, policies has been largely reactive, rather than proactive towards new job creation and better organization of work.

Just as thinking about environment *after* industrial development is planned and implemented does not optimize environmental quality, consideration of labour concerns also requires deliberate and intelligent actions *before* embarking on industrialization efforts in guiding industrial transformations. The recent downturn of the extraordinary long economic boom might be expected to reveal fundamental structural employment problems in the industrialized world. It is likely that employment considerations will be the central issue in the coming decade for countries in the expanding European Union, and will influence the nature and direction of (re)industrialization and the growth of the service economy. It is therefore timely to explore options and opportunities for *co-optimizing* economic development (competitiveness), environmental quality, and labour/employment concerns, all of which have implications for the organization of work.

Introduction

Work and the workplace are essential elements of industrial and industrializing economies. Work is combined with physical and natural capital to produce goods and services. The workplace is the place where the comparative advantages of workers and owners/managers create a market for exchange of talents and assets. Beyond markets, work provides both a means of engagement of people in the society, and an important social environment and mechanism for enhancing self-esteem. Finally, work is the main means of distributing wealth and generating purchasing power in dynamic national economic systems. This essay explores the complex relationship between employment, and the increasingly unsustainable

and globalizing economy; the changing nature of industrial economies presents new challenges and opportunities for the organization of work in both industrialized and industrializing countries.

The Unsustainable Industrial State

Those that argue that the industrialized state – whether developed or developing – is currently unsustainable emphasize a number of problems. These are depicted schematically in Figure 1. The ‘environmental problems’ include toxic pollution, climate change, resource depletion, and problems related to the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem integrity. The environmental burdens are felt unequally within nations, between nations, and between generations, giving rise to inter-national, intra-national, and intergenerational equity concerns that are often expressed as ‘environmental injustice’. The Brundtland formulation of sustainability seems to focus concern on intergenerational equity, but all three kinds of mal-distributions are important.

The environmental problems stem from the activities concerned with agriculture, manufacturing, extraction, transportation, housing, energy, and services -- all driven by the demand of consumers, commercial entities, and government. But in addition, there are effects of these activities on the amount, security, and skill of employment, the nature and conditions of work, and purchasing power associated with wages. An increasing concern is economic inequity stemming from inadequate and unequal purchasing power within and between nations – and for the workers and citizens of the future.

Whether solutions involving industry initiatives, government intervention, stakeholder involvement, and financing can resolve these unsustainability problems depends on correcting a number of fundamental flaws in the characteristics of the industrial state: (1) fragmentation of the knowledge base leading to myopic understanding of fundamental problems and the resulting fashioning of single-purpose or narrowly-fashioned solutions by technical and political decision-makers, (2) the inequality of access to economic and political power, (3) the tendency towards ‘gerontocracy’ – governance of industrial systems by old ideas, (4) the failure of markets both to correctly price the adverse consequences of industrial activity and (5) to deal sensibly with effects which span long time horizons for which pricing and markets are inherently incapable of solving. The solutions to these system problems will be explored in the context of their implications for the organization of work.

Globalization

‘Globalization’ has at least three distinct meanings [Gordon, 1995], with different implications for workers and working life. ‘Internationalization’ is the expansion of product/service markets abroad, facilitated by information and communication technology (ICT) and e-commerce, with the locus of production remaining within the parent country. ‘Multi-nationalization’ is where a (multi-national) company establishes production/service facilities abroad, to be nearer to foreign markets and/or to take advantage of more industry-friendly labour, environmental, and tax policies, while maintaining research-and-

development (R&D) and innovation-centered activities in the parent country. The third meaning is the creation of strategic alliances, what some call ‘transnationalization,’ in which two different foreign enterprises merge/share their R&D and other capabilities to create a new entity or product line. Those concerned with enhancing trade are especially worried about barriers to internationalization, while those concerned with possible erosion of labour/environmental standards bemoan the consequences of multinationalization. Transnationalization may lead to industrial restructuring with unpredictable consequences for national economies. All three kinds of globalization raise questions of excessive market, and hence political power where concerns for profits overwhelm democratic and ethical values.

Globalization raises new challenges for governance, especially vis-à-vis the roles of government, workers, and citizens in the new economic order. Within nation-states, the extent to which the ‘externalities’ of production – adverse health, safety, and environmental effects – are internalized differ according to the differential success of regulation/compensation regimes and the extent to which economies incorporate the ethics of fair play in their practices. There has been a constant struggle to establish good labour and environmental standards/practices within nations. With the advent of globalized, competition-driven markets, attention has now shifted to the harmonization of standards through ILO conventions and multi-lateral environmental agreements, with only a modicum of success. Countries are slow to give up national autonomy, and only where there is a trend toward significant economic integration (as in the EU) are there successes at harmonization. But globalization has brought an even more complex set of challenges through the creation of trade regimes – such as the WTO, ASEAN, and NAFTA – where the term ‘fair trade’ means the elimination (or equalization) of tariffs and so-called non-tariff trade barriers, which place labour and environmental standards at odds with trade objectives.

The trade regimes promote international laissez-faire commerce; and rights-based law/protections and market economics have become competing paradigms for public policy and governance. Government plays very different roles when it acts as a facilitator or arbitrator to resolve competing interests, than when it acts as a trustee of worker and citizen interests to ensure a fair outcome of industrial transformations [Ashford, 2002]. The differences are pronounced when stakeholders have largely disparate power – or when some are not represented in the political process, as in the case of emerging or new technology-based firms.

John Rawls argues that no transformation in a society should occur unless those that are worse off are made relatively better off [Rawls, 1971]. Operationalizing a Rawlsian world has its difficulties, but law operates to create certain essential rights that enable just and sustainable transformations. These include the right-to-know, the right to participate in decisions affecting one’s working/non-working life, and the right to benefit from transformation of the state or global economy. Struggles won at the national level are now being eroded by a shift in the locus of commerce. Without consensus about fair play and the trustee institutions to ensure fair distributions from, and practices in, the new global

economy, equity and justice cannot be achieved. It is now agreed that future development must be 'sustainable,' but that means different things to different commentators.

Sustainable development must be seen as a broad concept, incorporating concerns for the economy, the environment, and employment. All three are driven/affected by both technological innovation [Schumpeter, 1939] and by globalized trade [Ekins et al., 1994; Divan and Walton, 1997]. They are also in a fragile balance, are inter-related, and need to be addressed together in a coherent and mutually reinforcing way [Ashford 2001]. Technological innovation and trade drive national economies in different ways [Charles and Lehner, 1998]. The former exploits a nation's innovative potential, the latter its excess production capacity. Innovation-based performance is enhanced by technological innovation and changing product markets, characterized by fluid, competitive production. Cost-reduction strategies are enhanced by increased scales of production and/or automation, usually characterized by rigid, mature monopolistic production. Economies seeking to exploit new international markets may enjoy short-term benefits from revenues gained as a result of production using existing excess capacity, but they may ultimately find themselves behind the technological curve. Performance-driven markets may be slower to gain profits, but may outlast markets driven by cost-reduction strategies. The consequences for workers may differ as well.

Increasing labour productivity, defined as output per unit of labour input, is a concern in nations pursuing either strategy. But labour productivity can be improved in different ways: (1) by utilizing better tools, hardware, software, and manufacturing systems, (2) by increasing workers' skills, and (3) by a better matching of labour with physical and natural capital and with information and communication technologies (ICT). Theoretically, increasing worker productivity lowers the costs of goods and services, thereby lowering prices -- and ultimately increasing the demand and sale of goods and services. Depending on the markets, it can be argued that more workers may be subsequently hired, than displaced as a consequence of needing fewer worker to produce a given quantity of goods and services. This optimistic scenario assumes a continual throughput society with increasing consumption. However, the drive toward increased consumption may have dire consequences for the environment [Daly, 1991]. In addition, questions arise as to whether, in practice, (1) labour is valued, and paid, more or less after productivity improvements, (2) there are positive or negative effects on job tenure and security, and (3) more workers are hired than displaced. The answers depend on the sources of the increases in worker productivity and the basis of a nation's competitiveness.

Innovation-based performance competitiveness presents opportunities for skill enhancement and building optimal human-technology interfaces, while cost-reduction strategies focus on lean production (with worker displacement), flexible labour markets, and knowledge increasingly embodied in hardware and software rather than in human capital. The consequences for workers are different for these two strategies. The former strategy rewards and encourages skill acquisition for many, with appropriate financial benefits for those workers. The latter creates a division between workers, some of whom are necessarily upskilled and many whose job content is reduced. Different national

strategies might be pursued, reflecting different domestic preferences and culture, but there are further implications, depending on the extent to which trade drives the economy. Interestingly, the US is globalizing and focusing on expanding markets abroad, while the EU is selling a smaller amount and percentage of goods and services outside its borders, focusing instead on integrating its internal markets in which its various members compete on performance [Kleinknecht and ter Wengel, 1998]. In the US, wage disparities are large and increasing, while in some parts of the EU – notably the Netherlands – wage disparities are much smaller and decreasing.

The changing global economy, however, presents challenges for all nations as concerns for the number of jobs, job security, wages, and occupational health and safety increase. In the private sector, labour needs a role in choosing and implementing information-based technologies; in the public sector there is a need for integrating industrial development policies with those of employment, occupational health and safety, and environment. From the perspective of labour, these require implementation of the right to know, the right to participate, and the right to benefit from industrial transformations.

The right to know has been described elsewhere [Ashford and Caldart, 1996: Chapter 7] and includes the workers' right to know/have access to, and the employer's/manufacturer's corresponding duty to inform/warn workers about scientific, technological, and legal information. Scientific information includes chemical or physical hazard/risk information related to product or material ingredients, exposure, health effects, and individual or group susceptibility [Ashford et al., 1990]. As important as information about hazards is, information about technology is the key to workers being able play a role in reducing risks. This kind of information includes not only knowledge about pollution/accident control and prevention technology, but also technology options for industrial production. Knowing how production might be changed to make it inherently cleaner and safer, and the source of more rewarding, meaningful work, is a *sine qua non* of being able to participate meaningfully in firm-based decisions (see below). Finally, information about legal rights and obligations is crucial for using legal and political avenues for workplace improvement and redress from harm.

The right to know is made operational through the right of workers to participate in (1) the technology choices of the firm (through technology bargaining and system design) [Ashford and Ayers, 1987], (2) firm-based training, education, and skill enhancement, (3) national and international labour market policies, and (4) in the setting of national and international labour standards. While national unions enable workers to work with employers through industrial relations systems, and ILO utilizes a tripartite system that includes labour, management and government, the trade regimes mentioned earlier give little or no participatory rights to labour (or environmentalists) in global economic activities which have potentially significant effects on wages and working conditions. As trade becomes an important part of national economies, this omission needs to be corrected [European Commission, 2001]. Ironically, under the WTO trade rules, importing countries can restrict imports or place countervailing duties on items that harm their environment, but there is no 'equalizing action' that can be taken if the exporting countries produce those goods unsafely or with adverse environmental effects within their own borders. This

reinforces non-enactment or non-enforcement of national health, safety, or environmental laws in the exporting countries, to the detriment of their own workers and citizens. Further, countries may be reluctant to ratify or adopt international accords – including ILO or multi-lateral environmental agreements – in hopes of maintaining or gaining short-term competitive advantage.

Finally, and at the core of justice in the global work life, is the right of working people to benefit from industrial transformations. The right to know and right to participate are essential, but the ultimate rights are those of a fair division of the fruits of the industrial or industrializing state -- and a safe and healthful workplace. This translates into sufficient job opportunities, job security, and purchasing power, as well as rewarding, meaningful, and safe employment. This can not be left to chance or serendipitous job creation. In formulating policies for environmental sustainability, economic growth and environmental quality are simultaneously optimized, rather than having environmental interventions occur after harmful technologies are in place. Instead, we seek to design and implement cleaner and inherently safer production. Employment concerns deserves no less a place in center stage; growth, environment *and* employment must be *co-optimized*. Systemic changes must be pursued and selected that intentionally benefit employment. Even with better prospects for employment, in an industrial system that continues to replace labour with physical capital, increasing worker capital ownership and access to credit [Ashford, 1998] that turns workers into owners may be an additional necessary long-term option if disparities of wealth and income prevail.

Conceptualisations of Sustainable Development

It makes quite a difference whether you look at sustainable development as just an environmental issue, or alternatively as a multidimensional challenge in the three dimensions: economic, environmental, and social. We argue that competitiveness, environment, and employment are the operationally-important dimensions of sustainability – and these three dimensions together drive sustainable development along different pathways and go to different places than environmentally-driven concerns alone, which may otherwise require tradeoffs, for example, between environmental improvements and jobs. The inter-relatedness of competitiveness, environment, and employment is depicted in Figure 2.

A *sustainable development* agenda is, almost by definition, one of systems change. This is not to be confused with an *environmental policy* agenda, which is – or should be – explicitly effect-based, and derived from that, a program of policies and legislation directed towards environmental improvements, relying on specific goals and conditions. The sustainable development policy agenda focuses at least on processes (e.g., related to extraction, manufacturing, transport, agriculture, energy, construction, etc.), and may extend to more cross cutting technological and social systems changes.

TABLE 1: Comparison of Current and Sustainable Policy Agendas

AGENDA	Competitiveness	Environment	Employment
Current	Improve Performance/Cut Costs	Control pollution/make simple substitutions or changes Conserve energy and resources	Ensure supply of adequately trained people; dialogue with workers Provide safe workplaces
Sustainable	Change nature of meeting market needs through radical or disrupting innovation (a systems change)	Prevent pollution through system changes Change resource and energy dependence	Radical improvement in human-technology interfaces (a systems change)

Referring to Table 1, note that *current strategy agendas*, even those that go beyond environmental goals, are defined as those that are focused on those policies that (1) improve profit and market share by improving performance in current technologies or cutting costs, (2) controlling pollution/making simple substitutions and changes, and conserving energy and resources, and (3) ensuring an adequate supply of appropriately skilled labour, dialogue with workers, and providing safe and healthy workplaces. We would describe these strategies as ‘reactive’ vis-à-vis technological change, rather than proactive. They are usually pursued separately and by different sets of government ministries and private-sector stakeholders. At best, policies affecting competitiveness, environment, and employment are *coordinated*, but not integrated.

In contrast, *sustainable agendas* are those policies that are focused on technological changes that alter the ways goods and services are provided, the prevention of pollution and the decreased use of energy and resources through more far-reaching system changes, and the development of novel socio-technical systems -- involving both technological and organizational elements -- that enhance the many dimensions of ‘meaningful employment’ through the *integration*, rather than coordination, of policy design and implementation.

The kind of innovation likely to be managed successfully by industrial corporations is relevant to the differences between current and sustainable technology agendas. We argue that the needed major product, process, and system transformations may be beyond those that the dominant industries and firms are capable of developing easily, at least by themselves. Further, industry and other sectors may not have the intellectual capacity and trained human resources to do what is necessary.

This argument is centered on the idea of ‘the winds of creative destruction’ developed by Joseph Schumpeter [Schumpeter, 1939] in explaining technological advance. The

distinction between incremental and radical innovations – be they technological, organizational, institutional, or social – is not simply line drawing along points on a continuum. Incremental innovation generally involves continuous improvements, while radical innovations are discontinuous [Freeman, 1992] possibly involving *displacement* of dominant firms, institutions, *and ideas*, rather than evolutionary transformations. In semantic contrast, Christensen [Christensen, 2000] distinguishes continuous improvements as ‘sustaining innovation’ and uses the term ‘disrupting innovation’ rather than radical innovation, arguing that both sustaining and disrupting innovations can be either incremental or radical, where the term ‘radical’ is reserved for the rapid or significant performance changes *within* a particular technological trajectory.

Thus, in Christensen’s terminology, radical sustaining innovation is a major change in technology *along the lines that technology has been changing historically*, for example a much more efficient air pollution scrubber -- and is often pioneered by incumbent firms. Major innovation that represents an entirely new approach, even if it synthesizes previously invented artifacts, is termed ‘disrupting;’ and in product markets, it almost always is developed by firms not in the prior markets or business. This is consistent with the important role of ‘outsiders’ – both to existing firms and as new competitors -- in bringing forth new concepts and ideas [van de Poel, 2000].

Counting only or mainly on existing industries, or on traditionally-trained technical expertise, for a sustainable transformation ignores increasing evidence that it is not just willingness and opportunity/motivation that is required for needed change, but that a third crucial condition -- the ability or capacity of firms and people to change -- is essential [Ashford, 2000]. In some situations they may do so because society or market demand sends a strong signal, but not in all or even in most of the cases.

We argue here that the same holds true for government and societal institutions faced by the triple challenge emanating from new demands in the areas of competitiveness, environment and employment. Intelligent government policy is an essential part of encouraging appropriate responses of the system under challenge, and of assisting in educational transformations as well.

An essential concept in fostering innovative technical responses is that of ‘design space.’ As originally introduced by Tom Allen et al. of MIT, design space is a cognitive concept that refers to the dimensions along which the designers of technical systems concern themselves [Allen et al., 1978]. Especially in industrial organizations that limit themselves to current or traditional strategies or agendas, there is a one-sided utilization of the available design space. Solutions to design problems are only sought along traditional engineering lines. In many cases unconventional solutions – which may or may not be hi-tech -- are ignored. For that reason radical, disrupting innovations are often produced by industry mavericks, or as a result of some disruptive outside influence (such as significantly new or more stringent environmental regulation and foreign competition, or influence of an outsider to the organization).

The Role of Government

Government is essential for achieving the kinds of industrial transformations that are desirable from an economic perspective, but that are also fair and just in their production and deliverance of goods and services. Among the suggested general functions of government are:

- to provide the necessary physical/legal infrastructure
- to support basic education and skills acquisition
- to invest in path-breaking science and technology development – for enhancing competitiveness, environmental improvement, and job design
- to act as a facilitator or arbitrator of competing stakeholder interests to ensure a fair process
- to act as a trustee of (under-represented) worker and citizen interests to ensure a fair outcome
- to act as a trustee of new technologies
- to act as a force to integrate, not just coordinate policies

More specifically, depending on the specific transformation desired, there is a role for government from the direct support of R&D and incentives for innovation through appropriate tax treatment of investment; to the creation and dissemination of knowledge through experimentation and demonstration projects; to the creation of markets through government purchasing; to the removal of perverse incentives of regulations in some instances and the deliberate design and use of regulation to stimulate change in others; to the training of owners, workers, and entrepreneurs, and educating consumers. The role of government should be considered beyond simply creating a favourable climate for investment. While it is true that ‘the government may not be competent to choose winners,’ it can create winning forces, and provide an enabling and facilitating role by creating visions for sustainable transformations.

There is continuing debate about the appropriate role of government in encouraging industrial transformations [Ashford, 2000]. Major differences revolve about two competing philosophical traditions: the dominance of unfettered market approaches and a more interventionist, directive role for government through laws and regulation. Market approaches concentrate on ‘getting the prices right,’ ensuring competition in capital and labour markets, and increasing demand for a clean environment, product safety, and good working conditions through the providing of information and education. In contrast, government intervention approaches focus on establishing minimum environmental, product safety, and labour standards and practices; requiring full disclosure by employers and producers of information needed by consumers, citizens, and workers to make

informed choices and demands; encouraging technology development, transfer, and infrastructure through a deliberate 'industrial policy;' and requiring decision-bargaining in industrial relations.

Alternative roles for government in promoting sustainable development accomplish different things:

- *correcting market failures* by regulating pollution, and by addressing inadequate prices, monopoly power, uncompetitive labour markets, and lack of information *achieves static efficiency* through better working markets,
- acting as a *mediator or facilitator of environmental and labour* disputes/conflicts among the stakeholders *achieves static efficiency* through reducing transaction costs,
- facilitating an industrial transformation by *encouraging organizational learning and pollution prevention* leading to win-win outcomes (based on the concepts of 'ecological modernization' [Jänicke and Jacobs, 2002; Mol, 2001] or 'reflexive law' [Teubner, 1983]) *relies on rational choice and evolutionary change that moves towards a more dynamic efficiency, usually over many decades,*
- moving beyond markets and *acting as a trustee for minority interests, subsequent generations, and new technologies* by forcing and encouraging innovation, through coordinated regulatory, industrial, employment & trade policy *transcends markets, moving towards dynamic efficiency within a shorter time horizon.*

Conclusion

Recalling that a sustainable future requires technological, organizational, institutional, and, social changes, it is likely that an evolutionary pathway is insufficient for achieving factor ten or greater improvements in eco- and energy-efficiency and reductions in the production and use of, and exposure to, toxic substances. Nor are fundamental changes in the organization of work likely to emerge through evolutionary change. Such improvements require more systemic, multidimensional, and disruptive changes. We have already asserted that the capacity to change can be the limiting factor -- this is often a crucial missing factor in optimistic scenarios.

Such significant industrial transformations occur less often from dominant technology firms, or in the case of unsustainable practices, problem firms' capacity-enhancing strategies, than from new firms that displace existing products, processes and technologies. This can be seen in examples of significant technological innovations over the last fifty years including transistors, computers, and PCB replacements.

Successful management of disruptive product innovation requires initiatives from outsiders to produce the expansion of the design space that limits the dominant technology firms [van de Poel, 2000]. Especially in sectors with an important public or collective involvement like construction and agriculture, this means that intelligent government policies are required to bring about necessary change.

Rigid industries whose processes have remained stagnant also face considerable difficulties in becoming significantly more sustainable. Shifts from products to 'product services' rely on changes in the use, location, and ownership of products in which mature product manufacturers may participate, but this requires significant changes involving managerial, institutional, organizational, and social (customer) innovations. Changes in socio-technical 'systems', such as transportation or agriculture are even more difficult. This suggests that the creative use of government intervention is a more promising strategic approach for achieving sustainable industrial transformations, than the reliance of the more neo-liberal policies relying on firms' more short-term economic self-interest.

This is not to say that enhanced analytic and technical capabilities on the part of firms; cooperative efforts and improved communication with suppliers, customers, workers, other industries, and environmental/consumer/community groups are not valuable adjuncts in the transformation process. But in most cases these means and strategies are unlikely to be sufficient by themselves for significant transformations, and they will not work without clear mandated targets to enhance the triple goals of competitiveness, environmental quality, and enhancement of employment/labour concerns.

The history of innovation has amply demonstrated that disruptive innovations are feasible, and they may bring substantial payoffs in terms of triple sustainability. They are within the available, but unused design space. However, the general political environment, governmental dedication, and incentive structure have to be right for the needed changes to occur.

Government has a significant role to play, but the government can not simply serve as a referee or arbiter of existing competing interests, because neither future generations nor future technologies are adequately represented by the existing stakeholders. Government should work with stakeholders to define far-future targets – but without allowing the agenda to be captured by the incumbents -- and then use its position as trustee to represent the future generations *and* the future technologies to 'backcast' what specific policies are necessary to produce the required technical, organizational, and social transformations. This backcasting will have to be of a next-generation variety of backcasting. It has to go beyond its historical focus on coordinating public and private sector policies. It must be multidimensional and directly address the present fragmentation of governmental functions – not only at the national level, but also between EU, national, regional, and local governmental entities.

There is a great deal of ontology, serendipity, and uncertainty in the transformation process, and the long-term prospects may be not be sufficiently definable to suggest obvious

pathways or trajectories for the needed transformations. Thus, it may be unreasonable to expect that government can play too definitive a ‘futures making’ role. What follows from this is that rather than attempting tight management of the pathways for the transformations that are sustainable in the broad sense in which we define it in this work, the government role might be better conceived as one of ‘enabling’ or ‘facilitating’ change, while at the same time *lending visionary leadership for co-optimizing competitiveness, environment, and employment*. This means that the various policies must be mutually reinforcing. This newly-conceptualized leadership role – focused on ‘opening up the problem space of the engineer/designer’ -- is likely to require participation of more than one ministry. Increasingly, ministries of commerce/economic affairs and ministries of environment are working together to fashion a vision of *environmental* sustainability. What has been missing is a similar proactive role of ministries of labour to interface and integrate employment-related policies into the national and global policy agendas.

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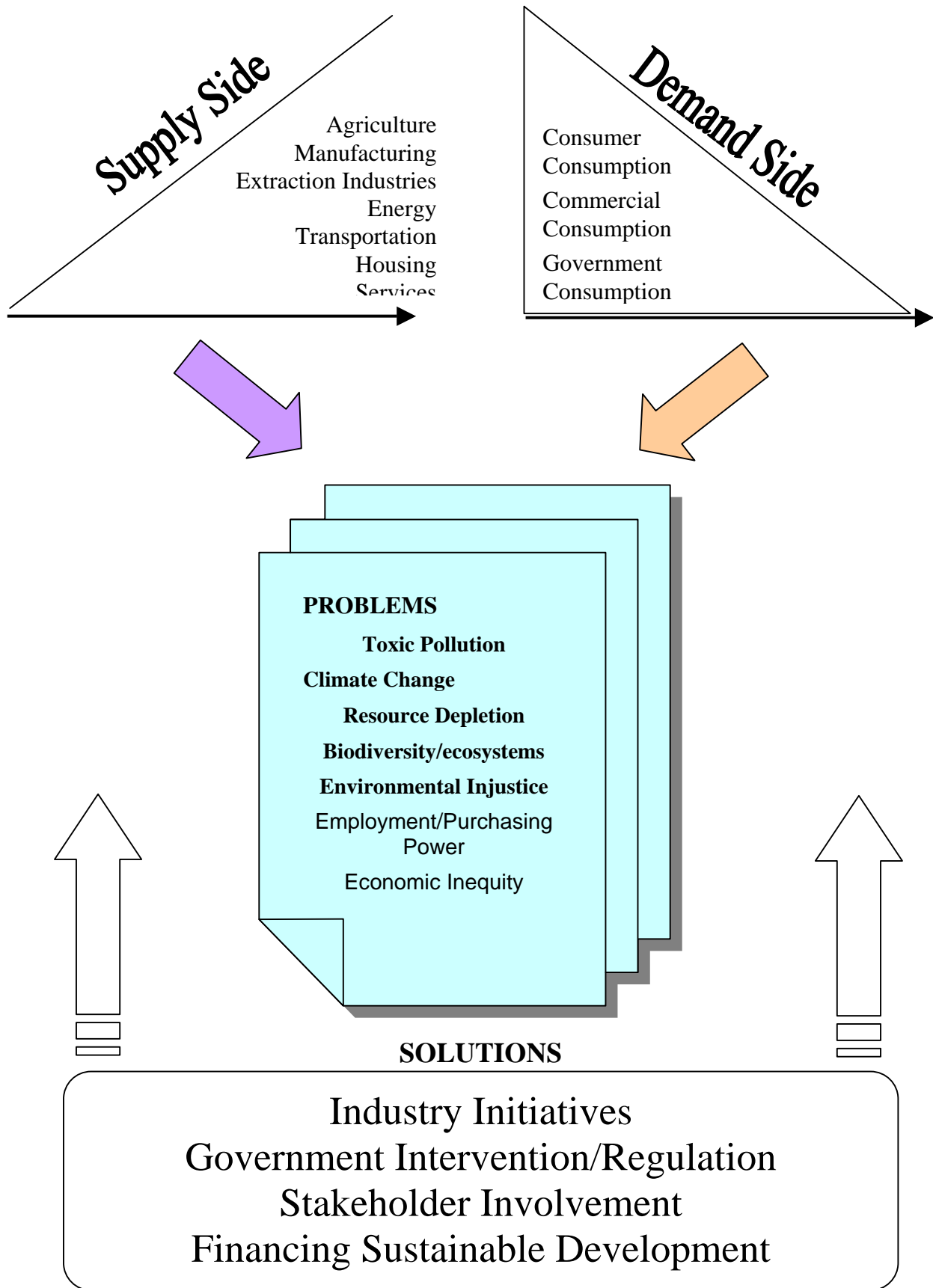


FIGURE 1: The Origins of Sustainability Problems in the Industrial State
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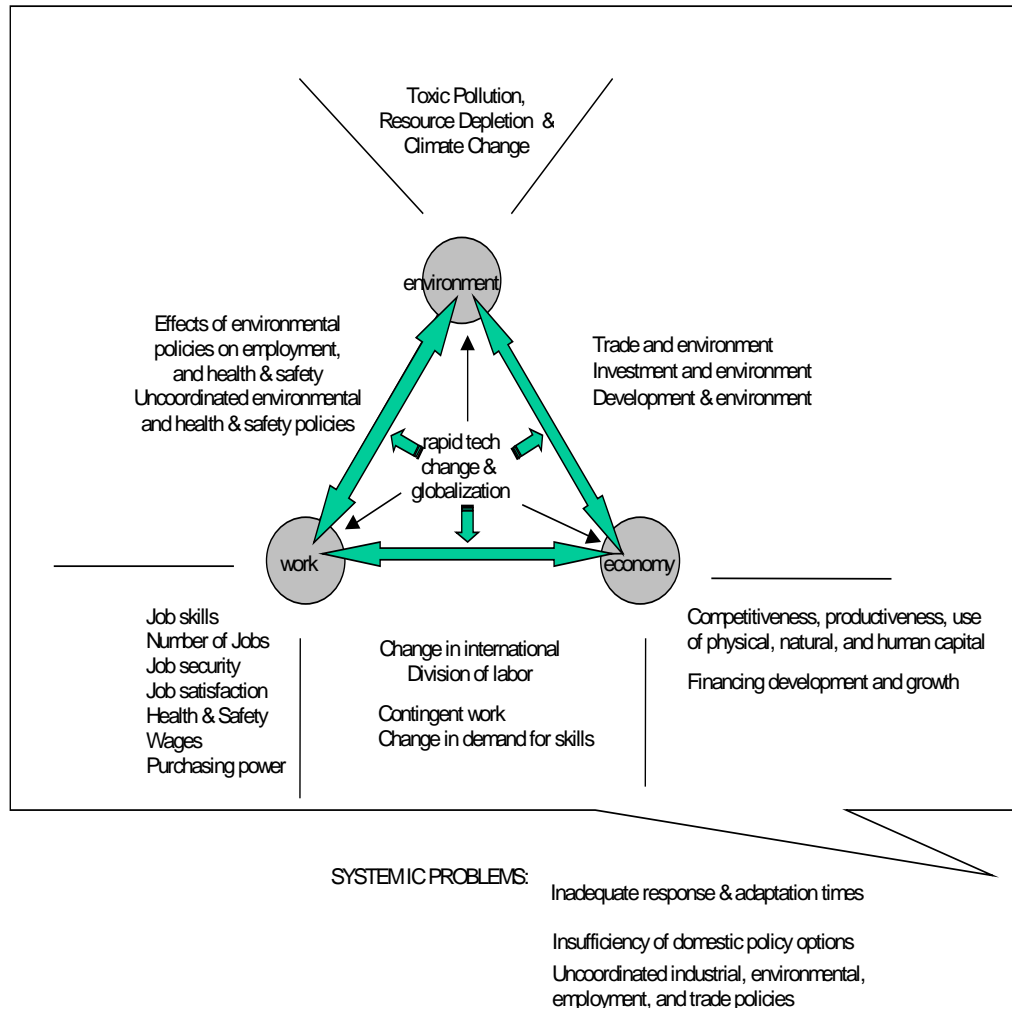


Figure 2: The Dimensions of Sustainability
 (Copyright © 2004 by Nicholas A. Ashford)

III PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

Lars-Erik ANDREASEN, Administrator Principal in the European Commission
Elias Bezevegis, Professor at the University of Athens

PARTNERS AT WORK? LESSONS FOR EUROPE'S POLICY MAKERS AND SOCIAL PARTNERS

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Abstract

Background

Emerging forms of work organisation represent an under-utilised resource in Europe, offering the potential for enhanced competitiveness, employment growth, healthier work and social dialogue. Yet the potential offered by this 'High Road' of organisational innovation is scarcely recognised by employers, social partners, policy makers and other actors.

This paper reports on the findings of a European study⁶ on the emergence of new forms of work organisation, recently completed for the European Commission. The Hi-Res project was commissioned to provide an insight into the 'state of the art' of organisational innovation in Europe, including its drivers, characteristics, obstacles and benefits. It draws on a cross-section of research to create a framework for the analysis of data from some 120 European organisations including large and small enterprises and public bodies. Hi-Res concludes that public policy intervention can be an effective means of animating and resourcing workplace innovation by helping to overcome the multiple obstacles to change, though such initiatives remain relatively rare across Europe.

Emerging Forms of Work Organisation in Europe

A key task for the Hi-Res project was to establish a clear and usable definition of 'work organisation'. Experience suggests that it is commonly used as an umbrella term covering

⁶ *Defining the High Road of Work Organisation as a Resource for Policy Makers and Social Partners*. Project undertaken for the European Commission by a consortium of partners from 6 Member States led by The Work Institute at Nottingham Business School. See Totterdill, P., Dhondt, S., Milsome, S., 2002, *Partners at Work? Lessons for Europe's Policy Makers and Social Partners* (available at www.hi-res.org.uk).

many types of work practice both inside and outside the workplace. In our view this is unhelpful, diverting attention from the core focus on workplace innovation. While we have not attempted a rigid definition of work organisation, we have focussed on those factors in the work environment which determine the extent to which employees can make full use of their competencies and creative potential.

This importance of this approach is that it seeks to identify the potential for ‘win-win’ outcomes – the scope for convergence between organisational performance, employment and quality of working life:

- Improving competitiveness and organisational performance through successful innovation in products, services and processes. Benefits reported by case study organisations include enhanced rates of innovation, greater responsiveness to customers, improved productivity, better quality, cost reduction and lower staff turnover.
- Higher rates of innovation in products and services leading to economic growth and new job creation.
- The enlargement and enrichment of jobs, allowing employees more control over their working environment and greater opportunities for innovation, enhances learning, workplace health and quality of working life.

Critically these outcomes cannot be achieved by training and technology alone. Returns on investment in skills development or technological innovation are rarely realised in full unless they are accompanied by appropriate organisational innovations.

Analysis

While the logic of ‘best practice’ is pervasive, the supposition that there are definitive ways of organising – even for specific types of organisation - remains problematic. It is also inconsistent with the many observations that innovation and creativity are the key to sustainable competitive advantage, whereas ‘best practice’ largely relies on mimicking the innovative practices of others. We stress that workplace innovation cannot be defined in terms of the identification and implementation of a series of blueprints to change discrete aspects of an organisation. Although the traditional way to accomplish change is through the application of generalised concepts to specific problems according to a predetermined set of rules, it is now increasingly argued that this approach has emerged as a roadblock rather than a motor for change in organisations. Rather it is important to understand the complex learning paths which characterise change in real situations. Several commentators are very critical of a-contextual approaches and argue for greater focus on the internal and external contexts which drive, inform and constrain change. They criticise the common perception of change within management texts as rational and incremental, thereby

conducive to the use of normative change models. They argue instead that change is a dynamic and uncertain process which emerges through the interplay of many factors. In this analysis, organisational innovation struggles towards a virtuous circle in which reflexive practices capture employee knowledge and experiences to create a dynamic interaction between product or service innovation and organisational change.

Case study data provides useful rich description, but its translation into ‘key lessons’ has been notoriously difficult. Part of the reason for this lies in a replication of the ‘one best way’ logic, whereby analysts have attempted to make *universal* generalisations, which simply cannot be supported empirically. Even those check lists, or ‘key learning points’ which make no claim to universality, have often failed to offer much more than a list of organisational truisms – useful, but failing to go beyond managerial commonsense.

Another difficulty of the checklist approach, is that many of the issues appear discrete when there is evidently considerable overlap between points of advice. It is difficult to tackle issues like ‘partnership’, ‘teamworking’ and culture separately because the boundaries between them are obviously blurred.

Thirdly many change recipes suggest that transformation occurs through a rational and incremental process. Lewin’s analysis that organisational transformation occurs through linear ‘freezing-unfreezing-refreezing’ processes has provided the theoretical basis for many contemporary change agendas. However, a growing number of academics stress that the actual practice of change is far from tidy; rapidly changing markets, technologies and labour market expectations have rendered the logic of rational-incremental change redundant – even assuming their practical relevance in the first place.

Of course, the organisation should not be viewed as impermeable and there will be an interchange of ideas and experiences between other organisations and intermediaries. The market environment may well influence strategic choices at the local level, but the model does not suggest that any single factor will explicitly determine the organisational response. Rather the model suggests a relationship with external structures and contexts as reciprocal. Knowledge, ideas and expertise may instigate a process of learning and experimentation within individual enterprises, but it is unlikely that there will be indiscriminate adoption of external solutions without some form of adaptation and shaping by local actors. Similarly innovation processes may permeate individual organisations and influence others in their sector, their region or across the EU. Renewed research attention on sectors, company networks or clusters of interrelated activity may reveal how firms both learn from and contribute to the *cognitive arenas* in which they associate.

Organisational boundaries are also becoming increasingly blurred in operational terms, with increasing dispersal of production and innovation vertically through supply chains and horizontally through sectoral and knowledge clusters. Arguably the network will become the dominant organisational form of the 21st Century, a possibility which is considerably enhanced by advances in ICTs and the consequent emergence of the ‘virtual organisation’.

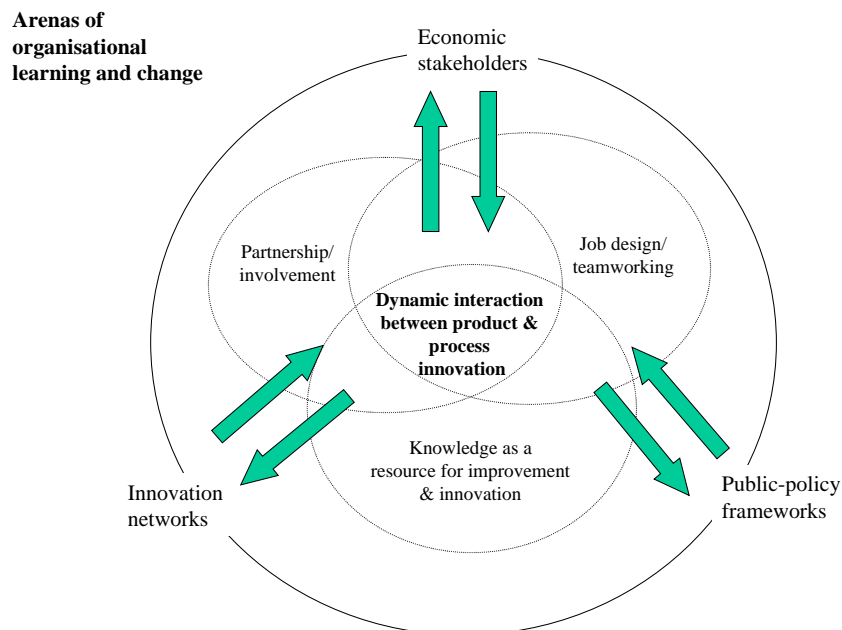
This analysis is therefore designed to:

- a) Avoid prescription.
- b) Allow for change processes to be explored in ways which recognise the complex and untidy path which change may take.
- c) Move beyond a list of 'key learning points' and offer opportunities for deeper analysis and exploration of the dilemmas and choices posed during the change process.
- d) Facilitate a more integrated analysis of overlapping themes and issues.
- e) Allow for the inclusion of external influences upon change processes.

We have explored some of the key areas to emerge from research evidence and case study data to identify the specific organisational dimensions of the High Road of workplace innovation. The figure below identifies three organisational arenas: knowledge as a resource for improvement and innovation; partnership and involvement; job design, teamworking and technology. Between these organisational spaces lie a number of more intangible and interpretive 'cultural' practices which both determine and are determined by the structure of work organisation. In particular case study evidence highlights the ways in which communication, commitment and trust lie at the heart of sustainable change processes, and can be seen to lubricate or impede the process of organisational and service innovation.

The analysis starts with the High Road's emphasis on competitiveness through the continual reinvention of products and services, which places a considerable premium on the ability of an organisation to harness the tacit knowledge and creative potential of employees. It is central to the argument that this involves much more than the ability simply to recruit and retain employees with the necessary aptitudes and competencies. It requires a work environment which fully engages all levels of employee in planning, quality assurance, problem solving and innovation. Building this work environment involves a complex and contextualised process of dialogue, learning and organisational innovation based on interdependent processes in which workplace partnership, job design and teamworking are the principal organisational components. Work organisation then is a reflexive process, not an end state. New forms of work organisation are characterised by a dynamic interaction between process and organisational design:

- Knowledge, innovation and creativity are both valued and placed close to the heart of the work process at all levels of the organisation.
- Partnership and dialogue establish the preconditions for a workplace environment in which the instigation and ownership of innovation are widely distributed.
- Teamworking becomes a defining characteristic of all aspects of work, both routine and developmental. In this sense it emerges less as a formulaic model than as an approach to work organisation which broadens job design and challenges both hierarchical and horizontal demarcations in order to optimise levels of agility and innovation. It also provides the day-to-day context for enhancing the quality of working life.



These key organisational components interact with other dynamic contextual factors, notably new technologies. New technologies can broaden job profiles, increase the delegation of responsibilities to individuals and teams, widen the distribution of information, and increase the speed of product or service innovation. Technological change becomes integral to the process of organisational development, facilitating adaptation and adjustment in ways of working and learning. The challenge is to secure maximum coherence between technological possibilities and organisational needs rather than simply optimising the relationship between the machine and its operator.

As the diagram depicts, many issues for organisations are overlapping. For example, to support innovation through partnership and involvement, organisations may need to create 'design space' or organisational 'slack'. Engaging employees in partnership practices may occur independently of their work tasks, but wider participation in decision-making also may directly impact their task environment. The intersections between the change arenas, therefore, provide the opportunity to discuss the interconnectedness of change activities. The activities highlighted in these areas are suggestive, and there may be other issues which could be explored in these areas. In summary the model, is not intended to be prescriptive, but aims to be a framework in which change processes can be explored and in which the strategic choices of organisations can be visualised and deliberated.

Animating and sustaining organisational innovation

Sustainable organisational change requires sustained resourcing: there are few successful 'quick-fixes'. Critically the task is not to try and catch up with 'best practice' but to develop a strategy firmly orientated towards the creation of innovative and self-sustaining

processes of development. Perhaps one of the most important resources for change is the development of a culture committed to research, negotiation, experimentation, critical appraisal and redesign over many cycles. An innovating organisation must also recognise that setbacks are inevitable and that the toleration of 'blame cultures' only stifles experimentation.

Organisations do not operate in a vacuum. The learning organisation is good at networking; it is close to all its stakeholders; it accumulates, distributes and uses knowledge effectively from a wide variety of sources. Change may also involve looking for external knowledge, assistance and support. Social partners, business support organisations and researchers may all help to resource change. Internal solutions may be inspired by critical appraisal of different models of leading-edge practice in external organisations, while opportunities for peer-exchange and review may also alleviate some of the 'loneliness' of the organisational innovator. Comparing divergent options for change and visiting other organisations have been shown to be effective in supporting organisational transitions. External facilitators, who can be seen as neutral brokers between the interests of different stakeholders, have been particularly useful in supporting the development of the partnership practices which subsequently underpin other organisational innovations.

Management values and attitudes deeply affect the nature and effectiveness of the change process. The necessity for 'top down' senior management commitment has been identified by many researchers, and the analysis confirms that this is of crucial importance in securing the legitimacy and effectiveness of 'bottom-up' change strategies. As the previous discussion emphasises, effective change requires widespread involvement and participation across the whole workforce. Innovation arises in part from making it possible to question established expertise, received wisdom and authority.

Many managers understandably find the implications of this difficult and threatening. Such potential obstacles need to be anticipated and addressed, often through the significant redesign of management roles and responsibilities as well as by developing new management competencies.

However while proactive management and leadership plays an essential role in creating the conditions for workplace innovation, change can rarely be 'managed' in a linear, planned way. The idea of the 'change agent' leading successful innovation from the front needs to be challenged. A condition of successful change appears to be that it is multi-voiced, messy and unpredictable. Some more imaginative examples of practice actively embrace chaotic and widely dispersed possibilities for organisational innovation. Ericsson Radio in Sweden for example has introduced a number of staff at all levels of the organisation as 'Inspirers' with a specific brief to 'sense the feeling' of the organisation, identifying possibilities for innovation which combine improved performance and enhanced quality of working life.

There is also a strong link between the success of new working practices and investment in workforce development, and substantial education and training may be required. Greater emphasis is needed on nurturing core competencies such as team skills, communication and

problem-solving. However learning needs to become embedded in day-to-day working practice rather than existing only as a separate activity.

In summary, emergent practice identified within this analysis challenges the commonly held notion of 'best practice'. Rather it provides a perspective in which organisational renewal is inspired and resourced by both external and internal dialogue and negotiation. Using the three conceptual arenas – organisational knowledge, partnership and teamworking – the analysis has sought to identify the common challenges, choices and design principles characteristic of High Road organisations, aiming to avoid the prescriptions of some change management recipes and checklists. The approach stresses the interconnectedness of development strategies and thereby attempts to portray change as the dynamic interplay between people, structures, technology, cultures, histories, resources and the environment. In this way it seeks to avoid the problems associated with reductionist accounts of change which focus on single factor effects and linear causalities. Organisational innovation is not a rational, incremental process and any attempt to capture its complexity will have major failings. However it is hoped that the approach developed here facilitates a more dynamic portrait of the characteristics of the High Road.

Problems of Dissemination: Public Policy Implications

Although demonstrable benefits can be achieved through the modernisation of work organisation, the process of change is hard to achieve. The case study evidence demonstrates conclusively that all companies face very tangible obstacles in designing, implementing and sustaining change.

Evidence suggests that the spread of successful organisational innovation in these arenas remains weak in Europe. This may be attributed to a number of mutually reinforcing factors including:

- low levels of awareness of innovative practice and its benefits amongst managers, social partners and business support organisations;
- poor access to evidence-based methods and resources capable of supporting organisational learning and innovation;
- countervailing trends in the design and application of new technologies;
- limited distribution of the competencies associated with new forms of work organisation amongst the workforce.

Action by public policy makers and social partners is of proven value in overcoming these obstacles through, for example:

- the provision of knowledge-based business services and other publicly provided forms of support;
- the creation of opportunities for networking and peer exchange between management and employee representatives;
- the capture and dissemination of knowledge and experience of from workplaces across Europe;

- action research to pilot innovative approaches to change, especially in new contexts;
- the creation of development coalitions to close the gaps between key actors and stakeholders with an interest in work organisation.

For the EU this poses a number of questions and challenges, notably:

- creating a climate of awareness and concern amongst policy makers and social partners in Member States;
- ensuring that existing resources (such as the European Social Fund) are targeted effectively to support the modernisation of work organisation;
- acting as a broker to maximise exchange of knowledge and experience across the EU;
- identifying fast-track strategies to support the modernisation of work organisation in the applicant countries.

FLEXIBILITY AND COMPETITIVENESS⁷

⁷ The report is based on research undertaken by five research organisations, notably the Centre of Financial Studies of the University of Athens (coordinator), the Greek Employment Observatory, the Technical University of Delft; Trinity College, Dublin, The Research Institute of the Finish Economy and the Technical University of Zurich. The research project "Flexibility for Competitiveness" was

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1. Introduction

The target of this paper is to study the issue of labour flexibility with economic considerations, and notably under the light of and constraints put by the need to maintain/increase competitiveness in a global context.

European countries, in particular the E.U member states are in a process of a continuous introduction of new forms and more flexibility into their labour market. Based on certain success indicators of the US, making the labour market more flexible has become a policy orthodoxy adopted by the OECD, the EU open coordination policy for employment and last but not least by individual countries. Trying to improve national performance in the Employment Protection Legislation (EPL) benchmarking exercise is almost becoming an obsession.

There is though a certain divergence appearing in the literature, which takes almost the dimension of a disciplinary debate: psychologists and sociologists on the one side defend the need to respect industrial relations and assure workers satisfaction, which not only improve working conditions but in the long run, due precisely to the satisfaction of the workforce, are expected to lead to better economic performance. Mainstream economists on the other hand believe that cost saving is the most important component and thus increased flexibility automatically leads to improved competitiveness.

So the question that raises for economists is, to what extent this correlation is ubiquitous. One way to deal with it is to accept the US case as a best practice model and try to introduce as much flexibility as possible independently of context. Another approach is to investigate to what extent labour flexibility needs (or does not need) to respects economic structures and path dependencies and derive conclusions on the impact of flexibility, which are not context independent. And then, immediately of course the next question is to what extent does this lead to long-term competitiveness at the firm level, at the regional level, at the national level. More explicitly: does flexibility increase profitability? Always or under which conditions?

2. On definitions and methodological problems

Flexibility seems to be a good thing, seems to have a positive connotation and of course functional flexibility in new work organizations, flexible organizations and so on, ideologically trigger a positive reaction. Then why doesn't everybody do it? Partly because of social resistance and partly because it is a concept that is by far relying on a commonly agreed definition.

While there is little doubt that flexibility is a hallmark of competitive advantage, making sense of the debate on flexibility is hindered by the fact that flexibility is conceptualized in different ways, it takes respectively different forms and is related to different outcomes. In the literature reviewed here, flexibility refers to

- forms of employment contracts (e.g. fixed-term contracts),
- forms of labor deployment (e.g. multi-tasking),
- forms of work organization and human resource management (e.g. post-fordist work organization, strategic human resource management),
- and market or institutional forms of social coordination at the national level.

Each form of flexibility, moreover, has been linked to different kinds of outcomes – for the firms that adopt it, the workers subjected to it and the economies where it predominates. Thus when we review the claims about the role of flexibility, it is imperative that we start by distinguishing between the specific forms of flexibility under consideration by each author, the actors for whom the outcomes of flexibility apply, as well as between the levels of analysis that is undertaken.

Perhaps the most influential attempt to classify different types of flexibility is Atkinson's typology (Atkinson 1984). He distinguishes between "numerical" and "functional" flexibility applied to the peripheral and the core staff of a firm, respectively. Numerical flexibility refers to the firm's ability to vary the numbers ("headcount") of its peripheral workers according to the variations in production needs, through the use of temporary work contracts. Functional flexibility refers to the firm's ability to vary the content of labour inputs ("tasks") of its core workforce according to the firm's changing needs, through the use of multi-tasking, continuous training, and team working. "Ideally" firms opt for one or the other flexibility strategy, while in the real world firms utilize both types of flexibility, albeit in different proportions.⁸

Atkinson's typology has given impetus to a large body of theoretical and empirical research, and has been modified accordingly. Most influential and minimally departing from Atkinson's original typology is a four-fold typology that replaces the categories of "core" and "periphery" with the categories of "internal" and "external" (dubbed as "FINE": functional, internal, numerical, external). Elaborating this typology further, Goudswaard and de Nanteuil (Goudswaard and de Nanteuil, 2000) arrive at another four-fold typology of flexibility, which replaces the categories of numerical and functional flexibility with "quantitative" and "qualitative" flexibility, respectively. In this typology temporal flexibility is a form of "internal-quantitative" flexibility, while Atkinson's "numerical flexibility" is a form of "external-quantitative" flexibility. However, financial

⁸ For a good analysis of the Swedish labour market along the functional-numerical distinction of flexibility see Arvanitis et al.

flexibility is not included in this typology or in Atkinson's, but is rather appended as a special form of flexibility (implicitly likened to numerical or quantitative flexibility).

The debate on flexibility is likely to retain its centrality in political economy, management studies, industrial sociology and labour economics for some time as its vicissitudes are intertwined with the continuing debate on the optimal relationship between capital, labour and public policy.

The different perspectives and different evaluations of flexibility notwithstanding, there is a tacit consensus developing that the choice ahead is not between facilitating internal (functional) or external (contract) flexibility, but in finding the right balance between the two types. Still, finding such balance is likely to be an elusive (if worthwhile) endeavour. This is so not least because of the contradictory properties of the two types of flexibility. The development of a certain type of flexibility hinders the development of another (path dependency). The pursuit of short-term strategies by some erode the foundations for long-term strategies by others (Streek 1997). "A restriction on 'numerical flexibility' is a precondition for 'functional flexibility'" (Wickham 2002)

The research was based on the analysis of country profiles, case studies and econometric evidence from five small European countries, with a differentiated profile as far as flexibility is concerned:

Table 1: Major national characteristics relating flexibility and competitiveness

	<i>The Netherlands</i>	<i>Ireland</i>	<i>Finland</i>	<i>Greece</i>	<i>Switzerland</i>
<i>Numerical flexibility</i>	Early introduction High levels	Medium Introduction Medium level	Medium Introduction Medium level	Late introduction Low level	Medium Introduction Medium level
<i>Unemployment</i>	Low	Strongly diminishing	High	Increasing	Low
<i>Growth pattern</i>	Close to EU average	Spectacular	Increasing	Increasing	Low
<i>Production structure</i>	Competitive, knowledge-based economy	Inward investment dominated with increasing local linkages	Mix of big and small high tech indigenous companies	Conventional	Mix of big and small high tech indigenous companies, internationally competitive
<i>Labour</i>	Medium-	Medium-	High-	Low-	High-constant

productivity	deteriorating	improving	improving	constant	
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The research methodology was divided into a literature survey, country reports, case studies and econometric evidence, each of which contributed to our understanding as follows:

Table 2: Relevance of each research package for the key themes of the study (in %)

	Understanding and measuring flexibility	Wage flexibility	Issues on numerical flexibility	Issues on functional flexibility and complementarity with NF	Institutional aspects
Literature	60		20	20	25
Country reports	30		20	20	25
Case studies	10		20	60	25
Econometric evidence			40		25

3. The need to review flexibility under the angle of long-term competitiveness

The result of the study was that probably there must be a difference between short-term and long-term effects. When speaking about profitability and competitiveness and it comes as no wonder that the literature is actually split in that respect. The fact that sometimes we measure things that appear to be very contradictory with what companies or policy makers do, probably can be explained by the fact that short-term effects are very different from long-term effects.

And the interesting thing then is to see what are the mechanisms, that means, in which case does flexibility increase profitability? In which case does it contribute to national or regional competitiveness? Which mechanisms support short-term profitability or short-term lack of profitability and respectively long-term profitability and competitiveness or long-term lack of profitability and competitiveness?

The economic literature suggests that numerical flexibility is not necessarily so bad. There are cases where employees want to be numerically flexible. They want to be part-time. There are benefits in voluntary part-time. And there are cases where functional flexibility may not be as profitable as one ideally would think. Case studies and econometric analysis at a macro level indicated positive correlation between functional flexibility and profitability in certain cases, but not always. There is

apparently no universal truth, it is not like the law of gravity. External flexibility is sometimes positively related to profitability and to productivity. Internal flexibility though, functional and qualitative, we have indications that it is more likely to be positively related but again, it is not like the law of gravity. If it was, we could impose it. The estimates of the benefits for performance of flexible workplace practices do not exist on an economy of sector-wide basis. They are limited to the company level. This is something we know. Companies who have done it well, they did profit out of that.

There are studies from the literature which focus on the performance impact of a single flexible work practice rather than a set or system of practices. And there we have a danger because if you find out that something works, one specific case, teleworking in the software industry, that does not mean that any kind of flexibility works for any kind of industry. And it is difficult to take into account the length of time needed to let organizational change take root and bring measurable results. The one intervention I would have made, if there was a discussion with the last speaker is that this very important psychological aspect which is called “resistance to change” has to be taken into consideration somehow.

The results of the Flexcom project suggest that when we speak about flexibility, we tend to look at a new orthodoxy, which like every orthodoxy, can be very misleading. Using the benchmarks for protection legislation (EPL) may be one of these sources of problem: there are now benchmarks which tell you which country has a flexible labour market and which country does not have one. And it is taken often by multinational companies as an indicator to whether they want to invest in this country or not. It has very – very serious economic consequences. Taking the five countries studied into consideration we see that there are extreme differences within Europe and within the European member states ranging from 4% of the labour force in Greece, up to 42% in the Netherlands. Finland and Ireland are rather low, closer to Greece. Switzerland, which is not a European Union member state, is closer to the Netherlands. The Netherlands is the most flexible country and Greece the less flexible one. If using fixed-term the picture changes slightly. But a further investigation suggests a distortion because there is one single indicator of what is a flexible labour market and this is the informal sector. There is nothing more flexible in the labour market than hiring and firing people illegally, without paying social security, without declaring them to the tax authorities and so on. Using this as a benchmark Greece suddenly becomes the second most flexible in Europe. And this is the real world.

The econometric results suggest that in the short-term profitability can increase but we did have serious evidence that this, in the medium to long-term can lead to deteriorating economic performance and reduced capacity to innovate.

From the case studies, it was very clear that retail, for instance, benefits very much from part-time. The agricultural sector benefits very much from fixed term. In some cases –in most cases actually- in Europe, this counts also for the tourism sector.

4. Policy conclusions

In terms of policy conclusions: if one tries to set the formal rules to adopt legislation of a general nature, then inevitably some sectors benefit and some other sectors pay for the cost. We have a negative externalization that is usually not documented and most probably not even measured.

The effort to increasing flexibility leads policy makers to adopt legislation for more formal flexibility, more numerical flexibility, because this is what is easier to regulate. Functional flexibility can hardly be introduced by law. But introducing numerical flexibility one supports retail, tourism and agriculture not necessarily the manufacturing sector, which is a sector that needs a more long term, dedicated workforce.

So, flexibility should not be an orthodoxy, and should not be faced as a general case but it should be studied on a case by case basis, relating types of flexibility and the structure of each economy trying to become more flexible.

Besides, labour market flexibility (as all institutional reforms) is not necessarily influenced by the introduction of legislation. One may be introducing as many pieces of legislation as possible, that does not mean that the market will react. The Flexcom results suggest that the number of formal legal acts passed in a country are not at all related with its degree of flexibility. Some acts were not used at all. It is labour relations and informal rules that help adopt or not what legislation enables.

And the final and most important conclusion, is that apparently there is a problem of a kind of an innovation reservoir. There is strong macro- and micro-economic evidence that flexibility may hamper long term productivity growth. When you introduce financial flexibility in the long term companies will not invest in technology (they will not need labour saving substitution because labour is cheap), innovation will be reduced and this will erode the competitive advantage of companies regions and countries.

If this applies to advanced countries, where we studied it, it risks to be even worse for cohesion and accession countries, they have no innovation tradition or reservoir.

So in a condenses way the conclusions are that flexibility needs to be introduced carefully and effectively, taking into consideration how it affects the sectors, what the mechanisms are, how the informal rules are going to react to this legislation. If not there is a risk of doing a lot more harm than good.

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WORK IS NOT A PLACE: THE VIRTUAL OFFICE – WORKING FROM HOME

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Abstract

This study examines and analyzes the concept of working from home as a modern day

alternate work arrangement. Working from home, or telecommuting, truly provides both employers and employees with some mutually beneficial flexibility and an array of other benefits. In addition, working from home addresses in part societal issues related to work-life balance, conservation, and environmental concerns. However, many managers remain ambivalent about introducing teleworking in their establishments and it is highly improbable that every organization and/or employee is suited to work from home. A county's and/or a company's technological infrastructure, along with local social trends may be the two main driving forces of telecommuting. Home working requires also a paradigm shift from focus on working time to a focus on results produced. This article attempts to address the business as well as employee and societal reasons for creating a virtual work place and provides managers with the information tools to seriously consider telecommuting.

Working from Home: An Overview

In the last few years advances in technology in the area of telecommunications, computers and office equipment have allowed widespread working from home possibilities. There are several terms coined to describe working from home: homeworking, flexiplace, teleworking, telecommuting, and electronic cottage.

Employees who work under this arrangement appreciate the convenience provided by working from home. It truly provides both employers and employees with some mutually beneficial flexibility, improves productivity and saves money. In fact, according to the international Telework Association and Council (ITAC) employers reported \$1850 in productivity gains and \$2100 savings related to absenteeism for each teleworker per year.

According to numerous research findings, a sizable portion of job dissatisfaction derives from lack of freedom and control over hours of work and work schedule and the inability to adjust and match these to the employee's personal needs. With this in mind, perhaps it is not surprising that the most important non monetary aspects of a job, from the employee's perspective, are the freedom to determine work schedule, the arrangement of work hours in balance with non work life obligations, and the total hours of work employers require over a period of time. Employers on the other hand are concerned about the likely impact that alternative work schedules have on the organization's effectiveness.

In the beginning, (early 90's) the concept of Telecommuting was embraced by companies who were able to pay a flat rate per unit of work completed. For example, sales departments would pay employees working from home per unit sold, or insurance companies would pay a flat rate per insurance claim processed. Nowadays, there is no need for "piece work" to use telecommuting. Virtually all types of jobs can be done from one's home. The old work paradigm from the industrial age that work is the time an employee spends in front of a machine or behind a desk has been progressively abandoned. The management's perspective of supervision "if I can see you working you are working" has also been replaced by results-based appraisals. What counts is what is achieved at the end of the day or week not how many hours one has worked. In today's information age, a

different attitude towards a job and a career is developing. It is not just a matter of what is achieved at the end of the day for the employer but also how the employee manages to balance work and life obligations.

Alternative Work Arrangements

Working from home is just one of the many alternative work arrangements. The most common of them may include the following:

Compressed (Reduced) Work Week

The traditional five day 35-40 hour week is compressed into a 4 day work week, a 3 /36 schedule (three shifts of 12 hours each a week) and other innovative work schedules. Research indicates that compressed work week schedules have positive and negative results. One of the most positive effects of a compressed workweek is a reduction in absenteeism. Productivity often improves at the beginning of introducing a compressed work week but it declines later. On the negative side, older employees often find a compressed work week more taxing physically and mentally than younger workers. Yet younger employees find a compressed work week interfering with their social life. The more physically and mentally taxing the job is the more undesirable the compressed week may be.

Job Sharing

This is where two or more individuals working for the same employer share in some form the work normally assigned to one full time employee.

Flexible Hours

Flex hours require employees to be present at the work place during a specified core time, but it also allows them discretion as to when the remaining work hours are going to be completed. There are different types of flex time such as:

- **Variable Day** whereby an employee can work 12 hours or not at all in a given day as long as the 40 hours of work are completed by the end of the week.
- **Gliding time** whereby any starting and quitting time is acceptable as long as the 8 hours of workday are completed.
- **Flexi tour** whereby employees are allowed to starting and finishing at specific times, other than regular, for a specified period such as Christmas season, summer months, a given week or month.
- **Personal Time off** outside the normal type of leaves may also be considered as an alternative work arrangement to accommodate a better work life balance.

Other Teleworking Concepts

Teleworking basically means being able to work from anywhere. It should not be seen in isolation, but as one of several similar measures addressing the issue of work location. There are several similar concepts already in place: In the educational field there is Distance Education. Students study not on a particular campus or classroom but where they live. In Business there is e-commerce. Customers buy goods and services online from home without visiting a store. In Health there is tele-health. Patients receive health information and advice from a health professional far away, and in certain instances a diagnosis is provided without the patient leaving home or visiting a doctor's office.

Who are Teleworkers?

Teleworkers are those employees who work away from their organization's office. They may work from home, plane, train, a client's office or elsewhere. Self employed people, or those working on contract, are not considered teleworkers in the pure definition of the term. For example, a freelance writer for a magazine or newspaper working from home is not considered as a teleworker. However, if one adopts a broader definition and includes business owners who run their business from home the numbers swell. This may not be surprising considering that Home Office Businesses represent 89% of all Businesses (Bell & Howell).

Teleworkers can work in any kind of field where the job requires that a lot of time be spent in front of the computer or on the phone. Jobs requiring face to face meetings may not be suitable for telecommuting. Most teleworkers work away from the office one to three days a week and the rest of the week they work in a more traditional setting. Therefore, teleworking should be seen as a part time proposition, not a full time one. Others report that teleworkers work off site about 23 hours a week, they are equally as likely to be male or female and the average teleworker is 40 years old. (Larin Nancy). Furthermore, there is evidence that teleworkers see themselves as trail blazing individuals, leaders not followers.

Some Relative Statistics

US Data

The number of telecommuting employees in the US increased from 4 million in 1990 to 19.6 million in 1999 and the percentage of employers offering telecommuting arrangements climbed from 14% in 1997 to 27% In 1998. (Read A.)

Canadian Data

Statistics Canada reported 600 000 teleworkers in 1991, 900 000 (not including public administration workers) in 1998, and in 2001 estimated teleworkers at 1 500 000.

In 1999, The Canadian Telework Association estimated 2 million of home workers, half of which are teleworkers. The Canadian Telework Association estimates that a Canadian worker can recoup on average one hour a day by eliminating the daily commute to work and back home. This totals up an annual commute savings of six full working weeks.

Canadian Federal Government

It employs approximately 5 000 teleworkers. A major evaluation of the program found that most of teleworkers saved over one hour of driving alone to and from work, and teleworking among other things reduces costs of going to work, re-energizes employees, and better balances work and personal lives (www.ivc.ca).

Bank of Canada

Reported (March 1998) that 94% of the 100 telework participants rated telework as a major benefit and 83% found that productivity increased and stress was reduced.

Nortel

About 25% of the 75 000 employees (one quarter full time, and three quarter part time) of Nortel's work force is under "HOMEbase" telework program. Once started only 1% of Nortel's teleworkers want to quit the program. (www.icv.ca)

IBM Canada

About 25% (2 300) of the non manufacturing work force are in a telework program.

Bell Canada

It employs about 5 000 teleworkers.

EKOS Research

Findings indicate that 33% of Canadians would choose telework over a salary raise. 43% would quit their jobs for another one that allows teleworking.

Royal Bank of Canada

Survey in January 2002 discovered that IT including the ability to telework shapes the Canadian family life (InnoVisions Canada, Canadian studies on telework). More than ever people can work at home in a fashion that replicates the office. Here is what the Telecommuters said:

- It increases job satisfaction 77%
- It allows more time with the family 72%
- It permits more convenient child care arrangements 58%
- It provides a greater choice as to where to live 30%
- It allows them to get by with only one vehicle 18%

EKOS Research

Reported in 2001 (www.icv.ca):

- 11% of Canadians work from home (this includes teleworkers, overtime and independent contractors, as well as home based business)
- 40% of Canadians work part time from home, including 77% of self employed individuals, 52% of professionals
- 34% of Canadians working at home do so less than 5 hours a week while 31% do so over 20 hours a week
- 50% of Canadians are interested in working from home while 27% view it as extremely appealing
- Teleworkers report an improvement in overall quality of life (68%) improvement in standard of living (60%)

Wired Young Canadians

Statistics Canada Report December 2001 reports that young teens are ripe to become tomorrow's teleworkers. They are great users of computers and online software.

Live/Work Balance

Almost every working person faces the challenge of finding the appropriate equilibrium between work and life obligations. More demands in the office on one side of the equation, and child care and aging parents on the other side create an interesting tug of war. Most working men and women are urged by personal and family circumstances to free up and reduce work time to make up time for family relationships and social life.

Costly labour time lost as well as productivity losses have forced employers to consider alternative work arrangements including flex time, personal time off, job sharing, reduced work weeks, and working from home. Employers who ignore the growing social issue of

life work balance are likely to cope with greater absenteeism and loss of key employees to other more progressive employers.

Bringing work at home instead of prolonging the hours at the office is not a solution for a better work-life balance. In fact, it may make things worse. Working extra hours at home may make the work-life divide seamless and work may become intrusive to home life. This realization may backfire and home workers may start thinking nostalgically about the complete separate work life of the downtown commute, the office building, the crowds, the cafeteria food, their colleagues, the whole routine. Working from home was never meant to be additional hours of work at home but working at home instead of in the office.

Employees often complain that social life among colleagues outside the office hours is lacking. Very often colleagues do not socialize outside the office environment, do not invite each other to their homes, and in general, do not share their home life. Yet, when one works from home, colleagues call home, are introduced to partners and/or kids who answer the phone and sometimes come over for business. Conventional work arrangements seem to have promoted a respect for each other's employee privacy, but working from home creates exceptions whereby one may be encouraged to hop in and out of each others home to deliver and pick up "work".

Getting to know people one works with builds a community network and alliances which may be more important than the official corporate objective of goal congruence. Also, a spouse or partner today may not be content to being passive with regards to her/his spouse's career. Working from home allows partners to get more involved in each other's careers. Perhaps this is a way of helping employees to better balance work and home life as well as improve their social life.

Workers' Teleworking Advantages

Workers have a greater control over their working conditions. In fact, workers can design their workstation. They can choose the furnishings of their liking and place them in the room of their choice.

There is a greater flexibility with regards to the time, duration, and pace of working. There is no need to start at a given time or finish in a predetermined span of time, seven or eight hours later. Individual workers can start their day whenever they are ready and finish whenever they feel like. The focus is on the work to be done, and not the time allotted in a day to complete certain tasks.

There are fewer exchanges and interruptions with co-workers, supervisors, clients, suppliers and other working partners. As a result, there is more time available to actually work and home workers may enjoy greater productivity.

There is a closer connection between work and home. Work and home duties inter-mingle and complement one another. There is no need to choose one over the other.

There is a lot of time saved in commuting to and from work. This time saved can be invested in more productive activities, reduce the frustrations of driving, the number of accidents and the possibility of injuries. In addition, it may save hundreds of dollars in travelling costs and reduce the environmental pollution caused by cars.

Home working improves the satisfaction one derives from work and it improves the well being of the individual as it reduces stress. Work becomes an extension of living, so one has a better perspective of what work really is.

Home working allows for a gradual return to work for individuals who are on sick leave, were injured on the job and have other absences from work. It also makes it easier for disabled individuals with reduced mobility "to get to work" because they do not have to leave their home as often.

Working from home may contribute to employment equity as it eases work/family conflicts for working parents. It may allow for a higher attraction and retention of female employees who seem to bear a greater load of family responsibilities.

Teleworking is cheaper than conventional work arrangements or at worse cost is neutral.

Teleworking accommodates those who need frequent medical care as they are able to work around their medical appointments or work from home while they are receiving treatment. For example, a worker requiring cancer treatment or dialysis over an extended period of time may take a medical leave. In this case, co-workers or a replacement would pick up the slack.

Employers' Teleworking Advantages

Higher worker productivity. The Canadian Telework Association estimates that teleworking increases individual job performance by 20% on average. Less commute time leads to more time available for work (and play) and improves worker productivity.

Lower operating expenses. Fewer facilities, less office space and overhead means lower operating expenses. However, some of these costs may be offset by long distance telephone costs (800 numbers employees use to communicate with the office) and multiple fax machines, and other equipment at each teleworkers home.

Fewer absences from work and lost man hours. "Self-employed" home workers are less prone to miss days of work, and, if they do get sick, they will make it up on their own time.

Reduced personal leaves. Home workers can better manage doctor's appointments, teacher-parent interviews, and household chores resulting in fewer personal leaves

Lower supervision costs. It is easier to manage and supervise employees who work on their own. In fact, there may not be as great a need for supervisors and first level managers for homeworkers.

A Virtual 24 hours around the clock operation. Personnel can be reached at any time through e-mail, fax, or telephone as opposed to the typical 9 to 5 time span. Customers may appreciate these expanded hours of service.

Home workers may develop an improved number of skills and know-how. Home workers cannot rely on the knowledge and direct support of co-workers. This may produce more flexible workers with a greater span of expertise and a less trade unionist approach where a union member of one trade refuses to do the job of another union member.

Working from home may result in better labour management relationships, fewer chances for labour disputes and conflicts. Less management supervision and more worker autonomy and job satisfaction may result into a more peaceful labour –management relationship.

Improved recruitment and retention of specialized mobile employees. Since home working is desirable for most employees and addresses many of the life-work balance issues, it is expected to improve retention and attraction of knowledgeable workers.

Lessens the impact of downsizing and cutbacks. In cases of restructuring, cut backs may not be as visible and the improved skills and know how of homeworkers may allow for easier job redesign and job descriptions.

Fewer space and parking requirements. The Canadian Telework Association estimates such savings at \$2000 per employee per year.

Finally, improved employee morale and job satisfaction. All of the aforementioned benefits create a synergy resulting in happier employees, higher morale and job satisfaction.

Societal Teleworking Advantages

Working from home may produce:

- ✓ Fewer cars on the road and less traffic congestion.
- ✓ Less need for additional infrastructure projects of bridges, highways etc.
- ✓ Less overall driving reduces gasoline consumption.
- ✓ Less traffic means less pollution from car emissions.
- ✓ Fewer cars on the road that reduce road wear and tear.
- ✓ Lower traffic accidents and traffic deaths.
- ✓ Less energy consumption. Working from home means that one building is heated or air-conditioned instead of two.
- ✓ Less office garbage.

- ✓ Less population concentration in big cities, better distribution of people between rural and urban communities.
- ✓ An improvement of job opportunities in the rural areas especially in proximity to big cities.
- ✓ More work opportunities for individuals with special needs since working from home improves the employability of special needs individuals.
- ✓ Better identification of workers with their communities and possibly greater involvement in civic affairs. The "I gave at the office" excuse may no longer be used.
- ✓ Teleworkers are not limited by geography and they may live thousands of miles away in other countries.
- ✓ It reduces day crime of break and enter theft since the presence of homeworkers averts and/or discourages the commitment of this crime.
- ✓ It provides options for teleworkers with latch-key kids and elderly parents who may need care at home.
- ✓ It reduces work related stress and the health costs resulting from it.

Disadvantages of Teleworking

- ❖ Attitudinal changes about work are needed in order to promote home working as a mainstream type of employment.
- ❖ Working at home may lead to social isolation. Home life may not provide for a great amount of networking with other colleagues and professionals in the field, social contacts and interactions.
- ❖ Interruptions from friends and relatives during the working hours of the day may be bothersome and intrusive. Family distractions may undercut the benefits of home working. Working outside the home provides a protection from such interruptions.
- ❖ Each individual home worker may require a greater use of technology than an average office employee. All modern gadgets that permit easy communication with the outside world (telephone, fax, e-mail, internet connection, computer, modem, and scanner) are needed to a greater extent by a home worker. The cost of such equipment is normally shared among many workers at the office. Duplication is unavoidable as the company office needs similar equipment to the home office for the time the teleworker works on the organization's premises. As a result, start-up costs and information technology support costs may be high. Some duplication may result in inefficient use of resources. Home working applied on a large scale may come at a prohibitive high cost.
- ❖ Access to couriers' services and therefore communications in residential areas may not be as great in the suburbs where the homeworkers work.
- ❖ Working from home may reduce public revenues from road tolls often used to discourage driving in central areas and ease down town traffic.
- ❖ Loss of business for downtown merchants.
- ❖ Management may have actual and/or perceived loss of control.
- ❖ Unions may be concerned over total work hours, keeping record of hours worked, overtime pay, lunch breaks, working conditions and the application of

various labour laws. They feel that such arrangements weaken the union organization, erode wage standards and may pave the way for worker exploitation.

- ❖ Flexiplace may be difficult to implement when jobs are interdependent. Especially in service industries, human resources coordination may be hard to achieve.
- ❖ Potential conflict with office colleagues especially if they are refused the chance to work from home.
- ❖ Not all employees may be present when coworkers and colleagues require their services and expertise
- ❖ Fewer promotional opportunities.
- ❖ Teleworkers may put pressure on office workers with requests of the kind “can you find this file for me?” or “can you fax me that letter?”
- ❖ There might be an information security issue when confidential information leaves the organization’s premises.
- ❖ Dilution of organizational culture. Independent work may not promote organizational culture.
- ❖ It may be disruptive to the team work culture.
- ❖ Loss of some fringe benefits such as vacation and sick leave may be detrimental to self-employed home workers.
- ❖ Labour law may not adequately cover all situations of home working, as labour laws were designed for traditional methods of employment.
- ❖ Potential for long work hours and work addiction.
- ❖ Couch potato may be replaced by the “fridge syndrome” whereby home workers are driven to the fridge, overeating, and potential obesity/health related problems
- ❖ Many of these telecommuting disadvantages may be mitigated by telecommuters working a few days a week in the office. Having to report to the office at certain times, to meet other colleagues, participate in meetings, ask questions, get new information and in general feel and be a part of the organization may be as important as the autonomy of homeworkers.

Factors Contributing to Teleworking

There are many factors contributing to the phenomenon of teleworking. Some are technologically driven and others are driven by societal trends. Perhaps there is an interaction between these two main drivers. A country with a strong technological infrastructure that is socially developed is a better candidate for adopting a teleworking culture than a third world or even a developing country. At any case, here are the major factors contributing to Teleworking:

Technological advances and access to technology. Technological presence is not enough. It has to be widespread in most aspects of life with a strong business presence.

Advanced telecommunications. A well developed telephone system with full and affordable services is a good starting point for telecommuting.

Cheaper internet availability. An industry of internet providers with fast speed internet connection is a precursor to developing a teleworking culture

Increased personal computer ownership and computer skills. A labour force in which the average worker is computer literate, owns a computer, and is or approaches the definition of knowledge worker sets the foundation for telecommuting.

Increased demand by employees to work from home. Employees must have an identified need to telecommute otherwise telecommuting is a noble but impractical concept.

Social and political pressures to expand alternative work patterns. Societal trends must be such (two income families, bedroom communities away from the city core, traffic congestion and so on) that there is some social and political pressures to rectify the situation.

Increase of suburban population and long distance commuting. Work force dispersion away from the place of work necessitating lengthy commuting is a prerequisite of cultivating a telecommuting culture.

Conditions for Successful Teleworking

The American Management Association reports that in spite of the significant growth in teleworking, few companies are addressing the strategic management issues the new work arrangement creates. In fact only seven percent of US based teleworkers have been formally trained to work outside the traditional office environment (www.amanet.org).

Teleworking can be a recipe for disaster for employees, employers and the organization if certain conditions are not met. To begin with, both employers and employees must be interested in making the program work. Second, the employees must possess certain personality traits and job skills. These may include, at minimum, the following:

- Able and willing to work independently without supervision
- Be organized with good work habits and practices
- Have good time management skills
- Be responsible, have self discipline
- Be capable of taking initiatives,
- Be self motivated and set priorities,
- Be results oriented
- Be on the job long enough and/or know the job well

Clearly not every employee possesses these qualifications and therefore, is not suited to work from home.

Third, employers must secure an effective communication system and protocol in place between the organization and working from home employees. Teleworkers must be kept in the loop of what is happening in the office. Toll free 800 numbers and/or fast access internet for e-mail communications are clearly a must. Supportive management is also a must.

Fourth, a performance indicator and benchmark system must be devised to measure the results home workers produce. These benchmarks may include setting objectives, time line by which these objectives are going to be achieved, time and method of communications with the office, provisions for fair work load, and pay equity between home workers and office workers working for the same company.

Is your Organisation Ready for Teleworking?

Teleworking, in spite of its many benefits, is not for every organization. Here are some criteria one can use to determine if an organization has what it takes to be instituting a teleworking plan. The organization may be ready for teleworking if:

- It increasingly relies on computers.
- It seeks out recruits and already employs “information workers/knowledge workers”
- It already employs teleworkers informally. (Your organization may be further ahead than you think. Ask to find out how much work is already done away from the office)
- Employee productivity and performance needs to be improved
- The organization experiences a recruitment and/or employee retention problem
- Travel and relocation costs are high enough that moving the work and not the people makes sense
- Absenteeism is high. (Teleworking may limit absenteeism due to childcare, and eldercare issues by allowing teleworkers to perform at least some of their normal work at home)
- Work /life balance complaints are prevalent among employees
- Office space and/or parking are limited and/or too much is spent on it
- Employee morale needs some boosting

The Initiative for a Teleworking Arrangement

Teleworking as an alternative work arrangement needs to be initiated by one of the parties involved - either the employee or the employer. In making rituals one must feel comfortable enough to make an approach without repercussions. Similarly, there must be some evidence from the employer that there is an open mindedness towards suggestions and/or alternate work arrangements for an employee to make the first step.

It is the teleworkers who are often best suited to explain how telecommuting arrangements

can help an organization to meet its goals. Every employee seeking telecommuting arrangements should be required to fill out a formal proposal. The question “how you plan to do your work?” needs to be answered by the employees who are the experts of their job. Telecommuting can work only if the focus is on the organizational objectives rather on the employees’ convenience. The issue is not “why” the employee wants the telecommuting job but “how” the job is going to be accomplished and how the business objectives are going to be met. Support tools, some training, and management guidance can be only complementary to the main conditions for successful telecommuting. A trial period of telecommuting may be a good idea.

A dialogue to determine the rules and policies of telecommuting is still emerging. Employers need a structure and methodology to deal with the issues of teleworking. They need some guidance to identify the best telecommuting practices and set benchmarks for others to follow. Standards for operational support, output expectations, occupational health and safety concerns, union concerns, employer liability and training of teleworkers are the first to come to mind. Organizations dedicated to teleworking may be good sources for information to a novice firm that is considering teleworking.

Employers’ Responsibility to Teleworkers

There is an understandable apprehension among employers about their responsibilities to employees who are telecommunicating or work full or part time at home. Some of the big questions are:

- Are the employer’s responsibilities any different from those to employees working on the organization’s premises?
- If they are, what is the difference?
- Does the employer have the obligation to inspect the home office and evaluate the “work site” for potential hazards?
- How often should these inspections take place?
- What right do the employers have to order modifications to the work place of an employee’s home?
- What obligation does the employee have to obey these orders?
- What recourse does the employer have to deal with an employee’s refusal to modify the home office?
- Should the employer keep a log or record of home office violations to exhibit due diligence in the event of an accident or claim?

Clearly, these questions make one realize the difficulties and/or the differences between the work and home office. The safe overall approach for one to take is that the occupational health and safety rules, whatever they are, apply at any work place including the employee’s home. However, home office inspections may not be necessary unless the employer becomes aware of “work related” not “house related” hazards in the home office.

Also, a record of work related home office injuries and/or illnesses must be kept for each employee working from home. The employer is responsible for preventing or correcting hazards that relate to home workers work. However, the employer is not responsible for making the homes of employees safe. It is not the employer’s responsibility to make sure that first aid kits are available in the home office, emergency exits and/or plans exist,

entries are accessible for handicapped people, or the doors and windows meet the office fire codes. However, employers may be responsible for offering general training in health and safety but not necessarily health and safety training for the home office.

The legal definition as to what defines an “employee” and what defines a “contractor” needs to be revisited in order to clarify some potential scenarios of employer responsibility for home workers. The cardinal rule probably is that employers must respect the law, regulations and collective agreements, while employees maintain the quality and quantity of work at the level expected when they work on the firm’s premises. Teleworking beyond the obvious computer hardware, software, and peripheral tools such as extra phone lines are in need for such fundamental things as health insurance and pension plans. Employers need not see teleworking as a way of avoiding these traditional employee obligations.

Teleworking Organisations

The increased popularity of working from home is evidenced by the number of organizations that have sprung up over the last few years. Most of them have a website. Here are some major ones.

- The International Telework Association and Council (ITAC). This is a non profit organization dedicated to advancing the growth and success of work independent of location. It was founded in 1993.
- Working from anywhere Organization
- Independent Home Workers Alliance
- Canadian Telework Association
- Inno Visions Canada
- British Columbia Telework
- Alberta Government Telecommuting
- Telework coalition (US based)

Conclusion

Teleworking must be seen as a greatly beneficial alternate work arrangement to all stakeholders involved in human resource management strategies. Employers who dismiss telework out of hand saying this does not apply to my organization should have a second look. As pressures mount on individuals to look for ways to better balance work and life, employers need to begin considering teleworking as an answer to HR issues they face.

Teleworking is not an all or nothing proposition. Part of the work week should be spent at home and part in the office. This helps remedy home isolation, “staying in the loop”, and “out of sight out of mind” issues. Governments can recognize the positive potential of telework and consider tax and other incentives for businesses and organizations to

introduce telework. Employers should use intelligence and imagination in designing telework strategies and programs. They must ensure that teleworkers receive appropriate training in home office ergonomics to prevent repetitive stress injuries as well as to avoid workaholic practices. Home workers need to guard against poor dietary and/or fitness habits (Fridge Syndrome), social isolation, and “online obsession”.

Work is not a place. In the future, virtual work places where employees operate remotely from each other and from managers will become more common. There are compelling business reasons, employee preferences and societal considerations that support teleworking. The advantages by far offset the costs of setting up and maintaining a teleworking system. An attitudinal paradigm shift from focusing on time spent in front of a machine, or behind a desk to focusing on results produced may lead to teleworking, great improvements in productivity, profits, customer service, and job satisfaction.

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III PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

Kevin O’Kelly, University of Limerick, Ireland

Despoina Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou, Assist. Prof. at the University of Athens

PUBLIC SECTOR WORKING TIME ORGANIZATION IN THE UK

Jo Morris, Senior Equality and Employment Rights Officer, Trades Union (UK)

In this presentation, I am going to be talking very much about flexibility, temporal flexibility, in other words, time. I am going to outline some of the social, economic and political trends which are forcing both public sector employers and the employees to look how work is organized in the 21st century.

And at the heart of that is something that surprisingly has not been mentioned yet. And that is the feminization of the labor market. We cannot ignore the changes, the social changes that have resulted from the new composition of the labor market. In the UK, over half of the work force are now women.

This has implications not just for the women workers but for their families, their partners who are increasingly participating more in family life and are not receiving domestic services that they may have received a couple of generations ago from their wives, with a few exceptions. And also, of course, their families, the children. So, it has implications for social policy.

So, I am going to argue that Unions play a central role in developing innovative new forms of work organization which benefit both the employees and their work - life balance as well as the business. And I am going to concentrate on a couple of examples in the public sector because I think that is particularly interesting because at the heart of the modernization of services – public services – is greater access for the public to those services at times which are convenient to them. And of course, if we are all working, both men and women, there is less time to access those services in standard working hours.

So, providing public services out of standard working hours has become increasingly prevalent and the pressures of the 24/7 at global economy has increasingly made an impact at local level on public services.

And there is an inherent tension. If we provide services at times which are convenient to the public, which is increasingly outside of standard working hours, somebody has to work those hours which are un social hours.

So, how should Unions respond to this inherent tension between meeting customer need on the one hand and representing workers and respecting their need for a good balance between work and life?

Employers have worked in the UK with the TUC to develop some innovative approaches. a model which comes in a publication from the TUC called “Changing times”, about reorganizing working time. And it underlines the need for partnership and innovative approaches.

I think it opens up the possibility for new forms of work organization which allow both women and men to participate in work in a new way, not necessarily being ghettoized into a negative flexibility by working part-time but by being able to work flexibly, a positive flexible way in a range of different forms.

So, I am going to concentrate on a couple of examples. First of all, the drivers for change in the UK has come very largely from the changing face of public services and the government agenda to open up access. But also, an increasing need for the public services to be seen as an employer of choice and to recruit and retain workers.

Our public services, like, I guess, every public service around the world, are not able to compete on being high payers. Certainly not at some of the more basic service levels but they can compete in terms of retaining staff by conditions of service.

And another driver for change is the meeting of new customer and business needs. Increasingly, there is an awareness that in order to avoid the negative effects of the long... as culture, there is a need to take onboard work – life balance and to match that on the Unions' part with the implications for jobs' security. And I will come on to that a bit more in my second example.

So, the social partners are looking for a “win-win” and I am going to look at an example in a medium sized city council in Bristol, in the west of England, and another rather more ambitious example in the Inland Revenue, the tax service which is a government department.

We are also doing work with the health service and private sector initiatives but I am not going to talk about those in any detail. So, what we are going for is a win for business, a win for staff and satisfied customers.

In Bristol City Council, the Council did a survey of library users and they said that they wanted to be able to use the library on a Sunday. However, the Council had undergone two recent reorganizations and the library staff said no way are we going to work on a Sunday. That is one step too far in flexibility. So, there was an impasse.

But, to cut a very long story short, as a result of a partnership project which was EU funded and I would just stress what good value this small piece of EU funding has been because this project five years on, is still sustaining itself.

We got together to talk with the Unions and it was agreed by the Union membership at ground level that this might be a possibility to look and see how there could be a creative solution to this impasse. And as a result of this, the most significant result, I think, was that it made a very happy and unhappy and disenfranchised Union membership in the library service, very proactive, to say a little bit about that in a minute. And it helped both management and the Union come up with creative solutions to all problems.

The process that we used was first of all, to match staff preference with business need. We had a survey which our staff, the hours that they were working, the hours that they would like to work and their suggestions of how that could be accommodated without any negative impact in the service.

In other words, we used the unique knowledge of frontline staff about how work was organized to try and find better ways to deliver services. And we set up a joint steering group with managers and not just Union reps but people who were working in the services and we involved staff in not only identifying what the problems were to creating this more extended service but how to find solutions.

And as a result, for example, one of the solutions that the Union came up with to the question in the library was to have self-managed shifts. So, it was the Union who had I think being perceived by management as a break on change, it was the Union rather than the management who became champions for change.

We were able, as a result of this process of discussion groups with staff and questionnaires about the times that they would like to work to identify that there were a lot of part-time workers who wanted to increase the number of hours that they worked in a week, but were not able to do it because, first of all, there weren't those hours currently available on contract, but secondly, that they did not want to incur greater childcare costs.

So, weekend working actually offered them the possibility to increase the number of hours that they were working and therefore, their pay, without having to resort to institutional childcare arrangements because they very often had family members who were not able to look after their children.

When the library, as a result of this experiment, opened on a Sunday, what was interesting was that it not only brought in users but they were new users, different people started using the library on a Sunday. Typically, families were coming in after doing shopping, they were coming in with their children, they were using the computers much more rather than taking books out. So, we were extending not only the time but also the quality of library use.

One of the products of this successful experiment in the libraries was that other workers in the City Council –the City Council employed about 20,000 employees- wanted to work in the same way. Previously, the male job areas had been quite resistant to the idea of flexible working. They had seen it as something that was encroaching on their normal way of working. And typically, these manual male workers in the refuel service, in pest control, people who go out and deal with cockroaches or rat infestations, they work from eight o' clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon and they did not want change. They made that very clear.

But when they saw how the library experiment had worked, they saw that this might also be a solution to the issues that affected them around traffic congestion. Bristol has huge problems about the rush hour and traffic congestion. So, they wanted to come in to work earlier or go away from work later, to choose their working time, they wanted to self-manage their shifts.

So, they organized self-managed shifts and the result of those self-managed shifts was in fact that not only they met their needs but the service itself was extended at the longer

opening times. So, there were sustained new relationships created between managers and Unions in terms of how to solve problems.

Moving on to the second public service example that I want to briefly tell you about, in the Inland Revenue offices, there was at national level an agreement signed between the Union and the government that public services would extend access to the public at times that were convenient.

Now, that had an implication on the very particular working time culture in the tax offices who really worked traditional bank hours. They were working 8 till 4 essentially. And the staff in the tax offices were very set in working those hours, they did not want to change.

However, at national level, the national Union understood that if they did not deliver change in the tax enquiry offices on one evening a week, until 8 o'clock and one Saturday morning, if that was not delivered, it was likely that there would be implications for job security. The government would take a number of options. Maybe there would be an increased reliance on electronic means of answering inquiries or call centers would be set up or perhaps the service would be contracted out.

So, there was an issue there for the national Union had to convince local membership. So, we were looking at how we could review the way that work was organized and how we could ensure that it became in the pilot area of the employer of first choice.

And one of the things that we integrated into this project which I think it would be good if we had some discussion about it sometime, was the concept of lifelong learning because the Union was quite resistant initially to the idea of this project but they were very committed to extending learning in the workplace and the Union concerned had a very good distance learning program.

So, as part of this project, part of the deal was that the National Union would deliver what we call "learn direct", its distance learning courses in the workplace, on computers supplied by the employer and all workers could access those computers before work, during the lunch hour, after work and during their flexi time arrangements.

And our aim was to deliver a model process. Using much the same approach as in Bristol, we had a star survey. Our only problem was that there was absolutely no interest by staff in changing their times of work. And yet, we knew that it had to change. It was going to change one way or the other and from a Trade Unionist's point of view, we wanted to change, we did not want it to be changed on the employer's terms, we wanted to be part of that change.

But staff did not see the point of longer working hours. So, we used a lot of staff discussion groups which actually helped staff see there were other ways of organizing their personal working time that delivered them personal benefits. And we moved this away from just family-friendly because there is a real problem, I think, when work – life balance measures

are seen as something that apply only to parents of young children or even worse, only to mothers of young children. You have to have a balanced approach.

And there were many staff who had all sorts of reasons why they wanted to change their working times. Go on to compress working weeks, a four-day working week. Many of the men opted for that. They worked late on one evening and then they only worked four days. Typically, quite a lot of them were doing that so they could take part in their family life and help care for children on that one day. Everything was voluntary. No one was coerced into changing their working time.

Now, I will not go into this but there were a number of new ways and our previous session covered some of the ways that flexible working can be introduced in a positive way. But as a result, part of the staff, they voluntarily opted to work so that the offices were extended, the inquiry offices had extended working times, opening times, but also staff began to volunteer to do things like run sessions for newly self-employed people on how to do their tax returns on a Saturday morning because they saw it enhancing their own personal development. And then, they had time off at other times of the week.

So, the challenges. It is a challenge to introduce new working time arrangements and to convince staff that the status quo is not necessarily the best way of organizing working time. The biggest challenge was perhaps middle managers who perceived that they were losing control and autonomy. And perhaps unexpected challenge was the different perspectives between the national and the local Union perspectives.

So, my conclusions from these two projects and the other work that I have done is that the quality of the process that you adopt determines the result. As Peter said, there is no blueprint but there is a blueprint for a process. It has to be partnership. You cannot make effective change at this level in terms of time arrangements without consulting staff. It can be imposed but it will be resisted actively or passively.

The process is as important as the outcomes and indeed, in both the projects that I managed, it was during the process that some of the outcomes were identified and were indeed the most important outcomes. And at the heart of it, there is a need to match individual preference and need with business need. All of us have different needs at different times of our lives, whether we have young children, whether we want to undergo some kind of lifelong learning or we have aged parents or we want to take part in civil society. We have different needs in terms of our time at different times of our lives.

So, this requires us to be creative, to think outside the box and be open to new ideas. And on that I leave. Thank you very much and I hope that you will perhaps sign up to the TUC e-newsletter that comes out once a fortnight, that has a lot of very useful links to what is happening in terms of research and news both in the UK and around the world on work – life balance and the organization of working time. Thanks very much indeed.

FLEXIBLE LABOUR AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH. AN EMPIRICAL STYDY

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Abstract

During the 1980s and 1990s, trade unions in the Netherlands sacrificed again and again wage increases against the promiss of job creation. Moreover, they tolerated a wage-cost saving flexibilisation of labour relations. This brought the county on a job-intensive but low-productive growth path. Growth rates of GDP per working hour are about half the EU-average since 1984/85. This paper tries to contribute to a better understanding of the Dutch productivity crisis, using firm-level panel data of OSA. It turns out that firms that have a high turnover of personnel do not realize higher productivity growth than firms with more 'rigid' labour relations. Moreover, firms which extensively use temporary contracts realize a signifycantly lower productivity growth. Whereas young firms realize above-average productivity growth, small firms in general have a significantly lower productivity growth than large firms

1. Introduction: The Dutch labour productivity growth slowdown

Following the "Dutch disease" during the 1970s and against the background of high and steadily rising unemployment during the recession of the early 1980s, trade unions in the Netherlands agreed upon very modest wage increases. Over the last twenty years, wage growth in the Netherlands has been much more modest than in the rest of Europe. Trade unions relied on the principle of 'trading wage increases against jobs'. This policy is called '*loonmatiging*', often poorly translated into English as 'wage moderation' or 'wage restraint'. Moreover, trade unions tolerated an increasing flexibilization of labour relations. During the last twenty years, there was an increasing share of people working on 'non-typical' working contracts, including temporary contracts without a perspective of tenure, labour hired from manpower agencies, or 'free lance' workers. Obviously, such flexibilization of labour relations allowed for wage cost savings and therefore enhanced the policy of '*loonmatiging*'. As was to be expected from neoclassical theory, this policy of wage cost saving was followed by high rates of job creation that attracted attention in the rest of Europe.

Table 1 is confined to three key variables about the Dutch economy, which we consider relevant for sketching the consequences of the trade union strategy in the Netherlands. Four observations from Table 1 merit attention:

1. In the long run, Dutch GDP growth hardly deviates from the EU average. This means that the fairly modest wage growth during the 1980s and 1990s did *not* translate into above-average growth of GDP. A slightly above-average GDP growth during the 1990s is to be explained by different factors.⁹
2. During the 1960s and 1970s, rates of labour productivity growth (i.e. growth of GDP per hour worked) in the Netherlands were slightly below the EU average, which might be explained by the relatively large service sector in the Netherlands.
3. During the 1970s and 1980s, EU-wide growth rates of labour productivity declined. The table shows that, from the 1980s onwards, growth of GDP per hour worked in the Netherlands declined even further, reaching just about half of EU average growth (column 2).
4. Together with the decline of labour productivity growth, the labour intensity of GDP growth in the Netherlands rose substantially (see column 3). From the 1950s up to the 1970s, GDP growth was fairly labour-extensive all over Europe. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, the Netherlands sharply deviate from this trend: A one-percent increase in GDP coincides with an 0,57% (in the 1990s even 0,61%) growth of labour hours (as opposed to 0,12 or 0,13 in the EU). This was the famous Dutch job miracle.

The high rates of job growth explain why Dutch trade unions were ready to maintain quite modest wage claims even long after the recession of the early 1980s. In interpreting the Dutch job miracle, one should remind that an economy can grow only in two ways: Either by using more labour or by making labour more productive. Following the 1982 Wassenaar

⁹ An estimate by the Dutch Central Bank (DNB) suggests that, during the 1990s, economic growth in the Netherlands has been enhanced due to the Dutch 'mortgage Keynesianism'. The rise in housing prices allowed many households taking extra (highly subsidized) mortgages for consumption purposes. According to estimates with the DNB Morkmon model, this caused about 1% extra economic growth per year in 1999 and 2000 (DNB 2002, p. 29-38).

agreement, the Dutch economy strongly relied on the first-named option: Using more labour. As can be seen from column 1 of table 1, the Dutch job miracle during the 1980s and 1990s can hardly be explained by a GDP growth that was slightly above the EU-average. Nor was it due to superior export performance.¹⁰ It is mainly due to a highly labour-intensive growth during the 1980s and 1990s (column 3) and a strikingly low labour productivity growth (column 2).

Table 1: GDP growth (1), labour productivity growth (2) and the labour intensity of GDP growth (3). The Netherlands compared to the European Union						
	Average annual GDP growth (1)		Average annual GDP growth per hour worked (2)		Growth of labour hours per 1% GDP growth (3)	
	EU-14*	Netherlands	EU-14*	Netherlands	EU-14*	Netherlands
1950-1960	4,5	4,6	4,2	4,2	0,07	0,10
1960-1973	5,2	4,9	5,7	4,5	-0,09	0,07
1973-1980	2,6	2,4	3,0	2,5	-0,15	-0,05
1981-1990	2,4	2,2	2,1	1,0	0,12	0,57
1990-2000	2,5	2,8	2,2	1,1	0,13	0,61

* Annual average growth rates of EU-14 (excluding Luxemburg)
Source: Calculations based on figures from the website of the Groningen Growth and Development Centre (www.eco.rug.nl/ggdc)

In recent years, there is a growing awareness in the Netherlands, that the low-productivity-high-employment growth path may not be sustainable in the long run. Many of the jobs created in the 1980s and 1990s may be called artificial jobs – most of them would not exist had the country had the same labour productivity growth as its neighbours. Moreover, during the second half of the 1990s, the highly labour-intensive growth (column 3, Table 1) lead to an increasingly tight labour market. As was theoretically expected, scarcity of

¹⁰ During the entire period of '*loonmatiging*', Dutch export market shares with respect to the most important OECD countries even declined. While the Netherlands lost export market shares, they did preserve a positive trade balance, as '*loonmatiging*' contributed to slow down import penetration (see Kleinknecht & Naastepad 2002).

labour drove up wages (in spite of trade unions trying to keep wage increases low). As labour productivity growth rates continued to be low, the wage rises of the late 1990s translated into lower company profits and a deteriorating foreign trade position.

This paper tries to contribute to a better understanding of the Dutch productivity problem by reporting some micro-econometric analyses, based on firm-level panel data of the *Organization for Strategic Labour Market Research* (OSA). We draw from a more voluminous report in Dutch, confining ourselves to analyses of the Dutch manufacturing sector.¹¹ The next section reports a summary of regression estimates that explain inter-firm differences in labour productivity growth. This can say something about micro-level patterns behind the macro-economic figures in table 1. While the impact of slow wage growth can hardly be assessed with our firm-level analysis, we can test the impact of flexible labour relations on productivity. In section 3 we round up with conclusions about the broader meaning of the findings.

2. The impact of flexible labour on labour productivity growth

2.1 Hypotheses

One can argue that easier hiring and firing of personnel and a higher labour turnover might be favourable for a firm's innovation performance. First, it leads to a larger inflow of fresh people that may enrich the pool of a firm's innovative ideas and open up new networks. Second, easier hiring and firing of personnel makes it easier to replace less productive workers by more motivated and productive ones. This would lead us to expect a higher productivity growth among the firms that have taken a lead in making their labour relations more flexible.

On the other hand, a higher degree of labour flexibility also has disadvantages. For example, a permanently high rate of people joining and leaving a firm may diminish social cohesion and trust and increase the danger of moral hazard. In other words, such flexibility will diminish social capital, forcing firms to invest into monitoring and control. Moreover, the so-called '*hold up*' problem may become more relevant: As labour relations are (expected to be) only of short duration, employers and employees may hesitate to invest into the labour relation. For example, the employer may under-invest into the human capital of his flexible workers, but the employees themselves may also invest less in firm-specific knowledge, networks, trust etc. High external mobility of people increases the probability that one cannot (fully) appropriate the benefits of such investment.

Flexible and short-run labour relations may also favour the leaking of confidential information and of technological knowledge, which may discourage investments in R&D and

¹¹ Similar analyses among service sector firms tended to be less reliable due to data deficiencies; for details see Dekker & Kleinknecht (2003).

innovation. In other words, high (external) labour market flexibility may aggravate the problem of market failure due to positive externalities. Moreover, firms with a more flexible workforce are likely to experience increased costs of hiring, selection and on-the-job-training. They may also suffer in terms the quality of their services since frequent changes of personnel may cause problems of information transfer between people leaving the firm and people coming in. A firm's historical memory may become weaker.

It is hard to predict theoretically whether such negative aspects of flexible labour will compensate the advantages named earlier. We therefore engage in an empirical exploration using cross-section firm-level data by OSA.

2.2 The model

In our attempt to assess the impact of flexible labour on labour productivity growth, we include in our estimate indicators of three types of flexibility:

- (1) An indicator of labour turnover (i.e. percentages of people that left or joined the firm during the past year),
- (2) Percentages of personnel on temporary contracts (without a perspective of tenure) and
- (3) An indicator of internal flexibility (i. e. percentages of personnel that changed their function or department during the past year).

We add control variables, including:

- Firm size and age. While young technology-based firms may realize high productivity growth, smaller firms tend to take little advantage from scale economies and may be lacking resources. We therefore include as explanatory variables firm size and a dummy for firms that are younger than 5 years.
- Sector dummies should account for differences in technological opportunity between sectors.
- Sales growth should account for the so-called Verdoorn law (i.e. a relationship between sales growth and productivity growth).
- Control variables for innovative behaviour. The OSA database covers a rich choice of innovation indicators, including indicators related to R&D input, innovation about (i.e. shares in sales of innovative products), or qualitative information (e. g. *'Did you introduce a major new technology during the last two years'*; or *'does your firm have an advanced position with respect to mechanization and automatisisation of production processes?'*).

The database also covers related variables that are likely to have a positive impact on labour productivity growth. Among these are:

- Percentages of personnel with higher education;
- A firm's export intensity;
- Investment in fixed assets;
- Manpower training;
- The age structure of personnel.

In our preliminary estimates, it turned out that the latter group of variables caused

considerable problems with multicollinearity. Therefore, many of these variables needed to be dropped. Moreover, the various versions of innovation variables also were highly multicollinear. In the end, we decided to use the following simple dummy variable for innovative behaviour:

- 'Non-innovators': firms without any R&D activities;
- 'Strong innovators': firms that perform R&D on a permanent basis and have R&D expenditures as a percentage of sales of 5% or larger.
- 'Normal innovators': all others (i. e. firms with only occasional R&D and/or firms with an R&D intensity of less than five percent).

This simplification helped to solve some of our problems with multicollinearity. Nonetheless, several interesting variables still had to be excluded. Among these are a firm's export intensity (which was significant in most versions when innovation variables were omitted), and investments in fixed assets (as a percentage of sales or per employee). As expected, this latter variable was highly significant in all versions but also has a high correlation with various innovation variables. Percentages of personnel with higher education were sometimes significant and sometimes not, depending on the specification. The same holds for manpower training efforts. As the latter two variables have a degree of multicollinearity with the innovation variables, they are omitted from our final version documented in Table 2. The only innovation variable that had no correlation with the other innovation variables was based on the question '*Has your firm an advanced position with respect to the mechanization and automatisisation of production processes?*'. This variable says something about the speed by which old vintages of capital are replaced by new ones which should, of course, have an impact on labour productivity.

In an earlier version of our estimate, we also included a dummy variable for the age structure of personnel. We expected that firms that have high shares of personnel in high age classes would show less labour productivity growth. To our surprise, this age variable was insignificant.¹² A possible explanation are the relatively generous schemes for early retirement and for persons with a handicap (WAO). These schemes allowed firms to easily quit less motivated or less productive personnel. As only very healthy and highly motivated people keep working until the age of 65, having high shares of personnel in higher age classes does not seem to matter for a firm's labour productivity growth.

2.3 Results

The results about the impact of flexible labour relations are mixed. A high turnover of personnel does not seem to influence labour productivity growth. As sketched above, a high labour turnover may be positive for labour productivity growth due to high rates of 'fresh blood' coming in or due to the easier replacement of less productive workers by more productive ones. Seemingly, such a positive impact is more or less compensated by negative effects of a high turnover: A short time horizon of personnel; less dedication to

¹² This is inconsistent with recent findings by Gelderblom et al. (2003) who find that older people do have a lower productivity.

work; a loss of trust, and an inadequate information transfer from people leaving to people coming in, weakening the organization's historical memory. Some of these arguments might be summarized under the notion of 'hold up': In order to make a labour relation fully productive, employer and employee need to 'invest' into the labour relation (i. e. into networks, trust, firm specific knowledge etc.). If the (expected) duration of the labour relation is short, such investments will not take place.

Against our expectations, high percentages of personnel that change functions or departments within the firm have an insignificantly negative sign in our productivity equation. We had expected that greater internal flexibility would allow for greater allocative efficiency and hence productivity growth. However, in practice, high internal flexibility might often be linked to major organizational changes, associated with lay-offs of personnel. Such lay-off campaigns may unleash processes of adverse selection: If people feel that their job is threatened, they will apply for jobs elsewhere. The most capable people will usually be the first to find a new job and leave. The less capable people are trapped in the firm and are internally reorganized. This adverse selection process might explain why we find an (insignificantly) negative impact of internal flexibility on labour productivity growth.

High percentages of people on temporary contracts (without a perspective of tenure) have a highly significant negative impact on labour productivity growth. In this case, some of the above-named factors are likely to be relevant: Lack of 'investment' into the labour relation due to a short time-horizon, less trust and loyalty and easier leaking of confidential information, a short organizational memory etc.

Most of our other variables have the expected sign. We find that larger firms indeed show higher growth rates of labour productivity. The same holds for firms of less than 5 years old. As expected, the Verdoorn coefficient is highly significant. A one-percent growth of sales coincides with an 0,24% rise in labour productivity which is low by international standards. Other than expected, we find few differences between industries. Firms that report that they have '*an advanced position with respect to mechanization and automatisaton of production processes*' have a modestly higher (+1%) productivity growth (insignificant). Firms that belong to the group of 'strong innovators' have a 1,9% higher labour productivity growth. To our surprise, this effect is insignificant which has to do with relatively high standard errors within the group of innovators.

Closer inspection of the data revealed that there is indeed more turbulence within the group of innovators. For example, innovators have significantly higher probabilities of contracting out (and 'contracting-in') of activities, of mergers and acquisitions or other types of organisational change. While such changes are typical for an innovative environment, they can cause higher standard errors, either because of real turbulence or by negatively affecting the quality of data reporting. One should note in this context that problems with noise increase as we use several variables for an indicator. For example, in order to arrive at our labour productivity measure, we computed 'value added', taking sales minus inputs bought from other firms, minus depreciation. The resulting value added was then divided by labour input. Moreover, we had to link two subsequent surveys (with a two-year

distance) at the firm level. Linking firms that participated in two subsequent surveys can be another source of noise that is hard to control: Due to mergers, acquisitions and other organisational change, firms can change during two years.

Table 2:

Factors that explain differences between firms in labour productivity growth (Value added per employee, periods: 1992-94, 1994-96 en 1996-98)

Explanatory variables:	Coefficients:	t-values:
Firm size: 20-99 employees#	4,03	1,7*
Firm size: 99-499 employees#	7,82	3,2**
Firm size: 500 and more employees #	12,00	2,8***
Firm is younger than 5 years	4,26	2,3**
Sales growth (Verdoorn effect)	0,24	5,0***
'Strong' innovator##	1,90	1,0
'Normal' innovator##	0,17	0,1
Has advanced position in mechanization and automatisisation of production	1,01	0,5
Labour turnover during the past year	-0,08	-0,5
Percentage of employees changing function or department during past year	-0,26	-1,5
Percentage of employees with a temporary contract	-0,26	-2,5**
Industry dummies:		
Textiles, clothing, leather	13,56	1,5
Wood and paper	6,96	1,7
Printing and publishing	0,47	0,15
Chemicals, plastic, glass	0,71	0,3
Basic metals en metal products	5,38	1,8
Mechanical engineering	1,39	0,5
Electrical industry, electrical machines	-1,93	-0,5
Automobiles and other transportation means	4,03	0,7
Furnitures	0,20	0,1
Reference group: food and tobacco	-	-
Dummy: observations measured in 1996 (reference year: 1994)	0,00	0,0
Dummy: observations measured in 1998 (reference year: 1994)	3,08	1,4
Constant term	0,48	0,1
Numbers of observations	594	
R-squared	0,21	
*** significant at 1% level; ** significant at 5% level; * significant at 10% level		
# reference group: firms with 5-19 employees		
## reference group: non-innovators		

3. Summary and conclusions

Our regression equations confirm a number of a priori expectations. For example, we find that large firms, due to various types of scale economies, realize significantly higher rates of labour productivity growth than their smaller counterparts. This implies that the macroeconomic pattern of lowly productive and highly labour-intensive growth in the Netherlands (visible in table 1) is to an important degree due to the weak productivity performance of small and medium-sized enterprises. Other than small firms, young firms (younger than 5 years) do realize significantly higher rates of labour productivity growth.

Moreover, the pattern in table 1 was also enhanced by employing people on temporary contracts. Firms with high rates of people on temporary contract realize significantly lower rates of labour productivity growth. However, for the other indicator of (external) flexibility of labour (a high labour turnover) we find no such effects. In this case, the above-sketches positive and negative effects of flexibility on labour productivity seem to be more or less in balance. In principle, a high rate of people changing function (or department) within the firm should enhance allocative efficiency and enhance productivity. However, the context in which high internal flexibility tends to occur (adverse selection during restructuring and lay-off), seems to cancel out the positive effects of flexibility on productivity.

Highly innovative firms in our sample realize on average 1,9 percent more labour productivity growth. Moreover, manufacturing firms that claim that they have '*an advanced position in mechanisation and automatization of production processes*' (compared to their competitors) realize one percent more labour productivity growth. However, all those percentages are (strictly statistically spoken) 'insignificant' due to large standard errors. High standard errors may in part be due to noise in the data due to high rates of structural change within the group of innovators (i.e. restructuring; mergers and acquisitions or contracting-out). While such factors may be complementary to innovative strategies, they may create organisational turbulence, which increases the probability of reporting incorrect figures in a survey. On the other hand, innovation is a typical 'high risk – high return' activity. It therefore seems almost 'natural' that figures about innovative firms show higher variances. Having these points in mind, one should probably not dismiss the above-named percentages as 'unimportant', simply because they are statistically insignificant.

In all versions of our labour productivity regressions, the Verdoorn effect was highly significant. In our firm-level estimate, one percent sales growth coincides with 0,24 percent labour productivity growth in manufacturing. This comes close to the picture from aggregate statistics, and, after 1985, Dutch Verdoorn coefficients are low by international standards. Above, we offered the hypothesis that the decline of labour productivity growth is caused by very modest wage increases during the 1980s and parts of the 1990s and by wage cost saving flexibilization of labour relations. Various parts of economic theory suggest that a causal relationship exists between wage growth and labour productivity growth, notably:

- (i) In standard *neo-classical theory*, an increase in the relative price of labour leads to substitution of capital for labour, shifting along a given production function, until the

- marginal productivity of labour equals the given real wage. Causality in this argument runs from relative factor prices to choice of technique and hence productivity.
- (ii) In *vintage models*, wage increases lead to scrapping of old, labour-intensive vintages of capital in favour of new and more productive vintages of capital.
 - (iii) In the theory of *induced technological change*, higher relative wages increase the labour-saving bias of newly developed technology (Hicks 1932; Kennedy 1964; Ruttan 1997);
 - (iv) In the *Schumpeterian theory of creative destruction*, one can argue that, due to their monopoly rents from innovation, innovating firms can better live with an aggressive wage policy by trade unions. Higher real wage growth enhances the Schumpeterian process of '*creative destruction*' in which innovators compete away technological laggards. Conversely, slow wage growth and flexible labour relations increase the likelihood of survival of low-quality entrepreneurs. While this is favourable for employment in the short-run, it leads to a loss of innovative dynamism in the long run (Kleinknecht 1998).
 - (v) According to Schmooklerian demand-pull theory¹³ and the Verdoorn-Kaldor law, higher effective demand raises innovative activity and labour productivity. This implies that wage restraint or downward wage flexibility may impede innovation as far as it leads to a lack of effective demand.
 - (vi) Within an *endogenous growth framework* (e.g. Foley and Michl 1999: 288–98), a profit-maximising firm's decision to invest in (labour productivity increasing) R&D, can be shown to depend on the share of wages in total costs. The higher the wage share, the more profitable it becomes to devote resources to increasing the productivity of labour.

Some of these theories point to a direct link between wages and labour productivity growth. Others, such as the '*creative destruction*' argument, suggest that overall innovation activity may slow down in response to lower wage cost pressure. In any case, all those pieces of theory contribute to explain the post-1980 decline of Dutch productivity growth observed in column 2 of table 1.

Unfortunately, the OSA database did not allow for a straightforward test these hypotheses. However, in earlier versions of our estimates, we found strong evidence that, among manufacturing firms, investments (per worker or as a percentage of sales) had a highly significant positive impact on labour productivity growth. This is not surprising as much productivity growth is 'embodied' in new investment goods. Due to problems with multicollinearity, the investment variable had to be omitted from the final version of our estimate. Related research demonstrated recently that a slight decline of investment ratios in Dutch industry can explain part of the slowdown in labour productivity growth (Naastepad & Kleinknecht, 2004).

During our period of investigation (1994-1998) there were two factors that can be assumed to have had a positive impact on labour productivity growth:

1. Legislation with respect to a 'disabled persons insurance act' (WAO) and early

¹³ The classical reference is Schmookler (1966); for a recent survey and empirical support see Brouwer and Kleinknecht (1999).

retirement schemes were quite generous. This allowed Dutch firms to quit many less productive workers at fairly low costs. This must have enhanced labour productivity growth and it explains our above finding that there is no lower labour productivity growth among firms that have high shares of older workers. The relatively low percentages of people that continue to work at the age of 55-65 years consist of very healthy and motivated people.

2. In the Netherlands, economic growth was particularly strong during 1994-2000. This is likely to be related to the build-up of private debt that was made possible by strongly rising housing prizes. This is sometimes referred to as the Dutch 'mortgage Keynesianism', i.e. deficit spending by private households that was enhanced by a generous subsidy scheme for mortgages. Via the Verdoorn effect, this must have fostered labour productivity growth.

It is remarkable that, in spite of these two positive counter-effects, overall labour productivity growth in the Netherlands has so severely declined. This underlines the relevance of the above-sketched arguments about the impact of wage cost pressure on labour productivity growth.

In the nearer future, these two positive effects may disappear, as a similar bubble in the housing market is not likely to be repeated and Dutch government is heading for a more restrictive access to early retirement schemes and for a tougher control of access to the 'disabled persons insurance act' (WAO). This is likely to exercise a negative influence on productivity growth in the coming years. Summing up, we expect the problem of low productivity growth in the Netherlands to keep us busy for some more time.

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NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANIZATION – GERMAN EXPERIENCES

Dr. Erich Latniak, Institute for Work and Technology (Germany)

I enjoy to present to you some of the research findings which we did in several studies. I am a social scientist and member of the research staff of the Institute for Work and Technology. This is a publicly funded research and consulting institution of the Federal State of North Rhine Westphalia. We are providing research, policy and company consulting, development and implementation of new concepts for companies, industrial relations partners and policy in North Rhine Westphalia.

I have been active in the field of organizational change and restructuring for about 10 years and what I would like present to you now is our results of studies which will provide something like a horizon of what has been going on in the industry in Germany during the last 10 years. We did several research projects on this topic. This is an effort to a kind of reflection of what we have done during the last 10 or 15 years in promoting new forms of work organization and what we could provide for industry, for example.

I will do this in two steps. I will first provide information on the studies and then shift over to some of the present challenges. And I think I can connect and relate this to what Peter Totterdill has said this morning.

In order to give you an impression of the background of the German discussion, I would like to invite you to come back to the early '90s with me. Looking back through these years, we have the impression that in Germany especially, there is a “sloganeering industry” that has been very active in continuously promoting lots of new concepts and lots of new ideas. I do not know whether they are really all new, but we heard about Japanese lean production concepts, especially for automotive and automobile industry. We heard about business process reengineering and, in the late '90s, there was a strong emphasis on new economy and different types of work organization promoting flexibility, as are e.g. work in projects and networks which has been highly prominent and which was very much promoted by different actors in the industrial relations sector.

What I would like to emphasize is that especially in the early '90s, there was a strong emphasis on group work because in Germany this seemed to offer a joint perspective for employers as well as for the Unions. You could condense this to the notion of “rationalization by humanization” and it was kind of a blending of “lean production” concepts brought in by management and industry on the one side and the quality of working life initiatives which have been very much fostered by the Unions during that time.

I just want to mention that because at that time, you had a high degree of public awareness of these aspects and it was quite interesting to see what the outcome would be because you had a lot of political initiatives that give strong emphasis on that in the public debates and work restructuring.

And the interesting thing for us was that on the one hand we had quite a lot of talking about and the first results we produced were more or less disappointing in that respect. What we did was an employee survey. We did this twice, in 1993 and in 1998. This is a representative survey for the whole German industry and services. We asked the employees whether they would cooperate. We asked them about the autonomy in work and their chances to participate and how they participated.

We derived a set of 8 different types of work by a cluster analysis, which are highly concordant with respect to the three dimensions brought in. And you can see by red lines that especially the self-determined cooperation type of work increased significantly while on the other hand, the most heteronomous forms of work, of individual work increased in the same way. So, what you can say, we have a polarization that has been extended.

Furthermore, we tried to figure out what the dissemination of group work really was. Based on these four cooperative types of work, we made a further breakdown step for which we used of some other questions. We found out that approximately 11.8% of all employees in Germany did work in a kind of group work structure in 1998. You can see that there was a significant growth of about 1% per each year. If you go on further and try to find out what kind of group work has been promoted in these companies, we had to learn that the most advanced types of work, the semi-autonomous group work, was only a small part of it. So, there are only approximately 3% of the employees that worked in that kind of work organization.

From appoint of analysis, this is a very limited approach. Accordingly, we tried to extend this and to introduce a more company-oriented view. Therefore, we tried to find out in the second study, whether there is a strong emphasis on decentralization efforts at different company levels. So, what we did was to use data from a company survey which is performed by the Fraunhofer Institute at Karlsruhe every two years in order to find out what has changed organizationally on the workplace level and on the company level.

We did this in a way to not only ask “Did your company apply group work” but we asked e.g. “1st Did your company apply group work? 2nd Are at least 30% of the employees working in groups? And 3rd Did the group members perform planning tasks and quality related tasks /quality controls?”. So, we tried to gain more information on the work organization on the shop floor level. The narrowest definition is going even further. The critical aspect is that every member of the group is able to perform all tasks.

Doing so, we tried to figure out these dimensions. We found out that for the capital goods producing industry, which is the sample here, approximately 19.5% of the companies applied group work - which was quite a lot at that time. On the other hand, the decentralization of planning and control and the task integration on the workplace level are hardly applied by the companies. So, you can see, that companies answered “yes, we do apply group work”, but if you look on it with a narrower definition, you can see whether a larger group of employees in the company is really applying these tasks and whether they have the competencies to do certain things.

Investigating into the changes on a company or strategic level, the impression is that companies very strongly emphasized to become leaner. They reduced hierarchies and they reduced central units, between 1997 and 1999, in a way and to a degree that nobody would have thought.

So, the interesting thing is that there is a strong emphasis on the reduction of organizational levels while the emphasis on the workplace reorganization is fairly low.

In a third step of analysis, we then tried to find out whether this is an integrated strategy to decentralize on a strategic as well as on an operative level. We wanted to find out, whether companies would way decentralize on company level as on the workplace level in the same. The result was that only a minority of the companies really performed an integrated approach while there still is a high degree of organizationally inactive companies.

So, what does that mean? In a certain way, at the change of the century, the German situation can be described as follows: There is a strong emphasis to become a leaner company while advanced measures of work design were hardly ever applied. This seems to be quite closely related to a strategy of cost-cutting which obviously is the dominant one while the integrated use of employees' competencies is less developed.

Furthermore, we could find some indication for an increasing polarization. I mentioned that there is an increase in cooperative as well as heteronomous forms of work organization, even with similar growth rate.

As mentioned, the use of group work is increasing but it is still limited and with less emphasis on advanced forms. Obviously the notion of "rationalization by humanization" did not work out as it was intended or as people thought it could be in the early '90s. Unions and work councils emphasize that when you analyze the processes of introducing group work, there are problems with resulting working conditions, with missing resources needed for the group work, conflicts with control and steering processes and things like that.

And a final point, obviously there is no "one best way" of organizational development which can be promoted but you have a set of different approaches side by side with differing results even in a similar environment.

What is going on in Germany, presently? I would like to stress at least three specific aspects. The one is the ongoing trend to internalize the market as a steering mechanism or as a control mechanism inside the company. Since the lean production debate, we have strong emphasis on a market driven production. As you know, there is a trend to a customizing of products and services. You have heard about "just-in-time" and "one-piece-flow" structures which focus and implement the idea that the customer is "pulling the products out" of the company, more or less.

The second aspect is the strong customer orientation on every level. It is not only - as it has been before - the task of the marketing department, but nowadays, it is quite common that for example, a customer is directly calling the production manager inside the company in order to check what is going on with a certain delivery or product related problem.

The third aspect I would like to emphasize is that you have an increase of process control via contextual variables. You have budgets and objectives, and people are quite free how to structure their work as long as they can reach the objectives given. This is quite the contrary to the traditional rationalization approach, especially in production, which was directed towards keeping market turbulences out of production on the one hand and in order to realize economies of scale on the other. So, both the objectives, a high degree of flexibility and economies of scale, do not really fit, and the impression is that reaching both is not really organized, but is left over to be solved in the everyday work on the operative level.

This has some implications for the resulting conditions of work. And there are two aspects discussed in German work sciences at present. The one is what we call "Entgrenzung von Arbeit". I try to translate this by "the delimitation of work". Talking about "Entgrenzung", there are four elements to be taken into account or: four limits of work seem to vanish.

1st the definition of tasks: The predefinition of working tasks becomes increasingly difficult. In German work sciences (i.e. in related parts of engineering and psychology), "tasks" are characterized by a fairly clear definition of the actions to be performed by the employees. It is a defined type of work. But there is a shifting towards "problems": You do not know really what the solution is. You have to find this out during the process of production or in the process of delivering the service.

2nd the working time: The working time is increasingly adapted according to production demands. Peter Hartz, one of the managers of VW, talked about the "breathing plant", getting more people in if it is needed and breathing out them if there is less work.

3rd the location of work: We have heard about the changing location of work and telework this morning so there is no need to extend this.

4th work-life-balance: And the limits between work and non-work seem to become indistinct or the limits seem to shift.

The second aspect is that increasingly there is a need to use employees' competences to fulfill this new type of tasks or to solve these problems. And the individual flexibility is required to solve these unforeseen situations.

Coming to the final one, what we now have to face in Germany is that obviously, the individual skills and competencies become even more important while on the other hand, we saw that German companies tend to focus on cost-cutting by layoffs and reduction of staff. The derived thesis would be: The resources for a strategic change inside the companies are no more available in every company. So, if they have reduced staff to a

certain degree and doing so, the company reduced the organizational slack necessary for restructuring, it is becoming even harder to shift to a different strategy or to provide more innovation. The question is, whether work design has been neglected or is still neglected in these companies. There is at least some evidence for that according to our research findings.

Furthermore, we have a heterogeneous situation and divergent development paths can be found even in the same company. Finally, for the work sciences, we have to admit that certain design principles do not guarantee good work and a sustainable type of production in every case. So, the conditions and the company background need to be taken more into account as this has been done before. This is part of our present research and conceptual work.

My final notion at this point is, I agree with Peter Totterdill, that it is necessary to concentrate on the change process and to emphasize this in a stronger way as this has been done before. But this is only one side. The other side is: I think it is necessary to have an orientation in these processes which is a bit more beyond being productive and being able to produce goods and be economically successful. This is even more necessary if you want to build a certain type of production which will be successful for a long time. The smart use of employees' competencies in an organization needs to be guaranteed and fostered in a way they can adapt to changing needs and market situation as well as to their individual needs. Otherwise, the company will not be able to tie these people to it for a long time. We could show that there are remarkable deficits in Germany in this respect.

And I think, with this notion, that's it from my side. Thank you.

IV PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

Alexandra Lambraki-Paganou, Professor at the University of Athens

Lena Tsipouri, Assoc. Professor at the University of Athens

EDUCATIONAL CHANGE FOR SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT

Pierre Laderrière. Ex-Head of Organization of Institution Management in Higher Education, OECD

Introduction

Sustainable employment is not always understood in the same way by the various social partners, if not stakeholders, within national socio-economic policies. In the current and likely future economic conditions, it should now be clear that such a concept no longer reflect the idea of a lifelong job in a firm, as exemplified earlier in the Japanese model. It is currently interpreted as a situation where a socio-economic policy is permanently able to feed the economy with an adequate supply of human resource (i.e. in both quantitative and qualitative terms). In such circumstances, periods of unemployment are not denied, but they should be based on an initial relevant education background and activated through dynamic method of re-skilling. Hence the idea that sustainable employment is closely linked to education and training. But, as we know, such a relationship is a complex one, as demonstrated by numerous and difficult debates on this key issue in the past.

In the last ten years or so, the question of the linkage between education and active life, has become more complicated with the emergence of a new developmental concept applied to modern societies : the idea of life-long learning (LLL). Developed and encouraged by all the major international bodies, LLL is supposed to respond to the various needs of a fully-fledged learning society which now seems to characterise societal development. Indeed, such a world trend implies that an initial education and training as good as it could be, can no longer extend over a life-span and should either regularly or on an ad-hoc basis, be renewed, extended or deepened according to societal changes. Contrary to the past, with the exception of some countries with strong traditions of multidimensional adult education (i.e. Scandinavian countries), the adult segment of LLL will not be limited to various kinds of retraining for employment. It will become broader and more open, especially in a context where social human skills are more closely articulated with vocational skills, under the general heading of “competence”. Before considering how far educational measures could help individuals to cope with the various changes affecting our societies, and the current difficulty for the education and training systems to develop in what could be considered as a right direction, we should briefly recall the new context of contemporary societies.

I. A new context

Even if the changes in work organisation are presented in an other session, it is necessary to recall major trends likely to directly or indirectly influence curriculum development and learning outcomes. Firstly, we are witnessing a reduced number of hierarchical principles and lines of bureaucratic controls, in favour of increased self-organisation and self-regulation, both individual and collective. This is because, secondly, the concept of project (always more or less relatively autonomous) and teamwork are developing rapidly, based on more or less permanent dynamism and creativity. This implies, thirdly, that know-how and life skills are closely linked particularly in cross-disciplinary competencies, and that a certain polyvalence of skills is increasingly necessary to facilitate mobility in context where quantitative and qualitative factors are more and more intricately. Fourthly and finally, mastery of all communication skills, especially with regard to integrating them into various networks, is essential to enable individuals to fine-tune their employability and up-date their knowledge.

It should be added that such a trend is taking place within a more competitive atmosphere and world, implying a more systematic performance based activity related to the idea of project mentioned above. It therefore means that a lot of human activities are now measured, confronting outcomes to primary objectives and that is why the concept of competences, a slightly broader concept than skill as it contains more human initiative in mobilising acquired skills in a given context, has recently emerged in the developed countries (Laderrière, 2002: 105-135). The request for personal commitment in work and society at large is still widely debated, but it is in line with an other contemporary trend: the development of social individualism and, consequently, the more frequently asserted concept of clientele and its requirements. The latter are well known: quality in the goods or services one intends to purchase, optimisation of the cost/benefit ratio, demand for transparency and accountability.

A last major trend should also be underlined: decentralisation. It is a generic term describing the situation whereby decision-making and management are brought closer to their implementation points; in a context of increasing complexity and greater knowledge and initiative-taking by individuals and institutions. This concerns either public or private sectors. In such a development, institutions, especially, are required to increasingly acquire the status of “learning organisation”, thanks to high level human resource. The above list of emerging contextual factors is far from exhaustive. Their weight can vary according to national/cultural context, socio-economic developments being generally unequal in a given large region or country. At a given place and moment, they may be viewed as both constraints and opportunities. How far educational measures could help individuals and/or community groups to cope with the above changes in minimising the adjustment cost and in facilitating a smoother transition from learning to active life and vice-versa throughout the life-span?

Faced with the above issue of a minimum of coherence between education and societal developments, we could be tempted by two completely contradictory solutions. The first one would consist, for the educational and training system, to accept without any discussion the immediate requirements of the production and administration sectors in terms of skilled labour. The second one would consist of entirely rejecting the demands of such sectors, in the name of the preservation of strict autonomy of the school system, for

the benefit of an overall development of the individual. Even if some people and groups are still backing these two points of view, in the current European debate on the future of education, it appears that these positions cannot be kept for long. Since more than ten years, indeed, various changes were introduced in the European learning systems which exemplify the very complex and subtle relationships between education and the society at large, which has always existed. Because of a lack of research interest and sometimes of relevant methodological instruments or for ideological reasons, these relationships were not always reviewed, clarified and acted upon if needed. An example of an informal adjustment has been the earlier discovery of the “hidden curriculum”, showing how school life was transmitting life and work habits to youngsters beyond the formal syllabi. Our hypothesis is that if the question of the contribution of education to sustainable employment is posed in Europe since several years, it is because the educational systems were unable to cope with the very rapid changes affecting the society of large and its work organisation in particular, and to take them into account to review and possibly rebuild their management accordingly. It has never been asked to the European education system to drop their humanistic and therefore multidimensional approach of the development of human being, especially in a period when it has been agreed upon in several quarters, including in the business sector, that a strong general culture is indispensable to educate and train the labour force. What has been underlined since roughly forty years (i.e. the creation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), was that, precisely, the consideration of the multidimensional features of the education systems was unbalanced at the expense of the acquisition of the relevant competencies required in active life. In the most selective/elitist systems, it was meaning a priority in favour of academic education, those students failing to achieve its specific standards, being sent (in fact socially “downgraded”) in vocational education and training (VET), except when strong autonomous VET were able to feed labour market with high level skilled workers and technicians.

For several years OECD tried to demonstrate that a fair lasting economic and social development was requiring a permanent action in favour of individual acquisition of qualifications sufficiently flexible to respond to technological and labour market changes. Through numerous and varied thematic and national reviews, the Organisation has shown that insufficient policy in this field was impeding such a development. Since then, other voices joined OECD claims, specially the European Union through multiple initiatives, one the most emblematic being its constant support of a real lifelong learning strategy for all, as a spearhead of the formal Union’s goal of labour mobility.

II. Quality off and in the system

When looking at the issue of “educational change for..”, it is strange to start with quality matters and not with some sweeping adjustments responding to sustainable employment’s needs. Quality, here, only means, for the education and training systems, to meet their major objectives as they are generally spelled out and agreed upon in any democratic society. Of course, major changes will be considered below, but it should also be recognised that some of major difficulties currently faced by the systems, could be initially found in their inability of self-regulation, in line with their basic aims. We will briefly outline some obstacles that they were unable to overcome.

i. Basic skills and quality issues

It is not the place to come back on the debate on quality of education in developed countries initiated in the middle of the 80's. After several years of publications of developmental indicators of schools and adult education achievements, the first results of PISA confirmed that many systems were no longer able to meet societal learning needs. It was interesting to note that the traditional elitist systems of middle and south of Europe and the previously well-praised dual systems of the German speaking countries and traditions, were no longer able to correctly qualitatively, if not quantitatively, correctly feed their respective labour market, without talking about the weak situation existing in some Anglo-Saxon countries. What struck many observers since mid-80's was the sometimes high percentage of pupils which did not acquire in time (and even later...) the basic skills required in any life, including of course, in the active (labour) life. And even if it was not so easy to prove it methodologically speaking, the educational systems were accused either to contribute in youth unemployment or not to be equipped to combat it.

Several hypotheses were advanced to try to explain such a situation. Firstly, the lack of a real culture of evaluation within the system was pinpointed. Both centralised and decentralised systems shared the same obstacle, even if, by definition, management traditions in decentralised systems were more open to the building of a true multidimensional assessment of the entire system. The more centralistic (mainly public) systems were more reluctant to go in such a direction, still feeling that tight central decisions and administrative controls were guaranteeing quality.

Secondly and closely linked to the above point, the lack of evaluation was also meaning that a true performance based management was impossible. Formal objectives, of a general nature, and not fed back by seriously based evaluation, cannot be concretised in a management by objectives at the level of the responsible institution and/or local authorities.

Thirdly, the overall societal changes outlined in the first part were not rapidly taken into consideration to revise the curriculum, either for ideological reasons and for preserving education/schooling from outside influence or because of the always weak effort of educational research and development activities and innovation strategies. Hence, too slow curriculum development increased the mismatch between school outcomes and societal needs, whatever effort was made to reinforce the relationships between academic and more vocationally oriented education. It is worth noting that such a slow process had also negative effects in a sector which was supposed to be preserved from such a trend through an optimal alternation between education and work : the dual system. Contrary to the earlier situation, such a mode of apprenticeship no longer protect against unemployment and was sometimes too slow to modify content and learning methods in certain and new branches of activity.

ii. Vocational education and lifelong learning

Then, one of the major issue has been the place of Vocational Educational and Training

(VET) in the overall curriculum. If, as indicated above, the dual system had no longer the very positive effects it earlier provided, it meant that the place and role of VET within the entire system had to be reascertained. In elitist systems, entirely based on positive achievements in academic fields, and therefore negative choice as an entrance basis in VET, there was a growing risk of being unable to “produce”, in quantity and quality, the human resources required by societal developments. And we know that to cope with this issue, these systems had, in fact, to provide more academic/general education in VET, but in a more subtle way that just superposing academic and vocational contents in an education and training sector let in isolation of the rest of the system. What curriculum development and education R&D were saying is that more interdisciplinarity was needed, together with new skills in terms of communication and human behaviour. Until now, only Scandinavian countries made a strong effort to give VET streams an equal role to academic streams in school education, while offering in tertiary education a real alternative to University education in developing polytechnics delivering VET diplomas at higher education, in an efficient way, to both young students and adults.

As already mentioned, the strong adult education tradition in Scandinavian countries helped in the development of life-long learning in these countries after the relative failure of restructuring the overall system in the 70's and 80's on the basis of the earlier concept of recurrent education. But as Eurydice surveys, in the beginning of the 90's have shown, if the majority of the European countries backed the LLL concept launched by the Commission and other international bodies, the real political effort of these countries, only concerned adult education or the adult segment of the LLL. We have, in fact, back to the earlier issue of curriculum development. As already mentioned (Laderrière, 2002: 181-189), there will be no real LLL permeating the whole life-span, if initial education and training are not preparing the individuals to positively and regularly come back to learning experiences throughout their entire life. For the time being those having failed at school and therefore much in need of further education are firmly resisting it, because of their earlier negative learning experiences. Hence the need to reshape completely the initial content and learning methods to possibly articulate such learning sequences with further sequences, as requested. Apart from the usual resistance of a professional milieu which rarely thought about the way the education they provided was used by individuals in real life, co-ordinating and practically integrating initial and further education in a life-long perspective is a true cultural revolution for the majority of the human resources acting in education. Except in a very few countries, initial education and diploma are still framing individual career. It therefore means that such major changes in the educational sphere will only be possible if parallel changes occur in social life and employment.

An interesting example of maintaining the “status quo” has recently been offered by a state of the art of career guidance emerging from a common survey of OECD and the European Commission (OECD, 2003 : 39-57). As this issue is tackled during the Conference, we will just recall that its mission is widening to become part of LLL and, that, therefore, it plays a key role in helping labour markets work and education systems meet their goals. Current innovations seem rather meagre against current and likely future needs and if we compare current outcomes with a previous appraisal of the situation in the European Union (Leclecq, 1997: 113-119). No real progress was made in the direction of the intended upheaval. And this is not a surprise, as a real renewed career guidance system can only be

settled at the crossroads of initial and further education and training throughout life and curriculum development, in conjunction with the acquisition of career management skills. It should nevertheless be underlined that the very weak progress in the above field has not delayed the development of two important innovations. The first one is the full recognition of credits acquired, generally by adults, through non-formal and informal learning, including through the growing sectors of distance learning or experiential learning, and usable for transfert purposes. The progress made above is permitted thanks to a second innovation (Colardyn, 1996: 23-63). Unequally developed according to countries and their specific values, it deals with the establishment of an agreed list, by Ministries of Education, Ministries of Labour or equivalent and social partners, of different standards, including, of course, vocational/professional elements, which should be attained by any type of learner. But as already mentioned about the current state of LLL, it is again a demonstration that, for the time being, important decisions are mainly concerning the adult segment.

If we summarise, in a positive, sense, the major weaknesses referred to above, we could say that education and training systems could help in sustaining current and likely future development in employment, only if they are able to:

- Guarantee the acquisition of basic skills and quality education in general, through permanent evaluation, management by objectives and curriculum development;
- Ensuring the right place of VET in a perspective of LLL, through the evolving role of VET, the feedback of LLL on initial education, the renewal of career guidance, the deepening of credit recognition and the establishment of a national list of standards.

III. Can education and employment get closer?

Even if we have not specifically focused on practical close linkages between education and training and employment in the above, we should remember that some of the mentioned strategies and logistics could not be achieved without such closer links. But is it sufficient to ensure a fair transition from education to employment? Even if we all agree that these two major functions in society should remain separated as their aims are different, their joint contribution to individual and society development could call for a kind of “common spirit” which could make their relationships easier. Our hypothesis is that Europe, if not developed countries in general are strongly divided on this issue. A minority group, mainly composed of two groups, the Anglo-Saxon one and the Scandinavian one, has gone further in trying to retain in the daily functioning of their education and training systems, managerial elements, not exactly similar to what exist in the business sphere, but sharing certain values, aims and strategies permitting contacts, dialogues and exchanges. We will try to outline some trends in this direction.

Firstly, the decentralisation process in society has reached the educational systems. Of course, the power is developed through quite different forms according to national values and experiences, from a true transfer of power to the French model of “deconcentration” (i.e.: giving more leeway to the local units of the central administration). There is still a debate about to what institution any decision-making process should be devolved. Will it be to local authorities or directly to school or both of them, it being understood that national authorities will continue to exercise an overall framing and follow-up of the

systems? Unhappily, there is a lack of serious assessment of the various outcomes of these decentralisation policies. Major changes are recorded in several developed countries, but it will be indispensable to obtain a comparative analysis of the results of measures which started to be implemented fifteen years ago. By and large, business work and the relevant employment policies are generally decentralised and educational changes in this field could help in establishing an active dialogue. Let think of alternative modes of alternation between education and work or of local dialogues on curriculum adjustments. Secondly, the decentralisation process in education modifies the overall management of the school institution at all levels. We already know that adult education and its various forms was decentralised by necessity of responding to local needs, if not by socio-cultural traditions. Initial education institutions, some of them being involved in adult education, now consider such experiences and retain some of their characteristics. It generally means, in conjunction with the emerging autonomy and responsibility (accountability), the following features:

- The participatory preparation of a school plan, divided in short, mid- and long term perspectives and in chapters detailing objectives, means and strategies of implementation for both qualitative and quantitative purposes;
- As it was already referred to above, a management by objectives, piloted by a true school leader team (Stegö, Gielen, Glatter, Hord, 1988), based on permanent multidimensional evaluation of outcomes, articulating both self and outside evaluation, to ensure that the educational training systems respond to needs at any level of its management structures;
- The systematic development of a partnership policy going beyond the internal mobilisation of major actors of school life (teachers, pupils/students/parents, etc.), interesting various and alternative stakeholders according to the aim of the education and training institutions, such as representatives of the various local authorities, of the business and trade-union world, of socio-cultural associations and interested community groups.

There is no need to recall that various firms and administrations functions in the same spirit to achieve their particular goals.

Thirdly and closely linked to the above, we should mention the slow but fundamental modifications affecting the management of human resources in education (Laderrière, 2004). The above developments cannot be fully implemented if the teaching and non-teaching bodies are not acquiring a new so-called “open professionalism” (Laderrière, 2004). Let us concentrate only on the teaching force to understand what is at stake. The following list of tasks being characteristic of such an professionalism is of course non-exhaustive:

- Education that is focused on pupils’ individual and group learning, in a context of greater attention to children’s overall development.
- In close co-operation with the school’s staff, that is the tasks of “teaching teams”:
 - An ability to identify pupils’ needs and learning problems;
 - Determining the specific teaching objectives of the school’s programmes, analysis of these and, on this basis, the possible revision of these objectives;
 - Improvement or adjustment of teaching programmes or methods in a wider action-research context;

- Assessment of results.
- Co-operation with parents, representatives of the local community, those responsible for other socio-cultural activities, and so forth: in order words, the duties of the “educational team”.
- On-going dialogue with pupils, not only for the sake of knowing them better and providing individual advice, but also in order to present the teaching programme to them clearly and to discuss it with them.
- Participation in on-going teacher activities, both as trainers and trainees.
- Participation in school planning and management, and coming forward with opinions about the development of the school system in general, on the basis of experience acquired in carrying out the tasks listed above.

This kind of development assumes that teachers, particularly secondary school teachers, are not specialists in one or several subjects, but are specialists in the teaching methodology connected with this (or these) subject(s), in the specific context of the level or type of school to which they have been appointed, in line with various teaching and learning strategies. This implies that teachers have mastered the basics of their specialised subject(s) and the knowledge and skills to be taught in that subject, but specialise in the ways and means of conveying that knowledge and those skills.

It is not necessary to elaborate very long on the notion of “open professionalism” mirrored by the listing of the above tasks. One considered that the need to drop the mostly negative features of traditional professionalism, i.e. relative authoritarian relationship with the clientele, narrow management of the profession, almost absolute freedom of initiative, etc. called for a redefinition of professionalism in education. That is to say that the teacher could develop, implement and modify, if need be, the appropriate teaching/learning strategies by relying on norms framing a permanent listening dialogue, co-operation and information/training. It also means to break with the “pedagogical individualism” and to systematise a scientific approach of the teaching practice for both individual teacher but also for team teaching. It should therefore concern the permanent or non-permanent teams, the subject matter or pluridisciplinary departments and the professional networks.

In offering teachers acting alone or in team an authority based on more scientific approaches, this identity make them – and the school – more self-sufficient in their permanent tasks of adapting education to the needs of pupils and society. The autonomy is indeed – with a high level qualification – one of the features of a recognised professionalism. The autonomy can help the teacher, when he or she judiciously mobilise existing support structures (pedagogical advisers, inspectors, pedagogical centers, R&D activities, etc.) to better appreciate proposed innovations and implementation measures in conjunction with the specific context of his or her school and of the surrounding community. Such an emphasis on support structures fully reinforces the idea of “opening” in the sense that a “true professional” is an individual which seeks – possibly outside its own institution – for alternative solutions to the problems to which he or she is faced with. A growing professionalism of this type cannot be separated from a coherent teacher policy which should lead to a status clearly reflecting the professional identity illustrated by the tasks mentioned above. Integrating recruitment, training, working conditions and socio-economic status in formulating, decision-making and implementing relevant actions is very difficult politically speaking. The emergence of this “open professionalism” calls for a

broader interdepartmental co-operation in decision-making. Hence, a permanent dialogue – if not the destruction of impenetrable barriers between a vast number of decision-making bodies – is required to avoid the persistence of various economic, juridical, administrative, etc. obstacles going directly against a necessarily progressive implementation of such a policy. That is to say, here as in other policies, short or mid-term consideration should not hinder a long term vision which would go in the direction outlined above.

In as much as the conditions for an evolution towards a real and new professionalism are closely intricated, and, as it was expressed earlier on, is a matter for a strict coherence of the policies, strategies and procedures, many obstacles remain. They are indeed tackled by the various industrialised countries in different orders and with a varied intensity and unequal results. We know that it is a very complicated task. The business and administration sectors have not yet succeeded to implement fully and positively such human resource strategies. Nevertheless educational efforts in this direction could, also, favour a clearer dialogue between education and employment by using similar concepts and exchanging experiences which could be of interest for both of them. A recent example concerning teacher training policy seems to back such approach (Laderrière, 2003: 29-48). Fourthly and lastly, one major change which should definitively affect education systems refers to their reform strategy. As resented in detail as a conclusion of a Council of Europe symposium in Prague at the end of 1999 (Laderrière, 2000: 25-39), it could of course appear a bit far from what is generally done in the field of employment where the main actors are generally private. But even if the management of an education system has to do with a key social sector mostly depending from public decisions and means, overall improvements in the way it could be regulated are of high interest for all sectors in society that it is feeding with its “knowledge production”, including, of course, the most important of them: employment. Let say that there was an agreement that the concept of reform should be reformulated, based on societal and educational observation, analysis and forecasting. No real changes would really occur without research, development and innovation tools. It meant that reform projects should be prepared, disseminated and generalised very carefully in trying to get the larger consensus as possible. It was than agreed upon that the monitoring of the change should be based on systematic evaluation as already mentioned, but also on the development of quite varied support structures (Laderrière, 2001: 81-92) designed to adapting the operational framework in schools.

Conclusion

We know since a very long time that school is not an enterprise (Laval, 2003). But because of the scandalous lack of educational R&D, to regularly nourish required changes in the system (Laderrière, 1999: 29-31), we are not clear about the major modifications to implement, including those which could smooth the transition between education and employment. Of course, this serious gap between education and business concerning R&D and its use to improve both respective services and products is one of the reasons why the relationships between the two sectors are often conflicting at the expense of the individuals and the society. The two sectors gets sometimes closer for what we can call a bad reason, i.e. the fact that educational institutions, to cope with changes, just import business management methods in front of an R&D desert in this field. Nevertheless part II and III

above selected new and on-going changes, unhappily sometimes in a minority of countries. We should therefore be less pessimistic than the current situation seems to show.

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PERSPECTIVES OF THE LABOUR MARKET AND EMPLOYABILITY

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Abstract

The article outlines briefly the complexity of causes of unemployment in Greece, according to the author's beliefs, an exceptional factor being that of the unbalanced relationship amongst the existing educational system and labour market needs. This is due to the fact that education in Greece is mainly based upon theoretical knowledge, while professional training, career guidance and active labour market policies are underdeveloped. Policy measures to confront the problem are proposed based on the analysis of its causes. Economic growth at a level above 3% per year, combined with a better adjustment of the educational system in accordance with labour market needs, as well as a modernization of the other specific variables noted above, appear to be the most suitable confrontation of the problem.

Η ανεργία, η μεγάλη μάστιγα της εποχής μας, οφείλεται σε πολλαπλά και πολυδιάστατα αίτια. Σε γενικές γραμμές, μπορεί να αποδοθεί στην ταχεία συρρίκνωση του αγροτικού τομέα, στην αύξηση της συμμετοχής των γυναικών στο εργατικό δυναμικό, στον τεχνολογικό εκσυγχρονισμό, στις ανελαστικές εργασιακές σχέσεις και στην μακροχρόνια ύφεση της οικονομίας σε συνδυασμό με τις αντιπληθωριστικές και περιοριστικές πολιτικές. Αλλά το κύριο αίτιο, ο βασικός πυρήνας της ανεργίας ειδικότερα στην Ελλάδα, οφείλεται, κατά την άποψη μας, στην αναντιστοιχία του εκπαιδευτικού μας συστήματος με την αγορά εργασίας, είναι δηλαδή διαρθρωτικής μορφής.

Στο σύνολο του 10% περίπου της ανεργίας στη χώρα μας, το μισό ποσοστό, το 5% περίπου, εκτιμούμε ότι οφείλεται στην επιλεγόμενη διαρθρωτική - εκπαιδευτική ανεργία, που μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ως η δίδυμη αδερφή της τεχνολογικής ανεργίας. Οι βασικές αιτίες αυτού του φαινομένου στην περίπτωση της χώρας μας, όπως επισημαίνεται και σε πρόσφατη σχετική έρευνα της Εθνικής Στατιστικής Υπηρεσίας της Ελλάδας¹ (βλ. ανακοίνωση της 29/5/2003), εστιάζονται κυρίως στη θεωρητική κατεύθυνση, στην αναχρονιστική δομή και την ανελαστικότητα της παιδείας, στην ανεπάρκεια της τεχνικής και επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης, καθώς και στην έλλειψη κατάλληλου επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού.

Δεν είναι υπερβολή να ειπωθεί ότι η παιδεία στη χώρα μας ολοένα και σε αυξανόμενους ρυθμούς παράγει ανέργους. Δαπανούμε τεράστιο παραγωγικό πλούτο σε υποδομή, ανθρωποώρες διδασκαλίας και διδασκομένων για να εκπαιδεύσουμε νέα παιδιά που οδεύουν στη μακροχρόνια ανεργία ή στην ετεροαπασχόληση. Παράλληλα, ο επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός υστερεί σε σχέση με τα διεθνή δεδομένα, ενώ η επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση είναι υποβαθμισμένες και λειτουργούν χωρίς κατάλληλο προγραμματισμό που να συνδέεται με τη ζήτηση ειδικοτήτων κατά περιφέρεια της χώρας. Δε χρειάζεται να τονιστεί πόσο αναγκαίο είναι να διευρυνθεί, ανανεωθεί και εκσυγχρονιστεί η επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση, η δια βίου κατάρτιση και επανεκπαίδευση,

καθώς και ο επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός στα πρότυπα των διεθνών δεδομένων και των κατευθύνσεων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.

Χωρίς να αμφισβητείται η μερική σκοπιμότητα του θεωρήματος της "παιδείας για την παιδεία", η ίδια η ζωή και οι ανάγκες της επιβάλλουν τη μερική έστω στροφή του συνολικού εκπαιδευτικού μας συστήματος σε ευρείες ειδικότητες που έχουν ζήτηση και προοπτική στην αγορά εργασίας. Η ραγδαία εξέλιξη της οικονομίας και της τεχνολογίας επιβάλλει αυτή την αναγκαιότητα, αλλιώς η οικονομία θα καταρρεύσει έτσι που δε θα υπάρχουν οικονομικές δυνατότητες για να εφαρμοστεί η κάπως ελιτίστικη αρχή της "παιδείας για την παιδεία". Χρειαζόμαστε λιγότερους γιατρούς, οδοντίατρους, φαρμακοποιούς, χημικούς, γεωλόγους, δικηγόρους, δημοσιογράφους, φιλόλογους, ιστορικούς, τουρκολόγους και περισσότερους πληροφορικούς, οικονομολόγους, φοροτεχνικούς, τεχνολόγους τροφίμων, ιχθυολόγους, νοσοκόμους, στελέχη τουριστικών επιχειρήσεων, εκπαιδευμένους αγρότες, ειδικευμένους τεχνίτες κλπ².

Η τεχνολογία σήμερα κινείται με πρωτοφανή γοργό ρυθμό, έτσι που πολλά επαγγέλματα, εκπαιδευτικές κατευθύνσεις και ειδικότητες να αλλοιώνονται, να μετεξελίσσονται ή να υποκαθίστανται. Για το λόγο αυτό, ένα μέρος της εκπαίδευσης, ενδείκνυται να παρέχει γνώσεις γενικής παιδείας και το υπόλοιπο να αποτελεί ευέλικτη μορφή εκπαίδευσης ή κατάρτισης σε κατευθύνσεις που προσαρμόζονται στις ραγδαίες εξελίξεις της τεχνολογίας. Έτσι η αρχή "η παιδεία για την παιδεία" (ή εκπαίδευση για όλους) μπορεί να συνδυάζεται με τις ανάγκες και τις προοπτικές της αγοράς εργασίας. Το εκπαιδευτικό μας σύστημα χρειάζεται να αναπροσαρμοστεί ώστε να παρέχονται οι αναγκαίες γενικές γνώσεις, αλλά και να υπάρχουν οι δυνατότητες εξειδίκευσης και μεταπήδησης σε συναφείς ειδικότητες, ανάλογα με την πορεία της ζήτησης³. Σκόπιμο είναι δηλ. να παρέχεται η δυνατότητα να είναι κάποιος απασχολήσιμος, να μπορεί δηλ. να βρίσκει δουλειά ή να διατηρεί τη θέση του, όχι γιατί έτσι επιβάλλει η νομοθεσία ή η όποια κρατική ή συνδικαλιστική πίεση, αλλά γιατί οι γνώσεις του και η εξειδίκευση του ζητούνται στην αγορά εργασίας.

Για να επιτευχθούν οι παραπάνω στόχοι, τα προγράμματα σπουδών πολλών ΑΕΙ αλλά και ορισμένων ΤΕΙ, χρειάζεται να αναπροσαρμοστούν σύμφωνα με τις τελευταίες εξελίξεις της τεχνολογίας και κυρίως των εφαρμογών της στην πράξη. Ιδιαίτερη βαρύτητα θα πρέπει να δοθεί στη σύνδεση της εκπαίδευσης με την παραγωγή. Το σύστημα της πρακτικής άσκησης, της μαθητείας, αναγκαίο είναι να διερευνηθεί σε όλα τα επίπεδα των σπουδών. Η δημόσια επαγγελματική και τεχνική εκπαίδευση και ειδικότερα του ΟΑΕΔ που χαρακτηρίζεται από υψηλό συγκριτικά επίπεδο, θα πρέπει να επεκταθεί σε μεγάλο βαθμό. Για το σκοπό αυτό προτείνεται να υπάρχουν υπερτετραπλάσιες από τις σημερινές θέσεις επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης, κατά κύριο λόγο σε τεχνικές ειδικότητες και κατά δεύτερο σε επαγγέλματα του τομέα των υπηρεσιών στην περιφέρεια Αττικής και σε άλλα μεγάλα αστικά κέντρα. Η ταχύρυθμη κατάρτιση που παρέχεται με επιδοτήσεις του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Ταμείου μέσα από το θεσμό των Κέντρων Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης (ΚΕΚ) χρειάζεται αναβάθμιση και κατάλληλο προγραμματισμό, που να στηρίζεται σε κατάλληλο προγραμματισμό των εκπαιδευτικών κατευθύνσεων, με βάση σοβαρές και αξιόπιστες έρευνες των τάσεων της αγοράς εργασίας⁴.

Οι δημόσιες δαπάνες για ενεργητικές πολιτικές αγοράς εργασίας, ειδικότερα όσον αφορά

την επαγγελματική και τεχνική παιδεία που για πρώτη φορά υιοθετήθηκαν από το 1982 στη χώρα μας, θα πρέπει να αυξηθούν ριζικά, αν μάλιστα ληφθεί υπ'όψη ότι η Ελλάδα μαζί με την Ισπανία και τη Μεγάλη Βρετανία, δαπανούν σε σχετικές δράσεις το χαμηλότερο ποσοστό χρημάτων συγκριτικά με τα άλλα Ευρωπαϊκά κράτη⁵. Στα πλαίσια και των οδηγιών της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, επιβάλλεται η επέκταση και εντατικοποίηση της συνεχιζόμενης κατάρτισης ή επανεκπαίδευσης, μεγάλου μέρους του εργατικού δυναμικού με τη χορήγηση αυξημένων κονδυλίων για τον ίδιο σκοπό.

Προτείνεται επίσης η δημιουργία ειδικών κινήτρων για τη δημιουργία εκπαιδευτικών προγραμμάτων από επιχειρήσεις. Τέτοια κίνητρα θα μπορούσαν να είναι η άμεση επιχορήγηση ή η επιδότηση του επιτοκίου για τη σύναψη μακροπρόθεσμων τραπεζικών δανείων σε παραγωγικές και ειδικότερα σε εξαγωγικές επιχειρήσεις. Παρόμοια κίνητρα θα μπορούσαν επίσης να δοθούν για τη δημιουργία "κυβελών επανένταξης", εργαζομένων σε ώριμη ηλικία που χάνουν τη δουλειά τους σε περιπτώσεις επιχειρήσεων που κλείνουν. Για τα άτομα αυτά, απαιτείται ειδική μέριμνα με ολοκληρωμένο σχέδιο που θα περιλαμβάνει επιδοτούμενη, επανακατάρτιση σε σύγχρονες ειδικότητες, υψηλά κίνητρα επαναπροσλήψεων και δημιουργίας μικρών ατομικών επιχειρήσεων, συνδυασμό προγραμμάτων ευέλικτης, μερικής απασχόλησης και ελαστικής συνταξιοδότησης. Στους απολυμένους μεταλλωρύχους της TVX λ.χ. θα μπορούσαν να δοθούν άδειες εκμετάλλευσης λατομείων ανά 10-20 άτομα. Και σε απολυμένους άνω των 50 ετών από την PALCO και άλλες επιχειρήσεις άδειες για τη λειτουργία περίπτερου, καντίνας κλπ. Ενισχύσεις και κίνητρα μπορούν ακόμη να χορηγηθούν σε νέους επιχειρηματίες, οι οποίοι να εκπαιδευτούν κατάλληλα και στους οποίους να παρασχεθεί δωρεάν ή με χαμηλό κόστος χώρος και υποδομή για ένα περίπου χρόνο ή και περισσότερο, για να λειτουργήσουν τις επιχειρήσεις τους και να προσλάβουν εργαζόμενους. Το ίδιο μπορεί να γίνει και με Δήμους ή και με διάφορους φορείς, υπό τον όρο ότι μακροπρόθεσμα όσα άτομα έχουν προσληφθεί δε θα μετατάσσονται αργότερα σε μόνιμες θέσεις του Δήμου. Βασική προϋπόθεση για την επιτυχή λειτουργία όλων των ως άνω προτάσεων, είναι η λήψη των κατάλληλων μέτρων ώστε να αποφεύγονται τα γνωστά φαινόμενα καταστρατήγησης που έχουν παρατηρηθεί στο παρελθόν.

Τα Πανεπιστήμια και ΑΕΙ πρέπει να αποκτήσουν μεγαλύτερη ευελιξία και δυνατότητες άντλησης πρόσθετων ή εναλλακτικών πηγών χρηματοδότησης, μέσα από τη διασύνδεση τους με επιχειρήσεις και την προώθηση ειδικοτήτων που έχουν μεγαλύτερη ζήτηση στην αγορά εργασίας. Τα επιστημονικά πάρκα και η δημιουργία μεταπτυχιακών ειδικοτήτων και κύκλων επιμορφωτικών σεμιναρίων για ενήλικες, κατά το πρότυπο σύγχρονων ευρωπαϊκών χωρών, αποτελούν ένα χρήσιμο οδηγό για το μέλλον. Σκόπιμο είναι επίσης να μεταφερθεί ένα μέρος των κερδών από την αυξημένη παραγωγικότητα της υψηλής τεχνολογίας και της βιομηχανίας των γνώσεων, σε δραστηριότητες με έμμεσα οικονομικά και κοινωνικά οφέλη, όπως είναι φροντίδα των ηλικιωμένων και των ατόμων με ειδικές ανάγκες, η προστασία του περιβάλλοντος, η βελτίωση της ποιότητας της ζωής, η διεύρυνση των δυνατοτήτων ψυχαγωγίας, η προώθηση της πολιτιστικής παράδοσης και κληρονομιάς, η καλλιέργεια των τεχνών.

Ειδική βαρύτητα θα πρέπει να δοθεί στον επαγγελματικό προσανατολισμό που παρέχεται στα σχολεία, από τον ΟΑΕΔ, το Εθνικό Κέντρο Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού και

διάφορους δημόσιους φορείς και υπηρεσίες. Οι σύμβουλοι εργασίας, οι σύμβουλοι επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού, χρειάζεται να επιμορφωθούν κατάλληλα και να πιστοποιηθούν αρμοδίως για την άσκηση του πολύ σημαντικού αυτού λειτουργήματος. Σοβαρή ενίσχυση απαιτείται όσον αφορά την υλικοτεχνική υποδομή και ειδικότερα τα συγγράμματα και βοηθήματα για το συναφές αντικείμενο.

Οι παραπάνω διαπιστώσεις και προτάσεις αφορούν κατά κύριο λόγο το ζήτημα της σύνδεσης της εκπαίδευσης με την αγορά εργασίας που κατά την άποψη μας συνιστά και το κύριο αίτιο της διαρθρωτικής ανεργίας στη χώρα μας. Οπωσδήποτε δεν εξαντλούν όλο το θέμα και τις δέσμες μέτρων που είναι δυνατό να καταγραφούν για το πολυμορφικό αυτό πρόβλημα, για την αντιμετώπιση του οποίου όπως είναι γνωστό, δεν υπάρχουν μαγικές συνταγές.

Γεγονός είναι πάντως, ότι η ανεργία δεν αντιμετωπίζεται μεμονωμένα, αλλά απαιτείται γενική έφοδος σε όλες τις εστίες που την προκαλούν. Χρειάζονται πολλαπλού τύπου μέτρα όπως λχ. η ενίσχυση και ο πραγματικός εκσυγχρονισμός των υπηρεσιών απασχόλησης του ΟΑΕΔ, των τοπικών συμφώνων απασχόλησης, η ενίσχυση της γεωγραφικής κινητικότητας των εργαζομένων, η ευελιξία της αγοράς εργασίας, η λήψη κατάλληλων μέτρων για την νομιμοποίηση, την ομαλή ένταξη και τον έλεγχο εργασίας για τους αλλοδαπούς εργαζόμενους, η δημιουργία αντικινήτρων για την απασχόληση των συνταξιούχων, η διευθέτηση και μείωση των ωρών εργασίας στα πλαίσια των αντίστοιχων διεθνών εξελίξεων⁶. Παράλληλα, αναγκαία είναι η προώθηση επενδύσεων σε στρατηγικούς τομείς της οικονομίας που θα συνδυαστούν με κατάλληλη εκπαίδευση σε αντίστοιχα επαγγέλματα η οποία θα επιτρέπει την εξειδίκευση αλλά και την ευελιξία στην αγορά εργασίας.

Πάνω από όλα, επιβάλλεται να συντηρηθεί η ετήσια αύξηση του ΑΕΠ πάνω από 3-3,5% με αύξηση της ανταγωνιστικότητας της οικονομίας, με αιχμή τις νέες τεχνολογίες, την πληροφορική, τον τουρισμό υψηλού επιπέδου, την εμπορική ναυτιλία και επί μέρους στρατηγικούς τομείς. Μια τέτοια αύξηση του ΑΕΠ, εφ' όσον συνδυαστεί κυρίως με σταδιακή αναπροσαρμογή και διασύνδεση του εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος με τις ανάγκες της οικονομίας, της τεχνολογίας και της αγοράς εργασίας, αλλά και τη λήψη άλλων επί μέρους μέτρων, αποτελεί και το πλέον αποτελεσματικό φάρμακο για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας. Γεγονός είναι όμως ότι, η μονομερής βελτίωση της παραγωγικότητας και η αύξηση του ΑΕΠ, δεν μπορεί να διασφαλίσει μακροπρόθεσμα τη μόνιμη λύση του προβλήματος, που όπως επανειλημμένα τονίστηκε, εξαρτάται σε μεγάλο βαθμό από τη διαρθρωτική - εκπαιδευτική του διάσταση.

Σημειώσεις

¹ Βλ. ανακοίνωση της ΕΣΥΕ της 29 Μαΐου 2003.

² Σχετικά με θετικές επαγγελματικές προοπτικές, βλ. Κατσανέβας, Θ. (2002 και 2003). Επαγγέλματα του μέλλοντος και του παρελθόντος. Πατάκης. Δ' μέρος. Επίσης: Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο, (2001 και 2003). Σπουδές και Απασχόληση. Επίσης: Wilson, R.A. (2001 ed.). Projections of occupations and qualifications, 2000, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick. Επίσης: Αρχή Βιομηχανικής Κατάρτισης Κύπρου, (1999 και 2000). Ισοζύγιο Εργατικού Δυναμικού.

³ Σχετικά με πρόσφατα στατιστικά και ενδιαφέροντα δεδομένα και παρατηρήσεις για την Παιδεία βλ. Ψαχαρόπουλος, Γ. (2003) Ελληνική Παιδεία. Εκδόσεις Σιδέρη. Βλ. επίσης: Τερλεξής, Π. (Καθημερινή, 19/6/03). Πανεπιστήμιο και αγορά εργασίας.

⁴ Για τα θέματα αυτά βλ. ΙΝΕ-ΓΣΕΕ (2003 επιμέλεια Ζ. Παλιός). Κατάρτιση και απασχόληση.

⁵ Για συγκριτικά στοιχεία σε χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης σε θέματα απασχόλησης και εκπαίδευσης μεταξύ άλλων βλ.: European Community. (2002). Eurydice. Key data on education in Europe. Επίσης: European Commission, Employment in Europe, 2002, recent trends and prospects. Επίσης: OECD Employment Outlook 2002.

⁶ Σχετικά με μέτρα πολιτικής για την απασχόληση στη χώρα μας, βλ.: Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων. (2000). Τελικό σχέδιο επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος, απασχόληση και επαγγελματική κατάρτιση, 2000 – 2006. Επίσης: Υπουργείο Εργασίας (2002 και 2003). Εθνικό σχέδιο αδράσης για την απασχόληση. Για μια περιεκτική περιγραφή του ζητήματος της ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα, βλ.: Δρεττάκης, Μ. (2001). Ανατομία της ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα. 1981-2000.

**THE RECENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES
AND THEIR IMPACT ON EDUCATION, TRAINING AND VOCATIONAL
GUIDANCE**

**(ΟΙ ΣΥΓΧΡΟΝΕΣ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟ-ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΚΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΚΕΣ ΕΞΕΛΙΞΕΙΣ
ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΕΠΙΔΡΑΣΕΙΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ, ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΑΡΤΙΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΝ
ΕΠΑΓΓΕΛΜΑΤΙΚΟ ΠΡΟΣΑΝΑΤΟΛΙΣΜΟ)**

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to present the consequences of the recent socio-economic changes on the application of the Vocational Guidance and Counselling. Among these changes the following are included: a) The globalisation of economy and culture, which favours the mobility of goods, capital and workers, increases the international economic competition and brings about restructuring in society and, particularly, in the sector of production and work organization, b) the rapid development of the Information and Communication Technologies and their spectacular applications on any aspect of human activity, c) the increase of knowledge which has proved the continuous training of employees in order for them to be able to respond to the new challenges. The above aspects of development have caused changes in the nature and methods of work. More specifically, traditional jobs have been vanished while new professional activities like telework, team work, full employment at home have been created thus making the limits between private and professional life less distinct. Further, the structure of the enterprises and organisations have undergone changes shifting from strict vertical organizational structures to more flexible schemata which allow horizontal cooperation. Education has inevitably been influenced by the above changes. As a result, it has started to place emphasis on programmes of general knowledge and training of skills related to the variety of specialties, which have emerged as a result of the continuous professional re-orientation of the workers. The same is the case for the training system, the flexibility of which and its adjustability to the current changes are indispensable prerequisites for its success, whereas life-long learning has been considered as the response of education to the new challenges.

With respect to the above, the role of the Vocational Guidance and Counselling is to provide continuous support to individuals in order for them to be able to make proper decisions concerning their studies and/or professional orientation. Such a role implies close cooperation between educational and employment services. This cooperation however requires changes in the organizational structure of the system of the Vocational Guidance and Counselling as well as in the spread of information about studies and jobs not only on a national but also on a European and international basis. International cooperation therefore on issues related to Vocational Guidance and Counselling is imperative along with the upgrading of the training of the Counsellors.

1. Εισαγωγή

Για τον προσδιορισμό και την κατανόηση των επιδράσεων που ασκούν στην εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση, αλλά και στην Επαγγελματική Συμβουλευτική και στον Προσανατολισμό οι σύγχρονες κοινωνικο-οικονομικές και τεχνολογικές εξελίξεις, θεωρούμε απαραίτητη μια σύντομη αναφορά στις σημαντικότερες από τις αλλαγές αυτές. Από τη σχετική ανάλυση θα προκύψει ο ρόλος, τον οποίο οι μεταβολές αυτές διαδραματίζουν όσον αφορά στην οργάνωση της εργασίας και στην αναμόρφωση της επαγγελματικής δραστηριότητας του σημερινού ανθρώπου, δημιουργώντας νέες ανάγκες και τάσεις στους παραπάνω τομείς. Από αυτές απορρέουν οι προκλήσεις στις οποίες καλούνται να ανταποκριθούν η εκπαίδευση και η κατάρτιση, αλλά και ο Επαγγελματικός Προσανατολισμός. Έμφαση δίνεται στα θέματα που σχετίζονται με τον τελευταίο, επειδή αυτός αποτελεί το αντικείμενο του Προγράμματος Μεταπτυχιακών Σπουδών¹⁴ που οργάνωσε το παρόν συνέδριο.

2. Οι σημαντικότερες εξελίξεις της εποχής μας.

Η άποψη ότι κατά τη διάρκεια των τελευταίων χρόνων είμαστε μάρτυρες θεαματικών εξελίξεων στους περισσότερους τομείς της ανθρώπινης δραστηριότητας είναι πλέον κοινός τόπος. Η εξέλιξη αυτή ανατρέπει όλες τις συμβατικότητες του παρελθόντος και δημιουργεί νέους όρους για τις δραστηριότητες του ανθρώπου, άγνωστους μέχρι σήμερα. Ορισμένοι, μάλιστα, υποστηρίζουν ότι οι αλλαγές που συνέβησαν στον κόσμο τα τελευταία χρόνια οριοθετούν μια νέα περίοδο στην ιστορία της ανθρωπότητας, κατά την οποία η προηγούμενη παγκόσμια τάξη πραγμάτων δίνει τη θέση της σε μια νέα κατάσταση «αταξίας», αβεβαιότητας και αμφισβήτησης, η οποία συνοδεύεται από πολλές προκλήσεις, αλλά και φόβους για το μέλλον (βλ. Toffler, 1983, Lyotard, 1984, Φλουρής & Πασιάς, 1997, Κοσμίδου, 2002)).

Η ραγδαία ανάπτυξη και οι συνεχώς διευρυνόμενες εφαρμογές των νέων τεχνολογιών της πληροφορικής και της επικοινωνίας έχουν οδηγήσει στην παγκοσμιοποίηση των διαδικασιών παραγωγής και διάθεσης των καταναλωτικών αγαθών, προκαλώντας ριζική αναδόμηση της παγκόσμιας οικονομίας (βλ. Βαίτσος & Γιαννίσης 1987, Hand 1984, Heinz, 1987, Κασσωτάκης 1994).

Υπό την επίδραση των τάσεων αυτών, παραδοσιακές βιομηχανίες καταρρέουν, ενώ άλλες αναπτύσσονται με ταχύτατους ρυθμούς σε νέους τομείς, όπως είναι π.χ. η βιοτεχνολογία, η πληροφορική, η ανακύκλωση διάφορων προϊόντων και άλλα παρόμοια.

Η παγκοσμιοποίηση της οικονομίας οδηγεί σταδιακά στην κατάργηση της έννοιας της τοπικής αγοράς και στην εξάλειψη της εξάρτησης των επιχειρήσεων από τις τοπικές πλουτοπαραγωγικές πηγές και τις αντίστοιχες καταναλωτικές ανάγκες. Από την άλλη πλευρά, η οργάνωση των ίδιων των επιχειρήσεων μεταβάλλεται ταχύτατα, φαινόμενο που αναμένεται να ενταθεί ακόμη περισσότερο στο προσεχές μέλλον. Οι εφαρμογές των νέων τεχνολογιών, η ανάπτυξη των εσωτερικών δικτύων ανταλλαγής πληροφοριών και η συνεχής πρόοδος της τηλεπικοινωνιακής τεχνολογίας έχουν καταστήσει ξεπερασμένη την

¹⁴ Πρόκειται για το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα « Συμβουλευτική και Επαγγελματικός Προσανατολισμός» που λειτουργεί στο Τμήμα Φιλοσοφίας, Παιδαγωγικής και Ψυχολογίας της Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών

παραδοσιακή ιεραρχική δομή των επιχειρήσεων και οργανισμών. Ευνοούν τη δημιουργία μιας πιο ευέλικτης οργανωτικής δομής. Η δομή αυτή απαιτεί νέες μορφές εργασιακές σχέσεις και επαγγελματικές δεξιότητες.

Παράλληλα μεταβάλλεται και η οργάνωση της εργασίας, ενώ εμφανίζονται νέες μορφές εργασιακής δραστηριότητας, όπως είναι η τηλεργασία, η συμμετοχική εργασία (team work), η εμφάνιση νέων επαγγεμάτων και άλλα παρόμοια. (βλ. Κατσανέβας, 2002). Η νέα τεχνολογία επιτρέπει, επίσης, την εκτέλεση πολλών εργασιών, ακόμη και την πλήρη επαγγελματική απασχόληση στο σπίτι. Όλα αυτά δίδουν νέο περιεχόμενο στην έννοια: «*αυτοαπασχολούμενος*». Ο τελευταίος μπορεί σήμερα να αναπτύσσει δραστηριότητες που υπερβαίνουν, μερικές φορές, τα συμβατικά επίπεδα της ντόπιας αγοράς, χωρίς να μετακινείται από το σπίτι του (βλ. Φακιολάς, 1990).

Ταυτόχρονα, όμως, μεταβάλλεται και η έννοια της επαγγελματικής ζωής, αφού τα όρια ανάμεσα στην επαγγελματική, την οικογενειακή και την προσωπική ζωή γίνονται όλο και πιο ασαφή. Η εξέλιξη αυτή επηρεάζει σημαντικά τον τρόπο ζωής των πολιτών και αλλάζει παγιωμένες συνήθειες εργασίας και πρακτικές της καθημερινής ζωής.

Στο σημείο αυτό θεωρούμε σκόπιμο να αναφερθούμε και στο κίνημα αναθεώρησης της έννοιας του επαγγέλματος και επαναπροσδιορισμού των διαδικασιών και των προσόντων που απαιτούνται για την άσκηση των διαφόρων επαγγελματικών δραστηριοτήτων. Το κίνημα αυτό, γνωστό ως "*νέος επαγγελματισμός*" (new professionalism), διαμορφώνει νέα επαγγελματικά πρότυπα και καινούργιους κανόνες επαγγελματικής ηθικής σε αρκετούς τομείς των ασχολιών του ανθρώπου.

Σ' όσα προαναφέρθηκαν πρέπει να προστεθεί η ταχύτητα αύξησης των γνώσεων, γεγονός που έχει ως αποτέλεσμα να παλιώνει γρήγορα κάθε είδους αρχική εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση των εργαζομένων. Η εξέλιξη που προαναφέρθηκε είναι ιδιαίτερα εμφανής στον τομέα των εφαρμογών της Τεχνολογίας, των Θετικών Επιστημών και των Επιστημών Υγείας, αλλά και σε άλλους κλάδους. Η παλαίωση αυτή έχει, όπως θα δούμε παρακάτω, σημαντική επίδραση τόσο στην εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση, όσο και στον επαγγελματικό προσανατολισμό των ατόμων.

Κι ενώ η γνώση αλλάζει πολύ γρήγορα, ο παράγοντας αυτός φαίνεται να διαδραματίζει όλο και μεγαλύτερο ρόλο στις σύγχρονες μορφές εργασίας. Μέσα στη σημερινή «*κοινωνία της γνώσης*» είναι βέβαιο ότι ο ρόλος της "*διανοητικής εργασίας*" και της δημιουργικής ικανότητας στο χώρο της παραγωγής θα εξακολουθήσει να ενισχύεται. Αντίθετα, θα μειώνεται συνεχώς η σημασία της χειρωνακτικής εργασίας. Εύστοχα, λοιπόν, λέγεται ότι "*οι μετοχές των προηγμένων επιχειρήσεων αντιπροσωπεύουν όλο και περισσότερο "άυλη περιουσία" που είναι εναποθηκευμένη στο μυαλό των στελεχών τους*" (βλ. Ηλιάδης, 1994). Η γνώση, με τη μορφή της τεχνογνωσίας ιδιαίτερα, είναι σήμερα το σημαντικότερο όπλο του διεθνούς οικονομικού και εμπορικού ανταγωνισμού, τον οποίο χαρακτηρίζει η ταχύτητα στην κυκλοφορία των παραγόμενων αγαθών, η διαφοροποίηση των βιομηχανικών ειδών και η βραχύτητα της ζωής τους. Ο ανταγωνισμός αυτός επηρεάζει αναπόφευκτα και τα εκπαιδευτικά συστήματα., αλλά και την ένταξη στην αγορά εργασίας. Η ενίσχυση των τάσεων που προαναφέρθηκαν, σε συνδυασμό και με τις μεταβολές των μεθόδων παραγωγής και τις νέες μορφές εργασίας, καθιστά πολύ πιθανή την πρόβλεψη ότι στο μέλλον θα χρειάζεται στο σημαντικός αριθμός ατόμων, ο οποίος πρέπει να συνδυάζει την υψηλή εξειδίκευση σε ορισμένους τομείς με τη γενική γνώση άλλων τομέων παραγωγής και τη συνολική εποπτεία του συστήματος οργάνωσης της εργασίας. Θα απαιτηθεί, παράλληλα, μεγαλύτερος ακόμη αριθμός ατόμων, τόσο στη βιομηχανία όσο και

στον τομέα των υπηρεσιών, που πρέπει να διαθέτουν ικανότητα προσαρμογής στις συνεχείς αλλαγές, πνεύμα συνεργασίας, δημιουργικότητα, κριτική ικανότητα, γενικές γνώσεις και δεξιότητες, δεκτικές ποικίλων μεταγενέστερων ειδικεύσεων. Εύστοχα λέγεται από ορισμένους ότι περνούμε από την περίοδο των «ιδεωδών» στην περίοδο των «δεξιότητων». Οι τελευταίες θα μπορούν να αναπτύσσονται, κατά ένα μέρος τουλάχιστον, και μέσα στο χώρο της εργασίας (βλ. Κασσιμάτη, 1999, Φλουρή, 1996, Κασσωτάκης, 2000^α και 2000^β).

Η αντικατάσταση, επίσης, μέρους της ανθρώπινης εργασίας από υπεραυτοματοποιημένα συστήματα περιορίζει όλο και περισσότερο τη ζήτηση για απασχόληση σε παραδοσιακούς τομείς εργασίας. Παράλληλα μεταβάλλεται και η σχέση του ανθρώπου με τη μηχανή. Ο χειρισμός της τελευταίας απαιτεί σήμερα κάτι περισσότερο από την ανάπτυξη στοιχειωδών μηχανικών δεξιοτήτων, οι οποίες στο σχετικά πρόσφατο παρελθόν παρέμεναν αμετάβλητες σ' όλο το διάστημα της χρήσης ορισμένου μηχανήματος. Η λειτουργία αρκετών σύγχρονων μηχανημάτων μπορεί να προγραμματίζεται, γεγονός που προσδίδει άλλες διαστάσεις στην εκπαίδευση των χειριστών τους.

Οι μεταβολές που μνημονεύθηκαν παραπάνω έχουν ως αποτέλεσμα την εμφάνιση έντονου προβλήματος ανεργίας, με μορφές άγνωστες μέχρι χθες. Το πρόβλημα, μάλιστα, φαίνεται να μην υποχωρεί με την εφαρμογή των παραδοσιακών συνταγών καταπολέμησής του, δηλαδή με την απλή ενίσχυση της παραγωγικότητας.

Μπροστά σ' αυτή την κατάσταση η επαγγελματική σταδιοδρομία δεν μπορεί πια να έχει μονοσήμαντο χαρακτήρα. Η επαγγελματική ζωή στο προσεχές μέλλον δεν θα αρχίζει και δεν θα τελειώνει με την ίδια δουλειά για ένα συνεχώς αυξανόμενο αριθμό εργαζομένων. Στις Η.Π.Α υπολογίζεται ότι ο σημερινός νέος ηλικίας 20 ετών θα αλλάξει περίπου επτά (7) φορές επαγγελματική δραστηριότητα στη ζωή του, ασκώντας επαγγέλματα είτε συναφή προς την αρχική του εργασία είτε και τελείως διαφορετικά. Κάτι ανάλογο αναμένεται να συμβεί και στις περισσότερες χώρες της Ευρώπης και κατ' επέκταση και στη χώρα μας. Μπαίνουμε, έτσι, σε μια περίοδο αβεβαιότητας που συνοδεύεται από αγωνία για το αύριο. Την αγωνία αυτή ενισχύουν η ανασφάλεια των διαρκών ανακατατάξεων και η ένταση που γεννά η προσπάθεια συνεχούς προσαρμογής στις εξελίξεις.

Κλείνοντας την ενότητα αυτή, πρέπει να σημειώσουμε ότι η σύγχρονη τεχνολογική επανάσταση και η παγκοσμιοποίηση έχουν και θετικές, αλλά και αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στα άτομα και στους λαούς. Δημιουργούν νέες ευκαιρίες για παραγωγικές δραστηριότητες και διαμορφώνουν καινούργιες δυνατότητες απασχόλησης. Παράλληλα, όμως, διατυπώνονται φόβοι ότι η παγκοσμιοποίηση εγκυμονεί τον κίνδυνο διεύρυνσης του χάσματος μεταξύ πλούσιων και φτωχών, ενδεχόμενο που θα προκαλέσει νέες εντάσεις σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο και θα φέρει στο προσκήνιο νέες κοινωνικές συγκρούσεις (βλ. Βεργόπουλος, 1999, Νεγρεπόντη-Δελιβάνη, 2001).

Ο κίνδυνος, επίσης, να εμφανισθούν νέες μορφές κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, οι οποίες έχουν σχέση με τη δυνατότητα πρόσβασης στις πληροφορίες και την ικανότητα χρήσης των νέων τεχνολογιών στην εργασία δεν είναι ανύπαρκτος, αν δεν ληφθούν μέτρα για να αντιμετωπισθεί η παραπάνω κατάσταση (UNESCO, 1999). Ανάμεσα σ' αυτά περιλαμβάνονται και ενέργειες που σχετίζονται με την εκπαίδευση, την επαγγελματική ενημέρωση, την καθοδήγηση των πολιτών και τον αναπροσανατολισμό τους σε νέες δραστηριότητες, τον οποίο οι σύγχρονες συνθήκες στον τομέα της εργασίας καθιστούν ολοένα και πιο αναγκαίο.

3. Οι προκλήσεις των σύγχρονων εξελίξεων για την εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση

Υπό τις συνθήκες που μνημονεύθηκαν προηγουμένως, η εκπαίδευση και η κατάρτιση δεν μπορούν να τελειώνουν με την απόκτηση κάποιου πτυχίου ή διπλώματος (βλ. Κασσωτάκης, 2002). Η συνεχής εκπαίδευση, η διαρκής κατάρτιση και επανακατάρτιση και η δια βίου μάθηση αποτελούν αναγκαιότητα της εποχής μας.

Στα παραπάνω προστίθεται η ανάγκη μετάθεσης της έμφασης από τη στείρα απομνημόνευση και τη συσσώρευση γνώσεων στην καλλιέργεια ικανοτήτων που θα καταστήσουν το εκπαιδευόμενο άτομο ικανό να ανταποκριθεί στις προκλήσεις των καιρών και να αντισταθεί στα φαινόμενα αλλοτρίωσης που παρατηρούνται στις σημερινές κοινωνίες.

Αναγκαία θεωρείται ακόμη η ενίσχυση της σύνδεσης των εκπαιδευτικών συστημάτων με τον κόσμο της εργασίας. Η ανάγκη αυτή είναι ακόμη μεγαλύτερη για τα Τεχνικά Επαγγελματικά Σχολεία, όλων των βαθμίδων και προπαντός για τα προγράμματα κατάρτισης. Ένα αυστηρά σχολειοκεντρικό σύστημα κατάρτισης είναι καταδικασμένο σε αποτυχία, στο πλαίσιο των συνθηκών που επικρατούν σήμερα στην εργασία. Η θεωρητική κατάρτιση πρέπει να συνδυάζεται με την πρακτική άσκηση και την εργασιακή εμπειρία. Όλα αυτά επιβάλλουν ριζική αναθεώρηση του προσανατολισμού των εκπαιδευτικών συστημάτων και του περιεχομένου των σπουδών. Η ανάγκη να δοθεί μεγαλύτερη έμφαση στη γενική παιδεία και στην καλλιέργεια ποικίλων δεξιοτήτων που μπορούν να διευκολύνουν τις μετέπειτα εξειδικεύσεις είναι μεγαλύτερη από κάθε άλλη εποχή. Η ικανοποίηση της ανάγκης αυτής δεν θα πρέπει να γίνει, ασφαλώς, με γνώμονα μόνο τις αλλαγές στο χώρο της εργασίας. Η επιδίωξη αυτή πρέπει να συνδεθεί και με τη γενικότερη μόρφωση και καλλιέργεια του ατόμου και την ολοκλήρωση της προσωπικότητάς τους. Απαιτείται ακόμη αλλαγή της μεθοδολογίας που εφαρμόζουν τα εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα και των διδακτικών μέσων που χρησιμοποιούν. Σήμερα περισσότερο από κάθε άλλη φορά το σχολείο έχει χρέος να μάθει στα άτομα πώς να μαθαίνουν, πώς να αξιοποιούν τη νέα γνώση που θα αποκτούν διαρκώς νέες πληροφορίες και πώς να δημιουργούν με βάση αυτές. Οι παραπάνω δεξιότητες αποτελούν προϋπόθεση για να γίνει πράξη η δια βίου μάθηση, την οποία οι σύγχρονες εξελίξεις καθιστούν αναγκαία, αφού ο σημερινός και πολύ περισσότερο ο αυριανός πολίτης πρέπει να ανανεώνει συνεχώς τα γνωστικά και επαγγελματικά του εφόδια για να ανταποκριθεί στις αλλαγές που επιτελούνται στον εργασιακό χώρο. Το ίδιο απαραίτητη κρίνεται και η λειτουργία ευέλικτων προγραμμάτων επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης, ικανών να προσαρμόζονται ταχύτατα στις σύγχρονες αλλαγές. Η αρμονική σύνδεση ανάμεσα στην εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση εντάσσεται στις προκλήσεις που δημιουργούν οι σύγχρονες κοινωνικο-οικονομικές, επιστημονικές και τεχνολογικές μεταβολές και οι επιδράσεις, τις οποίες ασκούν στην εκπαίδευση και την κατάρτιση.

Η εξέλιξη αυτή θα έχει σημαντικές επιπτώσεις και στην εκπαίδευση, αλλά και στην επαγγελματική κατάρτιση, οι οποίες δεν θα είναι πάντοτε θετικές¹⁵. Μια τέτοια προοπτική καθιστά αναγκαία την ανάπτυξη στα άτομα και στις κοινωνίες ισχυρών αντιστάσεων

15 Για τις αρνητικές συνέπειες της παγκοσμιοποίησης στην εκπαίδευση, την εθνική ταυτότητα και τον πολιτισμό γενικά βλ. τον πρόλόγο μας στην ελληνική μετάφραση του βιβλίου της UNESCO «*Εκπαίδευση. Ο θησαυρός που κρύβει μέσα της*», Αθήνα, Εκδ. Gutenberg, 1999.

απέναντι στις αρνητικές επιπτώσεις των σύγχρονων τεχνολογικών εξελίξεων και των ρευμάτων της παγκοσμιοποίησης, χωρίς, όμως, να αποκλεισθούν τα θετικά τους στοιχεία. Αυτό απαιτεί, με τη σειρά του, την καλλιέργεια της κριτικής στάσης απέναντι στις ταχύτατες εξελίξεις του καιρού μας, τη συστηματική ενημέρωση των πολιτών και την ποιοτική αναβάθμιση της παιδείας, με στόχο να καταστούν οι πολίτες ικανοί να επωφεληθούν από τις θετικές όψεις των σύγχρονων αλλαγών και να προστατευθούν από τις αρνητικές τους συνέπειες.

4. Ο θεσμός της Συμβουλευτικής και του Προσανατολισμού μπροστά στις σύγχρονες εξελίξεις.

Στο πλαίσιο των εξελίξεων που αναφέρθηκαν προηγουμένως ο Επαγγελματικός Προσανατολισμός γίνεται πλέον μια δια βίου διαδικασία, της οποίας η σημασία και για τα μεμονωμένα άτομα, αλλά και για το κοινωνικό σύνολο διευρύνεται.

Η πολυπλοκότητα των εκπαιδευτικών συστημάτων, η πληθώρα των ευκαιριών κατάρτισης που προσφέρονται στα άτομα, οι εντεινόμενες μεταβολές στο χώρο της εργασίας, οι δυσκολίες απασχόλησης και οι κίνδυνοι που απειλούν σήμερα την εργασιακή ασφάλεια έχουν πολλαπλές επιπτώσεις στους πολίτες και στις κοινωνίες. Τα άτομα, ακόμη κι αυτά που διαθέτουν υψηλή μόρφωση, αδυνατούν παρακολουθήσουν πλήρως, χωρίς εξωτερική βοήθεια, τις σύγχρονες εξελίξεις, δυσκολεύονται να λάβουν αποφάσεις για το μέλλον τους, αγωνιούν ιδιαίτερα για τη σταδιοδρομία των παιδιών τους και διακατέχονται από το άγχος της εργασίας και την αγωνία της ανασφάλειας και της αβεβαιότητας. Οι κοινωνίες από την άλλη πλευρά αντιμετωπίζουν όλο και πιο συχνά φαινόμενα επαγγελματικής περιθωριοποίησης και δυσκολίες στην αξιοποίηση του εργατικού δυναμικού που διαθέτουν.

Για όλους τους παραπάνω λόγους, η συστηματική πληροφόρηση των πολιτών για τις σπουδές και τα επαγγέλματα, για τις ευκαιρίες κατάρτισης και επανακατάρτισης, η συμβουλευτική τους υποστήριξη κατά τις φάσεις επιλογής σπουδών ή επαγγέλματος ή σε περιόδους εθελούσιου ή αναγκαστικού αναπροσανατολισμού είναι πιο αναγκαίες απ' ό,τι στο παρελθόν. Επιπρόσθετα, η ανάγκη αυτή δεν εμφανίζεται μόνο στο τέλος της υποχρεωτικής ή της δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης, όπως συνέβαινε παλιότερα. Είναι εξίσου απαραίτητη κατά τη διάρκεια των τριτοβάθμιων σπουδών, αλλά και μετά τη λήξη τους. Είναι, επίσης, αναγκαία και κατά την είσοδο στην ενεργό ζωή, αλλά και στη διάρκειά της. Σήμερα δεν αρκεί να βρει κανείς εργασία. Εξίσου σημαντικό είναι να μπορέσει να τη διατηρήσει. Η μύηση στα ζητήματα αυτά πρέπει να αρχίζει από την Πρωτοβάθμια Εκπαίδευση, ίσως, και από την Προσχολική Αγωγή.

Η διάκριση ανάμεσα σε εκπαιδευτικές και σε εξωεκπαιδευτικές υπηρεσίες Συμβουλευτικής και Προσανατολισμού θα γίνεται, μέσα στο πλαίσιο που προαναφέρθηκε, όλο και πιο χαλαρή. Ίσως στο απώτερο μέλλον οι υπηρεσίες αυτές θα ενσωματωθούν πλήρως. Οργανωτικές, λοιπόν, δομές Σχολικού και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού που εμμένουν σε παλιούς διαχωρισμούς και σε ξεπερασμένα στεγανά, χωρίς συντονισμό μεταξύ τους, πρέπει να θεωρούνται σήμερα αναχρονιστικές. Το ίδιο ισχύει και για αντιλήψεις και νοοτροπίες που επιδιώκουν να διατηρήσουν το υπάρχον status quo και να διασφαλίσουν κεκτημένα συμφέροντα, παραβλέποντας το γενικότερο κοινωνικό όφελος.

Όσον αφορά στη μεθοδολογία της Συμβουλευτικής και του Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού, ειδικότερα, μπορούν να αναφερθούν τα εξής: Στο μέλλον αναμένεται να ενισχυθεί ακόμη περισσότερο η τάση του ενεργού προσανατολισμού. Παράλληλα, θα παραστεί ανάγκη μεγαλύτερης συστηματοποίησης των υπηρεσιών επαγγελματικής πληροφόρησης, η οποία δεν θα περιορίζεται σε εθνικό ή περιφερειακό ή τοπικό επίπεδο μόνον. Θα χρειαστεί να παρέχονται στους πολίτες πληροφορίες και για τις δυνατότητες απασχόλησής τους σε άλλες χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης. Η ανάγκη αυτή ενισχύεται και από το γεγονός ότι μέσα στο παγκόσμιο σύστημα, στο οποίο εντάσσονται και λειτουργούν τα διάφορα κράτη, δεν μπορεί να αγνοείται αυτό που συμβαίνει αλλού και ιδιαίτερα στις χώρες που ανήκουν στον ίδιο διεθνή συνασπισμό. Η συνεκτίμηση του στοιχείου αυτού ισχύει ασφαλώς και για την οργάνωση των συστημάτων Συμβουλευτικής και Προσανατολισμού.

Μέσα στη σύγχρονη πραγματικότητα της αβεβαιότητας και των συνεχών αλλαγών, που περιγράψαμε παραπάνω, η πληροφόρηση δεν μπορεί να έχει τον παραδοσιακό χαρακτήρα της απλής περιγραφής των επαγγελματικών δραστηριοτήτων και των κοινωνικο-οικονομικών τους προοπτικών που, έτσι κι αλλιώς, είναι και θα παραμείνουν ασαφείς. Η πληροφόρηση πρέπει να επεκτείνεται και στις σύγχρονες παγκόσμιες αλλαγές με βασικό στόχο την υποβοήθηση των πολιτών να κατανοήσουν το παγκόσμιο γίγνεσθαι, να αντιληφθούν το κοινωνικο-οικονομικό και εργασιακό περιβάλλον στο οποίο καλούνται να ενταχθούν και να συνειδητοποιήσουν τους κανόνες που το διέπουν (βλ. Κωστάκη, 1988, Κασσωτάκης, 2000γ, Κοσμίδου, 2002). Πολλοί, άλλωστε, θεωρούν ότι ένας από τους πιο σημαντικούς ρόλους των σύγχρονων Λειτουργών της Συμβουλευτικής και του Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού είναι να υποβοηθήσουν τα άτομα και, ιδίως, τους νέους να αντιληφθούν όσο γίνεται καλύτερα την κοινωνικο-οικονομική πραγματικότητα. Πληροφόρηση, βέβαια, δεν σημαίνει παθητική μύηση και υποταγή σ'ό,τι ισχύει. Η ενημέρωση για την πραγματικότητα της αγοράς εργασίας πρέπει να συνδυάζεται και με τη διαμόρφωση κριτικής στάσης απέναντι της, καθώς και με την ικανότητα ανάλυσης και κατανόησης των σχέσεων που τη διέπουν.

Η πληροφόρηση, όμως, για τις σπουδές και τα επαγγέλματα δεν αρκεί. Οι εξελίξεις καθιστούν αναγκαία την ενίσχυση των διαδικασιών υποβοήθησης της επαγγελματικής ανάπτυξης των ατόμων, της συμβουλευτικής τους υποστήριξης και της κατάλληλης διαπαιδαγώγησής τους από τα πρώτα, κιόλας, χρόνια της ζωής τους. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η αγωγή σταδιοδρομίας θα γίνεται όλο και πιο σημαντική και η θέση της μέσα στις δραστηριότητες και τις γενικότερες επιδιώξεις του σχολείου θα ενισχύεται. Η έμφαση στην προσωπική επαγγελματική ανάπτυξη και στην επαγγελματική διαπαιδαγώγηση απαιτεί από τους λειτουργούς του προσανατολισμού βαθιά γνώση των σχετικών με τα ζητήματα αυτά θεωριών και μεθόδων, αλλά και με το ρόλο που διαδραματίζουν στους παραπάνω τομείς ποικίλοι ψυχολογικοί, κοινωνικοί και εκπαιδευτικοί παράγοντες (βλ. Δημητρόπουλος, 1999^α, 1999^β).

Ξέχωρη σημασία επιβάλλεται να δοθεί στις ιδιαίτερες κοινωνικές ομάδες, όπως είναι π. χ. οι γυναίκες, οι μειονότητες, οι παλιννοστούντες, οι αλλοδαποί και τα άτομα με ειδικές ανάγκες, για δύο, κυρίως, λόγους: Ο πρώτος σχετίζεται με το γεγονός ότι μέχρι σήμερα δεν είχε δοθεί στις κοινωνικές αυτές κατηγορίες η δέουσα σημασία¹⁶. Ο δεύτερος απορρέει

¹⁶ Αναφερόμαστε στην ελληνική πραγματικότητα κυρίως.

από τη διαπίστωση ότι η παγκοσμιοποίηση δεν συνεπάγεται μόνο κινητικότητα αγαθών, κεφαλαίων, πληροφοριών και ιδεών, αλλά και αύξηση της κινητικότητας ανθρώπων. Το γεγονός αυτό εντείνει την εμφάνιση μέσα στις παραδοσιακές κοινωνίες ιδιαίτερων κοινωνικών ομάδων (αλλοδαποί, παλιννοστούντες, κτλ.) και δημιουργεί πιεστικές ανάγκες για την αντιμετώπιση των προβλημάτων τους, ανάμεσα στα οποία κυρίαρχη θέση κατέχει το πρόβλημα της επαγγελματικής τους αποκατάστασης. Άλλωστε, η εύρεση εργασίας και η άσκηση κάποιας επαγγελματικής δραστηριότητας αποτελούν βασικές προϋποθέσεις για την κοινωνική ένταξη των ατόμων, αλλά και για την κοινωνική συνοχή και ευημερία.

Η στελέχωση των αναμορφωμένων υπηρεσιών Συμβουλευτικής και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού θα απαιτήσει την εκπαίδευση ειδικού επιστημονικού προσωπικού, από την έλλειψη του οποίου πάσχει το σημερινό σύστημα.

Επιπρόσθετα, υπάρχει ανάγκη συστηματικής επιμόρφωσης όλων όσων ασχολούνται με την εφαρμογή του θεσμού τόσο στην εκπαίδευση όσο και στην απασχόληση. Για τον παραπάνω σκοπό επιβάλλεται να αναπτυχθούν πολλαπλές μορφές επιμόρφωσης, να αξιοποιηθούν οι δυνατότητες της σύγχρονης τεχνολογίας και η εξ' αποστάσεως εκπαίδευση, να δοθούν κίνητρα για αυτομόρφωση και να παραχθεί νέο εκπαιδευτικό και επιμορφωτικό υλικό.

Παράλληλα θα απαιτηθούν βελτιώσεις και αλλαγές και σε άλλους τομείς, όπως στον τομέα της ενημέρωσης του ευρύτερου κοινού για τα ζητήματα αυτά, στη λειτουργία των υπηρεσιών που ασχολούνται με την απασχόληση του εργατικού δυναμικού, στον τομέα της κοινωνικής πολιτικής κτλ.

5. Αντί επιλόγου

Όσα αναφέρθηκαν παραπάνω οδηγούν στο συμπέρασμα ότι οι αλλαγές που συμβαίνουν στον εργασιακό χώρο ως αποτέλεσμα των γενικότερων κοινωνικο-οικονομικών και τεχνολογικών εξελίξεων επιβάλλουν ριζικές αλλαγές και στον τομέα της εκπαίδευσης και στο πεδίο της επαγγελματικής συμβουλευτικής. Για την πραγματοποίησή τους, όμως, απαιτείται συντονισμένη προσπάθεια, σωστός προγραμματισμός και αύξηση των επενδύσεων που γίνονται από την επίσημη πολιτεία στους τομείς αυτούς. Η κατανόηση της ανάγκης αυτής και η προώθηση της διεθνούς συνεργασίας στα ζητήματα, στόχοι που εντάσσονται στις επιδιώξεις του παρόντος συνεδρίου, θα συμβάλουν θετικά προς την κατεύθυνση αυτήν

Βιβλιογραφία

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V PLENARY SESSION

CHAIR:

George GEKAS, Assoc. Professor at the Ryerson University of Ontario - Canada

Jo Morris, Senior Equality and Employment Rights Officer, Trade Union (UK)

THE epal PROJECT AND ITS UNIQUE ELEMENTS

Mike FITZIMMONS, Chair of the Board of Greater Manchester Company

The epal project is based on the creative use of new media and technologies, combined with innovative approaches to the design and delivery of public services, producing a unique resource for 13-19 year olds in Greater Manchester. It is an electronic information service, fronted by Asha, an electronic personal assistant, imaginatively combining contributions by young people for young people; information, advice and guidance; opportunities for consultation, dialogue, and participation with a range of public and voluntary sector agencies; and opportunities for young people to develop their skills and knowledge both electronically and in face to face settings.

The primary aim is to provide a multi-channel electronic platform through which a virtual community of young people can access information and services supported by a virtual community of specialist agencies. Young people can also participate in ongoing design and development, contributing their own content if desired.

The objectives are to:

- contribute, alongside more traditional ways of doing things, to improved outcomes for young people; measured in terms of their capacity to negotiate the risks and challenges of teenage life
- maximise their opportunities for personal and social development
- gain achievements in terms of informal and formal education
- achieve a successful transition to adulthood.
- innovatively and creatively exploit new technology to support and promote wider participation of young people as citizens, in social and political life.

How does it work? Young people are able to interact with an “epal” in order to acquire information, communicate with others and interact with relevant agencies and organisations. Key background and contextual information is provided covering a wide range of topics, usually in partnership with agencies working in the field. The technology involved enables the system – the “epal” - to highlight and broker access to local sources, networks and opportunities.

This method of delivering services to young people is twinned with another, equally innovative mechanism, of enabling young people to participate in the development and “content” of the project. This has been around enabling young people to develop skills in a

variety of areas such as Urban Music, Animation, Styling, Photography, Journalism – which in turn facilitates these young people to publish, “content” to epal. A consequence of this is that epal gains credentials both locally and digitally, that aid with the take up of the electronic Personal Advisor services. Therefore, the epal project is significant in that there is a structured “back-end” of information and resources, with a youth focussed and produced “front-end”.

The unique characteristics of epal

1. Integration with mainstream public services

It is fully integrated into the newly emerging Connexions Service (the Government’s flagship youth support initiative targeting 13-19 year olds). The Connexions Service provides information, advice and guidance to 13-19 year olds, in order to help them make informed choices and fulfil their potential. Part of this is around careers, education, training and employment, but also embraces wider youth issues, from drugs and alcohol, through to a host of other specialist support services. Through epal, Connexions is able to deliver services more effectively and efficiently; to a wider range of young people than would be possible through face to face methods, and in ways more in tune with many young peoples’ lifestyles and preferences. It makes these services substantially more accessible – both in the sense that electronic access suits the needs of some young people more than face to face approaches may do; but also in the sense that it provides potential for imaginative presentation of materials, more in tune with young peoples’ learning styles and expectations.

2. The strength of its partnerships

Underpinning epal is a robust partnership structure, involving all key agencies working with young people, including youth services, Youth Offending Teams, Probation, schools, colleges, the Learning and Skills Council, training providers, transport agencies (GMPTE), health (drugs, alcohol, physical and mental health); the Police and other specialist providers. Working through and integrated within this partnership structure, epal is a vehicle for delivering a very wide range of services and information about services online. It includes a comprehensive directory of services across Greater Manchester, information about courses, leisure opportunities and events, volunteering opportunities, issues relevant to young people and places and people to talk to about those issues. It is also a vehicle for consultation and participation - ensuring that services are designed and delivered in ways that meet young peoples’ needs and engaging young people as active citizens in the wider public arena.

3. The range and quality of information and services which it makes accessible.

A robust partnership network, combined with the core contribution of the Connexions Service, ensures that the information and services accessible through epal are of good quality, relatively comprehensive and wide ranging in character. This is critical to ensuring success in terms of credibility with young people, accuracy and maximising the potential usage of the resource.

4. Its strong emphasis on youth participation and involvement

There is a special emphasis given to this aspect of Connexions, which reflects the Government's wider concern about youth exclusion and the lack of wider opportunities for youth involvement and participation in public and political life.

Working through a range of methods, including face to face "skillshops" and events designed to promote young peoples' creativity and involvement, as well as a variety of "online" methods of engagement, epal offers multiple opportunities for engagement and involvement.

Young people can contribute their own content. They can moderate content contributed by others. They can rate content provided by agencies. They can engage in discussion forums about issues relevant to them. They can engage in dialogue with agencies and decision makers who might otherwise be inaccessible. They can participate in consultation exercises about key issues and services, and make their needs and views known. Work is also taking place to engage young people more effectively in the governance of epal and as participants in project work (e.g. market research) that the project can develop.

A key factor is that the design and structure of epal ensures that the look, feel and content of the site reflect young peoples' needs and aspirations. It ensures that the resource is able to sit comfortably within a youth culture dominated by commercially driven services and products which heavily influence young people. Although epal has a very strong public sector ethos in terms of delivering services and support, this is achieved within a context that is young person centred, attractive and engaging - without being patronising. This ensures that the resource is popular and attractive to its target group; in turn making epal a tremendous opportunity and vehicle for public agencies seeking to engage with or deliver services to young people.

5. Its underlying community development principles and their potential

Underlying this methodology, is a set of principles borrowed from community development but applied in the context of emerging e-government. What epal drives forward is a set of electronic communities – with young people at their centre – plus a range of agencies and partner organisations, which may not otherwise be accessible. These can be defined around areas of common interest (issues, etc), or geography (neighbourhood, local authority area, etc); or wider civic issues (consultation, engagement, participation), and have very real potential for supporting and improving "real communities" (introducing young people and their projects from different areas to each other; sharing and disseminating learning). It is important to see epal as a dynamic process – something with potential that will grow and develop over time.

6. Personalisation

epal is personalised and personal. Young people have the option to register (and to do so at differing degrees of detail) when they enter the virtual epal community. They are guided in doing this, and in searching and finding information, by a personal assistant (Asha), who functions in the manner of a wise elder sister - helping young people negotiate around the resource to access what they need. Young people can personalise their information searches, gain on line access to a Connexions personal advisor, and contribute to the site.

They are also able to customise their home page.

7. Localness

Although there are a range of web based services for young people nationally, these do not have the local content that is essential to the epal concept. This includes directly accessing locally based services on line (Connexions in the first instance, but with potential for other agencies to experiment in due course), but also the local character of the information available. This is mainly provided through the directory of services, but also through the contributions made by local young people, agencies and organisations, in terms of content.

8. Accessibility and Scale

The accessibility of epal does not just cover issues around access to information or services, but also the technological aspects of accessibility, including mobile phones, pcs, and emerging channels such as digital television. It has been designed from the outset to be scaleable – in its partnership and youth involvement methodology and its technological content and design. Technologically, the design of the resource means that it can cater for an expansion in the number of users, and for an infinite expansion in the content carried. It has also established a methodology for experimenting with the delivery of online services, and for engaging young people and partner agencies in the process. The project also aims to experiment with a further new technological dimension, by piloting content suitable for a youth access digital television channel in due course.

TO WIN THE FUTURE: PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

(ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΚΕΡΔΙΣΟΥΜΕ ΤΟ ΜΕΛΛΟΝ. ΠΡΟΩΘΕΙΣΤΕ ΤΗΝ
ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑ)

Andreas Stefanidis, Secretary of the Federation of Hellenic Associations of Young Entrepreneurs – **O.E.SY.N.E.** (Member of the European Confederation of Young Entrepreneurs – **YES for Europe**)

The integration and globalisation process that hit every economy worldwide in the past few years altered how companies do business. Conditioned by new rules and principles that this world order presents, companies need to be more competitive, and to create more added value to their products and/or services innovating everyday the way to do business.

Borders are becoming more and more fluid; step-by-step a world market is imposing itself. The availability of products and services as well as the production factors is no longer local or regional but global. Only human resources still resist to mobility; it is harder to have the needed workforce where companies want them to be. Cheap labour is found in Third World countries, and high added value labour is hard to find.

In the current knowledge based economy, the most competitive economies are those who have the better and most prepared human resources. A wider gap is being built between those who have the know-how and those who have not. A higher rate of productivity will only be achieved by improving the education/training system and mainly through a cultural revolution.

The European culture of “fonctionnarisme” must stop. The Welfare State paternalism still shapes the way we think; even now we expect from governments to provide jobs to everyone. Schools are providing “functionaries” that do not answer to companies’ needs and without assurances that there will be a job for them. The educational system should be reviewed to embrace innovation and creativity, risk taking and responsibility.

The Cultural Revolution could start by disseminating the values of entrepreneurship to social partners/stakeholders. The promotion of a more autonomous and creative attitude towards life is essential; values such as initiative, innovation, and risk taking come side by side with those of competence, qualification and know-how are the expected outcome. Promoting entrepreneurs, be they employers or employees, as models to follow would be a first step to win the future. In a world where young people need references to follow, we should present those who fulfilled their “European Dream”.

Europe lacks the ability to transform scientific knowledge into innovative products and/or services; only by connecting the educational system and the private sector this problem will be solved. Entrepreneurship should be included in School curricula as a discipline or other disciplines curricula should be adopted to incorporate values such as initiative and enterprise development in order to promote a more dynamic and risk taking society. The

school system should be one of the most innovative environments in society; it ought to push students to go always a step further by maintaining permanent contact points with companies stimulating the spirit of entrepreneurship among students.

A more entrepreneurial school and the creation of more enterprises would enhance Europe's competitiveness by having a better-prepared workforce. More enterprises would drive to more innovation into companies and the rejuvenation of the private sector.

The creation of new companies is important to any economy. In order to play a role in the economy research and development "will require entrepreneurial initiative in its introduction."¹ Small companies are responsible for the majority of job and wealth creation in European countries, so the healthier they are the better economy will perform. And new ones would replace those who cannot compete.

Currently, to start a company is not "just" taking the risk of starting a venture but also one has to be ready to face bureaucracy, the well-known "red-tape". Supporting the creation of new companies is not enough; the right environment must be created to convince more people into starting their own business.

Several areas could and should be improved, they are not new but we have still to insist to have them changed:

- "Cut the red-tape" is still a valid slogan, there should be one simple model to fill in to start up your company. The registration should be valid no later than 48 hours after. The ministries involved in the creation of new companies should join efforts to create an effective network to achieve this goal.
- Labour market liberalisation, introducing more liberal measures allowing companies to face market cycles. A more liberal labour market means that companies will not be so concerned on hiring more personnel as they will always have the choice of downsizing if it needs.
- A slow "judicial system" also prevents the regular functioning of the market; be aware some businesses stay on hold for too long awaiting for a court decision.
- Also important is the creation of a true European capital market where entrepreneurs can effectively get financing for their ideas. Venture capital and Business Angels should be highly stimulated in Europe.
- Utilities services like energy and communications should have rates comparable to those on the other side of the Atlantic.
- Governments need to review their taxation policies to lower its weight on companies, currently at the European average of 50% (Corporate + Social charges).

What we want is to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit within schools and families; to support the creation of enterprises would mean a constant market revitalisation with more

innovative and creative products and services; without forgetting the imperative changes to create a market where new companies and SMEs can compete without having to worry red tape and utilities high prices.

Μέρος 1^ο

Είναι πλέον γνωστό ότι η παγκοσμιοποίηση των αγορών η οποία αλλάζει τα οικονομικά δεδομένα παγκοσμίως στα τελευταία χρόνια άλλαξε και τον τρόπο με τον οποίο οι εταιρείες συναλλάσσονται. Ρυθμισμένες από νέους κανόνες και αρχές, οι εταιρείες οφείλουν να είναι πιο ανταγωνιστικές, έτσι βρίσκονται σε ένα συνεχή αγώνα καινοτομίας για την δημιουργία περισσότερων πρόσθετων αξιών στα προϊόντα τους και τις υπηρεσίες τους αλλάζοντας τα δεδομένα των εταιρικών συναλλαγών.

Τα σύνορα γίνονται όλο και πιο ρευστά: βήμα προς βήμα μία παγκόσμια αγορά αυτοεπιβάλλεται. Τόσο η διαθεσιμότητα των προϊόντων και των υπηρεσιών όσο και οι συντελεστές παραγωγής δεν είναι πλέον τοπικοί ή περιφερειακοί αλλά διακρατικοί ή και παγκόσμιοι. Μόνο το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό αντιστέκεται ακόμα στην κινητικότητα είναι δύσκολο να διατίθεται το απαραίτητο εργατικό δυναμικό εκεί όπου οι εταιρείες το θέλουν να είναι. Τα φθηνά εργατικά χέρια βρίσκονται στις χώρες του Τρίτου κόσμου, και το υψηλής αξίας εργατικό δυναμικό είναι δύσκολο να βρεθεί.

Στην σύγχρονη οικονομία που είναι βασισμένη στη γνώση, οι πιο ανταγωνιστικές οικονομίες είναι αυτές οι οποίες διαθέτουν ειδικευμένο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό. Ως αποτέλεσμα του γεγονότος αυτού είναι η δημιουργία ενός σημαντικού κενού που έχει δημιουργηθεί μεταξύ αυτών που διαθέτουν και αυτών που στερούνται γνώσεων. Υψηλότερος ρυθμός παραγωγής μπορεί να επιτευχθεί μόνο με τη βελτίωση του συστήματος εκπαίδευσης/κατάρτισης και κυρίως μέσα από μία πολιτισμική επανάσταση.

Η Ευρωπαϊκή κουλτούρα της γραφειοκρατίας πρέπει να σταματήσει. Ο Κρατικός Μηχανισμός συνεχίζει να κυριαρχεί ακόμα και στον τρόπο που σκεφτόμαστε· ακόμα και σήμερα περιμένουμε **μόνο** από τις κυβερνήσεις να παρέχουν εργασία σε όλους μας. Τα σχολεία διαμορφώνουν ένα εργατικό δυναμικό που δεν ανταποκρίνεται στις ανάγκες των επιχειρήσεων και χωρίς εξασφαλίσεις ότι θα υπάρξει μία απασχόληση γι' αυτό. Τρομακτικά φαντάζουν τα στοιχεία που προκύπτουν για την Ελλάδα από τη δημοσκόπηση του Ευρωβαρόμετρου που πραγματοποιήθηκε μεταξύ 15 Ιανουαρίου και 28 Φεβρουαρίου 2003 στα 15 κράτη μέλη. Το **62,8%** των ερωτηθέντων απάντησε ότι **δεν γνωρίζει πώς να χρησιμοποιεί υπολογιστή** και το **69,2%** ότι **δεν μπορεί να χειριστεί κάποιο επιστημονικό ή τεχνολογικό εξοπλισμό.**

Αξιοσημείωτο και το γεγονός ότι μόνο το **17,7%** των ερωτηθέντων έχει λάβει κάποια μορφή εκπαίδευσης ή κατάρτισης, κατά τη διάρκεια του 2002, ενώ ακόμα πιο αποθαρρυντική είναι η αδιαφορία ενός στους πέντε να καταρτισθεί στο μέλλον. Το εκπαιδευτικό σύστημα θα πρέπει να αναθεωρηθεί και να «αγκαλιάσει» την καινοτομία και τη δημιουργικότητα, την ανάληψη ρίσκου και την υπευθυνότητα.

Μέρος 2^ο

Η πολιτισμική επανάσταση θα πρέπει να ξεκινήσει με την διάδοση των αξιών της επιχειρηματικότητας σε όλους τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους. Η προώθηση μίας πιο αυτόνομης και δημιουργικής στάσης απέναντι στη ζωή είναι βασικό αίτημα. Το αναμενόμενο αποτέλεσμα είναι: αξίες όπως η πρωτοβουλία, η καινοτομία, και η ανάληψη ρίσκου να συνδυασθούν με αυτές της ικανότητας, της πιστοποίησης και της τεχνογνωσίας. Η προώθηση των επιχειρηματιών ως πρότυπα μοντέλα, θα πρέπει να είναι το πρώτο βήμα για να κερδίσουμε το μέλλον. Σε ένα κόσμο που οι νέοι άνθρωποι χρειάζονται πρότυπα, εμείς θα πρέπει να προβάλλουμε αυτούς που εκπληρώνουν το Ευρωπαϊκό τους Όνειρο.

Η Ευρώπη στερείται την ικανότητα να μετασχηματίσει την επιστημονική γνώση σε καινοτομικά προϊόντα και υπηρεσίες και η λύση αυτού του προβλήματος μπορεί να βρεθεί μόνο στην σύνδεση του εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος με τον ιδιωτικό επιχειρηματικό τομέα.

Η επιχειρηματικότητα θα έπρεπε να περιλαμβάνεται στα σχολικά προγράμματα ως ξεχωριστός κλάδος. Άλλοι κλάδοι της εκπαίδευσης θα μπορούσαν να υιοθετήσουν αξίες όπως η πρωτοβουλία, η επιχειρηματική ανάπτυξη με σκοπό την ανάπτυξη μίας πιο δυναμικής και έτοιμης για ανάληψη ρίσκου κοινωνίας. Το σχολικό σύστημα πρέπει να είναι ένα από τα πιο καινοτόμα περιβάλλοντα μέσα στην κοινωνία· θα πρέπει να ωθήσει τους μαθητές να κινούνται πάντα ένα βήμα μπροστά κρατώντας συνεχή σημεία επαφής με εταιρείες που παρακινούν το πνεύμα της επιχειρηματικότητας ανάμεσα στους μαθητές.

Ένα πιο «επιχειρηματικό» σχολείο και η δημιουργία περισσότερων επιχειρήσεων θα ενδυναμώσουν την ανταγωνιστικότητα της Ευρώπης. Περισσότερες επιχειρήσεις θα οδηγήσουν σε περισσότερες καινοτομίες από την πλευρά των επιχειρήσεων και στην ανανέωση του ιδιωτικού τομέα.

Μέρος 3^ο

Η δημιουργία νέων επιχειρήσεων είναι σημαντική για κάθε οικονομία. Παράλληλα, η έρευνα και ανάπτυξη, για να παίξουν ένα ουσιαστικό ρόλο στην οικονομία «θα απαιτούν επιχειρηματικές πρωτοβουλίες κατά την έναρξή τους». Οι μικρές επιχειρήσεις είναι υπεύθυνες για την πλειοψηφία των θέσεων εργασίας και την δημιουργία του πλούτου στις ευρωπαϊκές χώρες, έτσι όσο πιο υγιείς είναι, τόσο ισχυρότερη οικονομία θα δημιουργήσουν. Οι νέες επιχειρήσεις θα αντικαταστήσουν όσες δεν θα μπορούν να αντεπεξέλθουν στον διαρκή ανταγωνισμό.

Ακολούθως, η έναρξη μίας εταιρείας δεν είναι μόνο η ανάληψη του ρίσκου εκκίνησης αλλά και η ετοιμότητα να αντιμετωπίσει κανείς την συνεχή γραφειοκρατία, ένα από τα σημαντικότερα εμπόδια της επιχειρηματικότητας. Η υποστήριξη δημιουργίας νέων επιχειρήσεων μόνο δεν είναι αρκετή· πρέπει να δημιουργηθεί το σωστό κλίμα για να ενθαρρύνει περισσότερους ανθρώπους στο ξεκίνημα της δικής τους επιχείρησης.

Αρκετοί τομείς θα μπορούσαν και πρέπει να βελτιωθούν, δεν είναι άγνωστοι αλλά πρέπει συνέχεια να επιμεινουμε για την πλήρη μετάλλαξη τους:

Μέρος 4^ο

- «**Άμεση άρση των εμποδίων κατά της επιχειρηματικότητας**» είναι ένα ακόμα αξιόλογο σύνθημα. Πρέπει τα πράγματα να είναι πιο απλά όταν θέλεις να ξεκινήσεις κάτι δικό σου! Η νομική έναρξη δεν πρέπει να γίνεται σε χρονικό διάστημα περισσότερο των 48 ωρών. Τα υπουργεία που συμμετέχουν στη δημιουργία νέων επιχειρήσεων πρέπει να ενώσουν τις προσπάθειές τους για να δημιουργήσουν ένα αποτελεσματικό δίκτυο για την επίτευξη του παραπάνω στόχου. Η ίδρυση των Κέντρων Υποδοχής Επενδυτών είναι ένα σημαντικό πρώτο βήμα αλλά επιβάλλεται και η νομική θεσμοθέτησή τους.
- **Διεύρυνση της αγοράς εργασίας, εισάγοντας περισσότερα απελευθερωτικά μέτρα τα οποία θα επιτρέπουν στις εταιρείες να αντιμετωπίσουν τους κύκλους της αγοράς.** Μία πιο ελεύθερη αγορά εργασίας σημαίνει μείωση της ανεργίας αφού οι εταιρείες θα προσλαμβάνουν ευκολότερα άτομα για να καλύπτουν τις ανάγκες τους χωρίς να έχουν το επαχθές βάρος της κείμενης εργατικής νομοθεσίας. Εξάλλου η εμπειρία των επί συμβάσει απασχολούμενων που συνεχώς αυξάνονται έχει αναδείξει αξιόλογα στελέχη στην αγορά που αν προσλαμβάνονταν με σχέση εξαρτημένης εργασίας ελάχιστο ποσοστό από αυτούς θα έβρισκε δουλειά.
- Ένα **βραδύ «δικαστικό σύστημα**» και μια, λίαν επιεικώς, απαράδεκτη νομοθεσία περί πτωχεύσεων αφαιρεί από επιχειρηματίες το δικαίωμα στη «δεύτερη ευκαιρία», δικαίωμα που σε ευνοούμενες χώρες δημιουργεί ανάπτυξη βασισμένη μάλιστα στην εμπειρία. Είναι χαρακτηριστική η προτροπή προς αυτή και της «Πράσινης Βίβλου» για την Επιχειρηματικότητα.
- Εξίσου σημαντική είναι η δημιουργία μίας αληθινής Ευρωπαϊκής χρηματαγοράς όπου οι επιχειρηματίες μπορούν αποτελεσματικά να λάβουν χρηματοδότηση των ιδεών τους. Επιχειρηματικά συμμετοχικά κεφάλαια (Venture Capitals) και οι Επιχειρηματικοί Άγγελοι (Business Angels) πρέπει να αναπτυχθούν στην Ελλάδα μιας και οι ίδιοι αυτοί θεσμοί αποτελούν πόλους ανάπτυξης καινοτομίας και επιχειρηματικότητας.
- Οι Υπηρεσίες Κοινής Ωφέλειας, που αφορούν κυρίως την ενέργεια και τις επικοινωνίες πρέπει να έχουν κόστος υπηρεσιών συγκρίσιμο με εκείνο που βρίσκουμε στην άλλη άκρη του Ατλαντικού.
- Οι νέα κυβέρνηση που θα προκύψει, πρέπει να επανεξετάσει την φορολογική πολιτική της για να μειώσει το βάρος της από τις εταιρείες. Αυτή τη στιγμή ο ευρωπαϊκός μέσος όρος φορολόγησης για οικονομικούς και κοινωνικούς φορείς, (Εφορία και Ασφαλιστικοί φορείς), ανέρχεται σε **50%**, ενώ στην Ελλάδα η φορολογία μόνο των επιχειρήσεων είναι **39%** ενώ φτάνει **συνολικά στο 60%**. Από την άλλη πλευρά, ως παράδειγμα ανάπτυξης, η Ιρλανδία μείωσε την

φορολογία της από 32 % το 1998 σε **12,5%** από 1^{ης} Ιανουαρίου 2003.

Επίλογος

Αυτό που θέλουμε είναι να ενθαρρυνθεί ένα επιχειρηματικό πνεύμα μέσα σε σχολεία και επιχειρήσεις· η υποστήριξη δημιουργίας νέων επιχειρήσεων και η διαβίου εκπαίδευση των επιχειρηματιών σημαίνει μία συνεχή αναζωογόνηση της αγοράς με περισσότερα καινοτομικά και δημιουργικά προϊόντα και υπηρεσίες· χωρίς φυσικά να ξεχνάμε τις επιτακτικές αλλαγές για τη δημιουργία μίας αγοράς όπου οι νέες εταιρείες και οι ΜΜΕ θα μπορούν να ανταγωνιστούν χωρίς τα εμπόδια της γραφειοκρατίας και τους υψηλούς δείκτες φορολόγησης.

Τελειώνοντας θα ήθελα να αναφερθώ σε μια πολύ καλή Κινέζικη παροιμία που έχει γίνει πλέον παγκόσμια :

«Αν σου δώσει κανείς ένα ψάρι, θα φας μία φορά. Αν σε μάθει να ψαρεύεις, θα τρως ψάρια για πάντα».

Η επιχείρηση είναι σαν τον ψαρά της παροιμίας. Όταν τη κτίσεις, δημιουργείς και παράγεις μια ζωή, όχι μόνο για τον εαυτό σου αλλά και για την κοινωνία. Θέλουμε πολλές επιχειρήσεις. Θέλουμε πολλούς επιχειρηματίες. Θέλουμε πολλούς δημιουργούς που λειτουργούν ως αναπτυξιακοί πολλαπλασιαστές στην κοινωνία και την οικονομία.

CULTIVATING HUMAN RESOURCE POTENTIAL IN MALTA: A CHALLENGE FOR THE SOCIAL PARTNERS

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List of Acronyms

BPA	Business Promotion Act
CVT	Continuing Vocational Training
EIRA	Employment and Industrial Relations Act
ESF	European Social Fund
ETC	Employment and Training Corporation
ETF	European Training Foundation
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FHRD	Foundation for Human Resource Development
FOI	(Malta) Federation of Industry
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITS	Institute of Tourism Studies
JAP	Joint Assessment of the Employment Policy Priorities (of Malta)
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LLL	Lifelong Learning
MCAST	Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology
MCESD	Malta Council for Economic and Social Development
MCST	Malta Council for Science and Technology
ME	Malta Enterprise
MEA	Malta Employers' Association
MIM	Malta Institute of Management
MSA	Malta Standards Authority
MTA	Malta Tourism Authority
MUS	Malta University Services
MPVQAC	Malta Professional and Vocational Qualifications Awards Council
NACE	Nomenclature generale des activites economiques dans les Communautes europeennes
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre
NMC	National Minimum Curriculum
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSO	National Statistics Office
NRCVG	National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
RTD	Research Technology and Development
SDO	Staff Development Organisation

SEC	Secondary Education Certificate
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
VET	Vocational Education and Training
WPDC	Workers Participation Development Centre

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Table 1: Labour Status in the Maltese Islands¹⁶¹

Table 2: Labour Supply Distribution*

3. Introduction

A key challenge for Malta's future is how to equip both individuals and employers with the necessary tools to successfully compete in a changing economy. The cornerstones of this new economy are knowledge and skills. These are key factors of competitiveness today, which can only be achieved by all stakeholders. Employers increasingly demand a labour force that has high levels of vocational skills, and government has the responsibility to ensure that adequate standards prevail in the educational and training systems. The state is responsible overall for shaping and developing the structure, organisation and content of the country's educational and vocational training systems. It has a crucial role in bringing about a learning society.¹ Society has a legitimate expectation that employers will also invest adequately in the skills of their workforce, and individuals must also take responsibility for skill development that contribute to their employability.

As the pace of change accelerates even further, it will be the adaptability of people and the ability of work organisations to move quickly to exploit new opportunities that will determine our ability to create and sustain competitive advantage.

The Maltese economy is undergoing a transitional stage that involves restructuring not only in terms of capital equipment and work organisation, but also of its human resources. As the backbone of Malta's economic development, the 'restructuring' of its human resources presents particular challenges.

4. Role and Responsibilities of the Social Partners

The new opportunities for the development of our human resources will depend on the investment made by the social partners in human resource development. This realisation will also depend on the effectiveness of the policy framework which the Government puts

in place to facilitate the development of what effectively must become a knowledge-based and knowledge-driven economy. The interests of the various social actors, including individuals, do not always converge. Employees, workers, service/training providers, individuals and Government are guided or motivated by different principles for action. Sectoral interests may precede the line of action and intervention. However, in a democracy, governments operate on a mandate to uphold the national interests as delivered to them by their citizens. The State's interventions in the provision of education and training, sets the roles of the social actors within the whole context of the vocational training scenario.

Quite apart from the need to improve the efficiency of the available productive systems – such as through foreign investment in modern technology – there is an urgent need to focus our educational and training institutions on an enhancement of the required technical skills and professional competencies. Realistically, in Malta's case, the maintenance of international competitiveness can best be achieved through the implementation of an HR strategy which promotes “high skills, quality products with a high value added and high incomes” (Fricke, 2001: 20)¹

Experience shows that employees will only be motivated to constantly upgrade their skills and qualifications if adequate incentives and rewards are available for their efforts. These, in turn, can be effectively secured through negotiated deals in collective agreements among the social partners. When other countries like Ireland and Holland were confronted with such a situation, a series of national development plans were adopted following negotiations among the social partners. These included an acceptable ratio of pay and productivity increases together with a realistic target of economic growth. Like other member states, Malta will soon have access to EU services for technical and financial assistance towards the realisation of its development strategy. Success or failure will depend on its ability to fully utilise such opportunities.

5. The Maltese context

The Maltese Islands have few natural resources and its people are highly exposed to international events. The country's imports and exports amount to nine-tenths of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Maltese labour force depends upon its capacity for high quality products and services offering value for money as well as its ability to attract foreign investment. Tourism, manufacturing and services are three key sectors in the Maltese economy. In recent years, *per capita* value added in manufacturing has increased, with employment in this sector moving away from footwear and clothing, towards the manufacture of electronics (in a few companies), engineering and health-related products.

Maltese industry has been restructuring in recent years to generate better returns. As liberalisation requires the removal of import restrictions and levies on domestic oriented companies, so there needs to be greater investment in the country's capacity to raise its productivity. While capital investment is necessary, raising the skill levels of the country is critical to progress. A greater repertoire of knowledge and skills benefits individuals in terms of self-development and opportunity. Raising skill levels also increases productivity and

earning-power, enhances the quality of the match between supply and demand for labour, and has various other social and political benefits.

6. The Labour Market on the Maltese Islands

6.1 Employment Profile

During the nineties, the number of persons in employment increased modestly.¹ There were 148,403 persons in employment in December 2002, of whom less than a third were women¹ (see Table 1). The National Statistics Office (NSO) defines the employment rate as persons in employment (15-64 years) as a percentage of the population of working age (15-64 years). The unemployment rate is the unemployed persons (15-64 years) as a percentage of the labour force.¹

Table 1: Labour Status in the Maltese Islands

	Males		Females		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Employed	102,120	65.1	46,283	28.5	148,403	46.5
Unemployed	6,715	4.3	4,160	2.6	10,875	3.4
Inactive	48,085	30.6	111,659	68.9	159,744	50.1
Total	156,920	100.0	162,102	100.0	319,022	100.0

Source: Labour Force Survey (December 2002)

46.5% of the working age population are in employment – 65.1% of working age men, and 28.5% of working age women. Despite a gradual rise in female employment, Malta's overall employment rate remains low when compared to the EU average. 14% of the employed persons are self-employed. Persons working part-time as their primary job were equivalent to 6.1% of all employees in December 2002.¹

A demand for labour and changes in the outlook of Maltese households on work outside the home have resulted in a greater proportion of working age women seeking paid employment. The ratio of women working part-time as a first job is 3.8%¹ of all persons in employment.

In December 2002, the unemployment share stood at 3.4% (NSO Statistics), a total of around 10,875 persons. Accounting for gender, the unemployment share for men was 4.3% while that for women was 2.6%. 35.6% of them have been unemployed for 18 months or more. Out of these, 16% are females.¹ At end December 2002, 74% of the registered unemployed held no qualifications while 17% of the total unemployed were illiterate.¹

6.2 Emerging Changes

Changes in employment during the past years point to some important underlying inclinations in the Maltese society. The labour force has become more varied and is drawing from all kinds of backgrounds and social sectors.¹ The diversity of the workforce due to job mobility and new recruits will lead to different forms of work organisation (see Table 2). As a result, employers would need to create more flexible policies in the workplace.

Concurrently, the pressures and needs arising from a higher standard of living have pushed more Maltese to engage in part-time work as a secondary job. This process reflects an active economy, but it undoubtedly points at new pressures on the Maltese to work more, to earn more because they need to spend more. Besides, a lack of flexible working hours and other forms of work organisation is also putting pressure on the Maltese family. In many cases, this leads to less time available for leisure and for time spent with one's family. These costs and benefits are part and parcel of such a

developing situation and constantly need to be kept in perspective by social and economic planners.

7. The Human Resource Infrastructure: The Social Partners

The social partners consist of the public sector, employers, and trade unions. The Malta Council for Economic and Social Development (MCESD)¹ was created by Government as an advisory body in order to provide a forum for consultation and social dialogue between social partners and, where necessary, with organisations of Civil Society. It was entrusted with the task of advising Government on issues relating to the sustainable economic and social development of Malta. MCESD is composed of representatives nominated by the national employers and workers organisations, representatives of government, and the Governor of the Central Bank (G. Baldacchino, S. Rizzo, E. Zammit, 2003:123,125).¹

7.1 The Public Sector

The public sector employs 32.9% of the labour supply.¹ This sector is undergoing a restructuring and privatisation process involving leaner organisations so as to reduce production inefficiencies and improve labour force flexibility (E. Zammit, F. Borg, & S. Vella, 2001: 81).¹ As a result, the public sector needs to develop its human resources to adapt to the ongoing changes in terms of skills and quality standards.

Government is responsible overall for shaping and developing the structure, organisation and content of the educational and vocational training systems. The state has a crucial role in bringing about a learning society.¹ As Malta operates within a market economy, there are some overarching trends which follow from the development of a culture in which there is less control by the state and more opportunity at regional and local level for people to exercise initiatives, to take responsibility for the management of their own lives and learning. This alters the roles of the key players in a fundamental way.

Table 2: Labour Supply Distribution*

	Dec 1997	% of Labour Supply	Dec 2002	% of Labour Supply
Labour Supply (Full-time gainfully occupied & Registered unemployed)	140,834	100.0%	144,379	100.0%
Full-time gainfully occupied (Including self-employed)	133,141	94.5%	136,863	94.8%
Self-Employed only	15,963	11.3%	15,340	10.6%
Private Direct Production	37,095	26.3%	37,705	26.1%
<i>Of which:</i>				
Agriculture and Fisheries	2,181	1.5%	2,215	1.5%
Quarrying, Construction & Oil drilling	6,053	4.3%	6,803	4.7%
Manufacturing	28,861	20.5%	28,687	19.9%
Private Market Service	44,937	31.9%	50,528	35.0%
<i>Of which:</i>				
Wholesale & Retail	15,095	10.7%	15,596	10.8%
Banking, Insurance & Real Estate	3,213	2.3%	4,865	3.4%
Hotel and Catering Establishments	6,111	4.3%	6,085	4.2%
Transport, Storage & Communication	8,988	6.4%	8,969	6.2%
Others	11,530	8.2%	15,013	10.4%
Public Sector	50,263	35.7%	47,556	32.9%
<i>Of which:</i>				
Government Departments	30,188	21.4%	30,327	21.0%
Armed Forces	1,526	1.1%	1,450	1.0%
Independent Statutory Bodies	374	0.3%	144	0.1%
R.S.C. & Airport Co.	10,304	7.3%	7,925	5.5%
Public Sector Companies	7,871	5.6%	7,710	5.3%
Apprentices & Pupil Workers	846	0.6%	1,021	0.7%
Registered Unemployed	7,693	5.5%	7,516	5.2%

Source: ETC Labour Market Research Statistics (December 2002)

* It is to be noted that ETC classifies employers by ISIC whereas the NSO uses NACE and therefore, ETC and NSO data do not tally.

The state also has a coordinating and facilitating role with responsibility for the overall infrastructure, the provision of a legislative framework, the setting of standards and the monitoring of quality assurance, the provision of mechanisms for accrediting qualifications nationally, and the licensing of education and training establishments. Government therefore needs to take the lead in encouraging the social partners to work together, with shared responsibility for strategy and operations, decision-making, management and where possible, even sharing financial commitments to training and development.

7.2 The Employers

The shortages and recruitment problems which organisations have been facing are various. 61% of employers declare that shortages were due to qualification deficits, lack of skilled manpower and other reasons.¹ The recruitment problem is common to several labour categories namely managerial level, clerical, skilled and unskilled labour.

Employers often view continuous training as a cost if investment in training is not expected to give a return on productivity at least in the long term. Training is generally tailor-made to an organisation's needs. It is goal oriented and runs on specific lines. Employees' overall development is not emphasised. It seems that in Malta, general formal learning ends with compulsory schooling. The notion of lifelong learning (LLL) needs to be further developed. Lifelong learning will be accepted insofar as it matches the changing skill requirements of today's dynamic labour environment. Most of what is called training is simply the repetition of good operations in the context of an organisational set-up. It is not, strictly speaking, skill-empowerment. In a competitive changing labour market environment, organisations have to develop their human resources.

The allocation of working hours/days for professional development purposes is not widespread. However, various contributing factors (such as tighter labour markets in certain economic and service sectors) have changed the profile of relations between employees (and their representative bodies) and their employers. Entitlement for a number of study leave hours/days should be included in collective agreements to be used by employees to advance their technical or managerial aptitude by following external training programmes related to their role and responsibilities within their organisation.

7.3 The Trade Unions

The traditional industrial relations model in Malta was that of a voluntary, bi-partite collective bargaining at the enterprise level in a polarised relationship between employers and trade unions (E. Zammit, F. Borg, & S. Vella 2001:62)¹ In recent decades, this model has gradually changed into a pattern of corporate tripartite bargaining at the national level based on social partnership. Around 60% of the Maltese workforce is represented by unions.

Malta has enjoyed an atmosphere of relative industrial stability. This can be attributed to the readiness of the social partners to work together in a highly competitive international

market as well as the government's readiness to solve industrial relations issues as they emerge.¹

7.4 The Individual

Employment contributes to the individual's identity in society. It is a source of belonging and status of the individual in her/his organisation, in its immediate social environment and within the household itself. Job stability affects the social texture within this context and therefore, the greater the changes in the political and economic environments, the greater the feeling of uncertainty.

Ultimately, the challenge of finding work and adapting to an industrial environment must be met by the individual. Few businesses offer secure jobs for life, and the employee is likely to have to adapt to new circumstances. Employers have the impression that the educational system does not yet equip individuals with this ability to adapt, as shown in various human resource surveys carried out in the past. Government also needs to assess the apprenticeship schemes and evaluate the existing teaching methods, in order to enhance skills required by the labour market.

Changes in the environment bring about associated changes in values and expectations among working people. Malta's economic growth, sectoral orientation of economic activity towards services, and higher household expectations have all contributed to the increase in female employment.

The promotion of equal opportunities is being addressed in general and in relation to particular sectors of the Maltese Society by a number of statutory bodies.

7.5 Civil Society

The Civil Society plays an important role in what is referred to as the social economy. This comprises co-operatives and voluntary organisations. In general these organisations may be distinguished from public and private organisations by their characteristics of being value-based organisations of committed individuals oriented towards mutual or social good. Their espoused values are usually participation, user and community orientation, and non-profit distribution. Two main sectors in the Civil Society which contribute to the development of Maltese human resources are NGOs and the Archdiocese of Malta.

The scale of current economic and social change in Europe, the rapid evolution of the knowledge society, and the demographic pressures resulting from an aging population, demands a fundamentally new approach to education and training. Lifelong learning is the umbrella under which all kinds of teaching and 'life-wide' learning should be united. It sees all learning as a seamless continuum 'from cradle to grave', extending from the early years through adult life. Encompassing a common core of knowledge and skills which goes beyond basic numeracy and literacy, it aims to equip people with the essential building blocks required to function in modern society – 'generic' or 'life skills' such as problem solving, teamwork and learning skills, motivation and disposition for learning at all ages.

Skills, knowledge and understanding will not last a lifetime but require regular updating. Thus, lifelong learning covers not only basic education but all purposeful learning activity undertaken on an on-going basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence.

Lifelong learning is needed not only to develop employability and personal fulfilment of current and future generations, but to ensure their inclusion in society and to promote their active citizenship. This notion of lifelong learning can be implemented on a wide scale. It is these challenges that Malta seeks to address.

8. Challenges for the Social Partners

8.1 Challenges for Government

The European Commission White Paper on Education and Training (1995) stated that ‘the State is responsible overall for shaping and developing the structure, organisation and content of their educational and vocational training systems. Clearly, the State has a crucial role in bringing about a learning society.¹ Its functions include the following:

8.1.1 Coordinating and Facilitating Role

The State has a coordinating and facilitating role with responsibility for the overall infrastructure, the provision of a legislative framework, the setting of standards and the monitoring of quality assurance, the provision of qualifications nationally and the licensing of education and training organisations.

8.1.2 Basic Skills

Government is to ensure that the educational system is producing high levels of achievement in the field of basic skills, such as languages, sciences, mathematics and technology, on which work-based learning can be built. Young people need to be flexible, enterprising and technically proficient to be equipped for an uncertain and rapidly changing future. They need to begin to learn all this while they are still at school, since school is only the first stage of their learning pathway.

8.1.3 Social Dialogue

The labour-capital relationship is being transformed and Government’s approach to social dialogue needs to pace the process of adjustment to new forms of social agreements. The process of managing these changes needs to realistically consider whether the social partners can fulfil their roles.

8.1.4 Co-partnership

Government needs to encourage the social partners to work together in genuine co-partnership with shared responsibility for strategy and operations, decision-making, management and where possible even sharing of financial commitments to training and development matters.

8.1.5 Consensus

Government is responsible for building a consensus on ideas put forward by the social partners and reaching agreements and commitment.

8.1.6 Enterprise Support

The state needs to give support to employers, especially small and medium enterprises, possibly financial support and/or incentives from the state to successfully invest in the training and development of their employees.

8.1.7 International Certification

The state needs to ensure that there is a system of qualifications which enjoys national credibility and recognition. Nationally recognised qualifications need to be international that is acceptable, transferable and accreditable to any country.

8.1.8 Quality Assurance

Training providers need to ensure quality education and training and the State needs to ensure a proper accreditation, inspection and monitoring mechanisms for quality assurance which may incorporate principles of intervention. Training providers need to ensure that their deliverables meet the needs of employers and the community. Government needs to set up a quality improvement strategy to ensure consistency, coherence and sustain a culture of continuous improvement.

8.1.9 Co-Funding

The state is not ultimately responsible for the funding of all training and development initiatives. However, it can influence policy and give support to education and training institutions in a number of ways. For example, tax reliefs for individuals or enterprises who invest in training and development, national funding for new schemes.

8.1.10 Vocational Education and Training

Competence and skill acquired in the workplace need to be recognised and accredited through systems of vocational qualifications. This would encourage closer links between academic and vocational qualifications. Qualifications need to recognise what people know, understand and can do and the standard they have reached. Both academic knowledge and practical applications need to be recognised and assessed. Vocational qualifications systems should benefit mostly persons already in employment.

8.2 Challenges for Management

The rapidity of technological and organisational change in business, changes in the nature of work itself and the increasingly competitive international business environment, all require the adoption of a continuous and lifelong approach to skills acquisition and training and the promotion of greater flexibility and adaptability within the workforce.

A recent NSO survey on vocational guidance has found that Maltese organisations do not invest sufficiently in upgrading employee and management skills. This is particularly the case for small businesses. Yet it is known that effective investment in HRD will yield a

good commercial return provided it is done in the context of a sound business plan.

The tendency for enterprises to under-invest in training may be due to:

- A fear that the employees benefiting from human resource investment may leave or be poached by other employers;
- A lack of funding for HRD investment purposes;
- An insufficient recognition of potential benefits of investment in HRD, due to a lack of readily available information.

To overcome these deficiencies, it is not enough to simply allocate additional resources to HRD. A strategic approach to the utilisation of the opportunities available to the organisation, together with new attitudes to training are also required. The successful enterprise is a learning organisation where people at all levels are able to acquire and renew the knowledge and skills identified through an analysis of the training needs of the organisation and of the training potential of its employees.

Closer links between the educational and training services are essential to underpin the capacity of organisations for innovation across the full range of business activities and to ensure that the education and training sectors are responsive to the needs of organisations.

In addition to raising the quality of existing skills, new work practices require the acquisition of new skills. Failure to master these new processes will put organisations at a competitive disadvantage.

The challenge for management is to make the transition to activities which are based on the use of higher technology, better quality, better organisations, and which will yield profitable margins. This transition requires a significant change in traditional management-employee relationships. It involves new forms of work organisation which foster greater employee autonomy and discretion in the performance of jobs within an agreed framework of responsibility. It requires work practices suited to developing competitive advantage in individual organisations, based on the acquisition and mix of skills and on flexibility.

A greater disclosure of information and partnership in the management of change needs to be revealed to avoid crises-driven change. This places new demands on management. The communication skills and negotiation capabilities of management and employees need to be strengthened to achieve greater effectiveness in this changed employee-management environment. Training and education in these skills is growing in importance. The aim must be to benchmark training performance at both the national level and at the level of individual organisations against the best known international practices.¹

8.3 Challenges for Trade Unions

Traditionally, trade unions act as intermediaries, constantly striving to represent the interests of their members and improve their conditions of work through bargaining and negotiation. At the work place, management encourages flexibility and adaptability to the market needs. This may imply leaner organisations due to restructuring and downsizing. Any form of flexibility introduced by management puts unions in a dilemma. A union's

mission is to promote solidarity rather than divide the workforce and flexibility measures may be viewed as going against this objective. The challenge for trade unions and management is to integrate flexibility with security. In order to face these challenges, unions need to manage change more effectively and according to a pre-determined strategy. The new initiatives may include the following:

- Image building;
- Coping with the new economic environment;
- Employee involvement;
- Relations with the state;
- An active role in vocational training and development.

- **Image Building**

All unions need to improve their public image through upgrading their public relations and mobilising their resources (G. Baldacchino, S. Rizzo, E. Zammit, 2003:148).¹

- **Coping with the New Economic Environment**

Unions should operate more actively their networks with other international trade unions – particularly within the European Trades Union Confederation (ETUC) - to devise common policies, such as the European Employment Strategy (EES) and keep up to date to with international events.

- **Employee Involvement**

Maltese trade unions should negotiate with the other social partners different forms of employee involvement and workplace participation. These would enable their members to be more involved in decision-making processes and achieve a balance between security and flexibility.

- **Relations with the State**

The unions are often viewed as offering ‘stiff resistance’ to Government. The latter follows a policy of industrial peace and should involve unions in formulating national policy. This may be viewed as ‘union accommodating state policy’. It should be noted that in the Malta survey, 67% of respondents believe that their union has achieved a balanced relationship. 23.7% of the respondents feel that the unions should offer ‘stiffer resistance’ to Government.

- **Active role in Training and Development**

The unions should be actively involved, in conjunction with the other social partners, in employee training and development as well as in vocational training and lifelong learning. Without this active union role, the success of any such schemes is likely to be severely impaired. This could also be their most effective contribution towards securing the employability of their members throughout their work lives.

In view of the above, trade unions are faced with a trend of increasing non-unionised, atypical and marginalised employees. A number of workers in the highly unionised public sector are decreasing. This trend poses a challenge to the Maltese trade unions in the future. For unions to maintain credibility, they need to show tangible evidence not only of

competence but also of fairness and equity (G. Baldacchino, S. Rizzo, E. Zammit, 2003: 153).¹

8.4 Challenges for Individuals

The individual will also have to give importance to ensuring that qualifications, training and personal development are updated, internationally certified and meet the need to secure and maintain employment. The minimum levels of initial education and training required to secure and to hold a job are rising. There is evidence to suggest that those who leave school with no or minimum qualifications will enter into an on-going cycle of unemployment.

There is also a need to ensure that, in the workplace of today and of tomorrow, where change is endemic and the need for new skills is constantly apparent, a commitment to lifelong learning is required to ensure their 'employability'. Individuals will need to develop a 'personal portfolio' of skills and attitudes that are continuously upgraded over a working life-time in which the concept of a 'job for life' in any business activity, will no longer hold.

The greater the extent to which organisations and individuals have invested in the upgrading of qualifications and skills, the lower the possibility of redundancy and the easier it will be to achieve reintegration into the workforce if redundancy occurs. Where employees do become redundant, their reintegration to the workforce can be facilitated by effective advisory and counselling services.

8.5 Challenges for Civil Society

The Civil Society motivates individuals within their own area of activity to equip themselves with relevant skills. This will enhance the individuals' employability. The characteristics of the Civil Society organisations are value-based, orienting individuals towards mutual or social good. Their espoused values are usually participation, user and community orientation, and non-profit distributing. They also confirm values like self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity (R. Spear: 1998).¹

In every society there is a growing minority of people who are more vulnerable, undereducated, under-skilled and unemployed. In some cases, these people have multiple difficulties to add to their employability problems. Private organisations cannot cater for all the needs of these people. Government has a social responsibility and ensures that provision is made for these people's needs, with the aim of helping them to become employable and capable of taking active participation in society.

9. Critical Challenges Confronting the Development of Employees in Malta Today

A field survey was carried out among a number of selected, influential individuals and experts on HR to support the findings. Further primary data was gathered through field research consisting of mailed questionnaires¹ and selected individual interviews.¹ The following questions were addressed:

- What are the most important challenges confronting the development of employees in Malta today?
- For each of these priorities, identify an initiative that could address the challenge.

The analysis of the questionnaires identifies the following eight most important challenges today:

9.1 Reintegrating unemployed people into the national workforce

Specific human resource development interventions are required to help bring those who have been unemployed and particularly long-term unemployed back into the workforce. Unemployed persons in the over 40-age group (mid-careers) are susceptible to long-term unemployment. These persons are likely to be severely affected by the restructuring of the economy.

9.2 Helping people become more employable and promoting gainful employment through the development of their skills

There is a need to prevent the drift of school leavers into long-term unemployment and improving opportunities for pre-entry vocational education and training together with its quality and relevance. Employees need to become more employable through the development of their knowledge and skills.

9.3 Underpinning competitiveness by promoting investment in the skills and knowledge of the workforce

Good educational attainments and qualifications are key requirements in reducing the numbers of people at risk of becoming unemployed. A lack of information technology and communication skills needs to be enhanced to support Government's drive for an information-based society and economy.

9.4 Strengthening commitment to lifelong learning/Continuous Vocational Training (CVT)

Individuals and their employers need to be committed to lifelong learning and vocational training. Malta has an imbalance of vocationally qualified personnel – young persons or individuals who have experience but no qualifications. MCAST is trying to address this issue.

9.5 Providing Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Services

Vocational Guidance should be seen as a continuum, life-wide and lifelong. Mobility of employees and continuing advancement in technology make some jobs obsolete and

change others. Vocational guidance becomes important for employees, before entry into employment and throughout their whole working life.

9.6 Promoting Equal Opportunities

Female participation in the labour market is significantly low when compared to other European countries. Gender differences may be due in part to a fair amount of women who drop out of the workforce when they have their first child (G. Baldacchino, F. Camilleri 1992:10).¹ Employers may also be reluctant to provide incentives to encourage women to remain working (A. Caruana, 2003:189-221).¹

Moreover, persons who experience social problems and who may be at risk of exclusion, often suffer from prejudiced employers. The existing schemes need to be monitored and continually reassessed to ensure their effectiveness in further integrating these persons into working life.

9.7 Assisting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to overcome the skill barriers to development

The majority of the work force is employed in SMEs. These organisations face difficulties in identifying what their training needs are relative to best practice, in developing HRD plans and in releasing staff for training. They also face financial constraints in investing in training. These difficulties are addressed.

9.8 Developing a strong quality assurance system

A recognised quality assurance system needs to be in place in relation to the quality and relevance of training, if investment in human resource development by individuals, by business or through the State is to be effectively encouraged. This system should provide authoritative information on best practice, provide information on training consultants or institutions and ensures acquired skills and experience are certified to a standard which has widespread recognition and portability.

10. Actions

The Brussels European Council in March 2003 emphasised the necessity of structural reforms, in particular good governance, social partnership and efficient employment services. The renewed Employment Guidelines focus on three over-arching objectives:

- Full employment
- Quality and productivity at work, and
- A cohesive and inclusive labour market.

Within these broad objectives are some guidelines:

- “Access of workers to training is an essential element of the balance between flexibility and security.

- Increasing investment (in HR) requires the provision of adequate incentives for employers and individuals, and re-directing public finance towards more efficient investment in human resources across the learning spectrum.
- A successful implementation of employment policies depends on partnership at all levels, the involvement of a number of operational services and an adequate financial provision to support the implementation of the guidelines.
- Improved quality at work is closely inter-linked with the move towards a competitive and knowledge-based economy and should be pursued particularly through social dialogue.
- Quality encompasses intrinsic job quality, skills, lifelong learning and career development, gender equality, health and safety at work, flexibility and security, inclusion and access to the labour market,¹ work organisation and work-life balance, social dialogue and worker involvement, diversity and non-discrimination, and overall work performance.”(A. Caruana, 2003: 194-202).¹

The very nature of work and work organisation is changing, driven both by the rapid pace of technological change and a need to maintain competitiveness. It is a world of work where flexibility and adaptability, the ability to change, to accommodate and generate new products and processes are essential for success, and where the concept of ‘employability for life’ is superseding the traditional concept of ‘a job for life’ (Department of Employment, 1997:149).¹

Human resources must increasingly require the highest levels of knowledge, skills and competencies. An ongoing investment in learning is required both at the point of entry into the labour market and, just as importantly, throughout the working life by constantly updating and adapting the employees’ knowledge, skills and competencies.

The Maltese people’s abilities are matched by their high aspirations. In this context, Malta’s main development objective is to restructure its economy by embarking on the “high road of innovation” (W. Fricke, 2001:20)¹ In practice, this means the creation of “highly skilled jobs producing high quality goods”. The occupants of such jobs must be capable of constant innovation in order to compete successfully on the global market. The realisation of this objective requires the establishment of local facilities for advanced vocational training at institutions like the University, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) and others. Where this is not feasible, specialised training may be imparted through exchange agreements with high-ranking foreign institutions.

All this, in turn, also requires the availability of adequate incentives for employees to dedicate their efforts to ambitious training projects which can best be secured for them through negotiated agreements among the social partners. It is strongly believed that the realisation of the above objectives will be facilitated if Malta avails itself fully of the new opportunities available following its EU accession.

The analysis suggests that Maltese enterprise has yet to fully realise the changing circumstances which it is facing, especially when measured in terms of the levels of its

investment in people. In other words, the Island's HRD potential is not being adequately utilised at present.

There can be mutual benefit resulting from greater synergy between the training infrastructure and the industrial sphere. An institutionalised dialogue is required between the educational organisations and industry so as to shape the training of human resources to the industry requirements.

The Governmental institution that is currently responsible to facilitate enterprise operations is Malta Enterprise, while that for employment and training is the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC). Together with the educational institutions, Malta Enterprise and ETC should analyse the current skill gaps in Malta and predict future skill requirements that result from current and planned future investment. The social partners should also be deeply involved in this process. As a result, the educational institutions will be in a better position to draft new prospectuses as well as to re-launch current courses. This analysis will also permit the system of training certification and quality assurance to update its criteria according to new requirements. Guidance and Counselling facilities represented by a National Vocational Guidance Unit would be in a better position to provide the right direction to individuals seeking further skill specialisation.

The synergy between Malta Enterprise, Employment and Training Corporation (ETC), the social partners and the educational institutions will also aid students to gain hands-on experience, and industry to commission its research requirements in these institutions.

The effectiveness of government incentives to companies for employee training and development (currently being provided under the Business Promotion Act, through ETC and Malta Enterprise) needs to be constantly monitored and its impact on HRD assessed.

11. Conclusion

The challenges and strategies will contribute towards overcoming some of the barriers that undoubtedly exist and help to bring about the culture or attitude change that is necessary to generate the new focus on investment in people. The strategies are to be used dynamically, and must inevitably change and evolve. New actions will need to be developed regularly to properly reflect that changing world of work to which they are meant to be applied.

All the social partners are to assume the responsibility for training and development of Malta's human resources. It is everyone's responsibility to get their house in order and adjust to the new work environment.

Government is making its commitment with respect to its own employees. It is already making a substantial contribution in HRD – particularly through the recent, significant investment in Malta by leading foreign companies operating in the vital Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. The ETC has also created a range of structures

through which its labour market interventions are implemented. Government has an obligation to ensure that its investments remain effective and are utilised efficiently.

The challenges confronting Maltese society are best viewed as opportunities to be grasped. All sectors of society should strengthen their resolve to mobilise Malta's key assets – our people – towards the attainment of our common objectives.

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13. APPENDICES

13.1 The Geo-Political Profile of the Maltese Islands

Malta is an archipelago of three main islands of which the largest (Malta) is 17 miles long and 9 miles wide covering a superficial area of about 96 square miles. The archipelago is situated about 60 miles South of Sicily (Italy). The second largest is Gozo (Ghawdex) with an area of approximately 26 square miles. Comino (Kemmuna) is only about 2 square miles and lies mid-way in the 4 mile channel that separates the two major islands.

Apart from being one of the most densely populated places in the world, the Maltese islands rightfully boast of a history spanning over six thousand years brimming with a wealth of civilisation. The strategic location of the islands made it inevitable that nearly all the major civilisations of their respective time made Malta their pride possession from where they controlled the maritime traffic plying the Mediterranean. They have all been here - Phoenicians from the East, Carthaginians from North Africa, the Romans, the Byzantine Greeks, the Arabs, Spanish medieval feudal princes, the Knights of St John, Napoleon the Emperor and finally the British Crown with a presence of lasting nearly 180 years. The UNESCO protected megalithic architecture comprising of free-standing temples and underground hypogea are thought to be older than Stonehenge.

The islands, strategically located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, have throughout their history acted as an important geo-political point of reference between Christian Western Europe and the Muslim region of North Africa and the Middle East. As stated the islands were ruled by various foreign powers ranging from the Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, Aragonese (c.1200-1529), the Knights of the Order of St John (1530-1798), the French (1798-1800) and the British (1801-1964). Great Britain formally acquired possession of Malta in 1801. The island staunchly supported the Britain through both World Wars and remained in the Commonwealth when it became independent in 1964. A decade later Malta became a republic. Since the mid-1980s, the island has become a major freight trans-shipment point, financial centre and a prime tourist destination within the Mediterranean region. On 1 May 2004, Malta will become a full member of the European Union (EU).

13.2 Malta's Fact File

Capital city:	Valletta
Government type:	Republic
Size:	27.4 km long and 14.5 km wide – 398 square kilometres
Situated about:	96 km from South of Sicily
Second largest island:	Gozo – 68 square kilometres
Religion:	Roman Catholic 98%
Languages:	Maltese (official), English (official)

Currency: Maltese Lira (MTL)
Legal system: based on English common law and Roman civil law
Population: about 385, 000 persons
Climate: Mediterranean with mild, rainy winters and very hot, dry Summers
Economy: Resources are limestone, productive labour force, has no domestic energy sources and depends on foreign trade, manufacturing and tourism.
Unemployment rate: 7% (2002)

**NEW METHODS AND PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL COHESION. RECENT
CHANGES IN THE ORGANISATION – LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR
SOCIAL INCLUSION – EMPLOYABILITY AND LIFE-LONG LEARNIG**

**(ΝΕΟΙ ΜΕΘΟΔΟΙ ΚΑΙ ΠΡΑΚΤΙΚΕΣ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗΣ ΣΥΝΟΧΗΣ.
ΠΡΟΣΦΑΤΕΣ ΑΛΛΑΓΕΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ – ΟΙ ΕΤΑΙΡΙΚΕΣ
ΜΟΡΦΕΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟΥ ΑΠΟΚΛΕΙΣΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΥΠΕΡ ΤΗΣ
ΑΠΑΣΧΟΛΗΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗΣ)**

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Abstract

Recent changes in the European Union and the other OECD member-States refer to the development of the Third Sector of the economy (NGO's, Social enterprises, voluntary work forms) all of which constitute interesting proposals for the social institutions in our country. This paper attempts to present the general framework, which aids in the formation of new proposals for a social innovation that bridges the gap between society and economy bringing in a transformation in the field of social intervention in many countries. Such new forms are social partnerships that develop at local level between all social partners and the social economy representing excluded populations such as women, migrants, youth, special needs people in general. The phenomenon, which dominates is characterized by the locality and the participation of all social agents. The main emphasis is to be able to deliver the inclusion at local level.

Περίληψη

Οι πρόσφατες εξελίξεις στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και τα κράτη μέλη του ΟΟΣΑ που αναφέρονται στην ανάπτυξη του Τρίτου Τομέα της οικονομίας (ΜΚΟ, εθελοντικές μορφές εργασίας και κοινωνικές επιχειρήσεις) αποτελούν ενδιαφέρουσες προτάσεις για τους κοινωνικούς φορείς της χώρας μας. Η παρουσίαση αυτή παρουσιάζει το γενικό πλαίσιο το οποίο συνδράμει στην δημιουργία των νέων προτάσεων κοινωνικής καινοτομίας που γεφυρώνουν το κενό μεταξύ κοινωνίας και οικονομίας έχουν δε αλλάξει το πεδίο κοινωνικής παρέμβασης σε πολλές χώρες μέλη. Αυτές οι νέες μορφές είναι οι εταιρικές σχέσεις (social partnerships) που αναπτύσσονται σε τοπικό επίπεδο μεταξύ των κοινωνικών εταίρων και των εθελοντικών οργανώσεων των ανέργων, των ΑΜΕΑ και των κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένων ομάδων εν γένει. Ένα φαινόμενο που κυριαρχεί χαρακτηρίζεται από την τοπικότητα και την πολυμετοχικότητα των τοπικών εταίρων με κύρια τάση την κοινωνική ένταξη (social inclusion).

Το γενικό μακροκοινωνιολογικό πλαίσιο. Η παγκοσμιοποίηση της εργασίας.

Οι μοντέρνες κοινωνίες αναπτύχθηκαν έχοντας βάση θεώρησης και ανάλυσης την εθνική κοινωνία. Αυτό δε μας ξαφνιάζει, είναι φυσικό, δεδομένου ότι το κράτος-έθνος έχει διαδραματίσει βασικό ρόλο στο σχηματισμό και την ανάπτυξη των μοντέρνων κοινωνιών μαζί με τα εθνικά συστήματα βιομηχανίας, την οικονομία της αγοράς, τα εθνικά συστήματα δικαίου, όλα βασισμένα σε σύνθετες μορφές οργάνωσης εργασίας. Η εστίαση όμως στο επίπεδο μιας χώρας ή ακόμη και σε υπερεθνική ομοσπονδία, όπως είναι η Ε.Ε., κρύβει τη βασική διασύνδεση του παγκόσμιου συστήματος.

Ενώ η επανάσταση στις επιστήμες κατά το 18^ο και 19^ο αιώνα γινόταν παράλληλα και στην οικονομία και την πολιτική, πρώτα στις φυσικές και μετά στις κοινωνικές επιστήμες, σήμερα η επανάσταση στις πληροφορίες, τις τεχνικές-επιστημονικές καινοτομίες δεν έχει παράλληλο αντίκρισμα σε κοινωνικές θεωρίες και καινοτομίες στον ίδιο βαθμό.

Είναι γεγονός ότι η γνώση σήμερα είναι αποσπασματική και ίσως αδύναμη να συλλάβει τις κοσμοϊστορικές αλλαγές και τους μετασχηματισμούς στην εργασία και τη ζωή.

Η εποχή της παγκοσμιοποίησης είναι εποχή του ριζοσπαστικού εκσυγχρονισμού η οποία απαιτεί αναδόμηση βασικών ερωτημάτων, εννοιολογικές αλλαγές και κοινωνικές καινοτομίες.

Ο 21^{ος} αιώνας είναι ο αιώνας που έχει τα χαρακτηριστικά ενός ενιαίου συστήματος αλλά και ενός κόσμου κομματιασμένου στον οποίο οι τάσεις για παγκόσμια ένταξη και παγκόσμια διακυβέρνηση είναι καιρίες.

Είναι γεγονός ότι πρέπει να δούμε καλύτερα το ρόλο των αγορών, των κοινοτήτων, των πολιτών και των κυβερνητικών οργανισμών ως θεσμικούς μηχανισμούς κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης και διακυβέρνησης στο παγκόσμιο σύστημα.

Ο σημερινός κόσμος της εργασίας μπορεί να παρομοιασθεί με το ολόγραμμα ακτίνας λέιζερ όπου κάθε σημείο εμπεριέχει την πληροφορία του ΟΛΟΥ μια και οι εργαζόμενοι πολίτες-εργάτες βάλλονται στην καθημερινή τους ζωή από μύριες πληροφορίες που έρχονται κάθε στιγμή από παντού.

Έτσι, αδυνατούμε να ξεχωρίσουμε το τοπικό από το διεθνές, το πολιτικό από το πολιτιστικό, το οικονομικό από το νομικό, το κοινωνικό από το οικονομικό δεδομένο, καθόσον αντιμετωπίζουμε έναν πολυσύνθετο κόσμο. Στην εποχή μας, το επίπεδο ανάλυσης για κάθε προσέγγιση τού φαινομένου εργασία, πρέπει να θεωρηθεί ως αυτό του παγκόσμιου επιπέδου. Η παγκόσμια κοινωνία της εργασίας και η σχέση της με την εκάστοτε εθνική και τοπική πραγματικότητα πρέπει να γίνει το κέντρο προσέγγισής μας. Η ενιαία κοινωνική πραγματικότητα αρθρώνεται με τις πολλαπλές μορφές τοπικής κοινωνικής πραγματικότητας.

Η καθιέρωση της παγκοσμιοποίησης ως κεντρικού φαινομένου της εποχής μας σημαίνει ότι ο παραδοσιακός εθνικός θεσμός τού κράτους βλέπει να διαβρώνεται η κυριαρχία του, εξαιτίας της αλληλεξάρτησης μεταξύ των μελών της διεθνούς κοινωνίας.

Η μεταβατικότητα είναι πλέον χαρακτηριστικό, λόγω της παγκοσμιοποίησης, όλων των αναπτυσσόμενων και αναπτυσσόμενων χωρών. Μεταβατικότητα σημαίνει παγκόσμιες ροές ανθρώπων (μετανάστευση), κεφαλαίου, πληροφοριών, ιδεών, τεχνολογιών οι οποίες αυξάνονται ραγδαία, ενώ οι θεσμοί και η πρακτική για τη διαχείριση τους υστερούν σε

επίπεδο οργάνωσης.

Κάθε περίοδος μεγάλων κοινωνικών αλλαγών, όχι μόνο σε πολιτικό, οικονομικό, τεχνικό, πολιτιστικό, επικοινωνιακό επίπεδο, δημιουργεί στους δρώντες έλλειμμα ασφαλείας και ανησυχιών, δεδομένου ότι το συνεχώς εξελισσόμενο κοινωνικό τοπίο δεν προλαβαίνει να παλιώσει. Το ρίσκο, λοιπόν, που γίνεται κυρίαρχο, δείχνει το δρόμο στην άνοδο ενός χαρακτηριστικού που έρχεται από την Παράδοση, δηλαδή αυτό της Εμπιστοσύνης.

Η εμπιστοσύνη, όμως, αναφέρεται εδώ ως έννοια που αγγίζει πλέον όλα τα κοινωνικά μεγέθη και τις κοινωνίες, είτε είναι αναπτυγμένες ή αναπτυσσόμενες είτε πρόκειται για μεγάλους οργανισμούς ή για μικρομεσαίους σχηματισμούς. Η εμπιστοσύνη σε μια παγκόσμια μορφή φαίνεται να αποτελεί απαραίτητο στοιχείο για την αντιμετώπιση όλων των κοσμοϊστορικών αλλαγών που συμβαίνουν τώρα παντού. Εμπιστοσύνη δημιουργείται με τη δημιουργία ενός πολιτισμού συνεργασίας στην εργασία και παντού. Ένας πολύπλοκος πολυπολιτισμικός κόσμος αναπτύσσεται δίνοντας έμφαση στην ανάγκη συγκρότησης πολυεπίπεδων τύπων διακυβέρνησης.

Σήμερα ένα ενιαίο σύστημα προσπαθεί να κυβερνήσει έναν αποσπασματικό κόσμο, χάρη στη μεγάλη ανάπτυξη στις επικοινωνίες και τις τεχνολογικές πληροφορίες, καθώς και στην ενσωμάτωση αυτών με την οικονομική και τη χρηματοδοτική πολιτική των διεθνών παραγόντων.

Δραστηριότητες κάθε είδους ενσωματώνονται ραγδαία στη δομή της οργάνωσης αυτών σε ένα διεθνές επίπεδο και κλίμακα – όπως οργανώνονται σε ένα παγκόσμιο-χωριό η παραγωγή και διανομή αγαθών και υπηρεσιών υλικού ή συμβολικού τύπου.

Τρεις είναι οι κύριοι θεσμικοί παράγοντες (αγορές, κυβέρνηση, οργανισμοί και κοινότητες πολιτών) οι οποίοι έρχονται σε επαφή μεταξύ τους, βασισμένοι στις τρεις βασικές αρχές της οργάνωσης της εργασίας: την ανταλλαγή (αγορά), την εξουσία /αρχή (κυβέρνηση) και την αλληλεγγύη (κοινωνία πολιτών-κοινωνική οικονομία) αποτελώντας τον κορμό των θεσμών κοινωνικής ένταξης και κοινωνικής ρύθμισης.

Οι σχέσεις όμως των θεσμών Αρχής με το Κράτος-Έθνος, η ανταλλαγή με την αγορά και η αλληλεγγύη με την κοινότητα των πολιτών είναι πολυσύνθετες και πολυδύναμες. Το κράτος, ενώ έχει το μονοπώλιο στην άσκηση της νόμιμης πίεσης /καταστολής και τη γενική ευθύνη ενσωμάτωσης των περιοχών και των κοινοτήτων, την ίδια στιγμή κάνει το ίδιο η κοινότητα των πολιτών που βασιζέται στην αλληλεγγύη και την αλληλεπίδραση. Παράλληλα, οι αγορές δεν είναι μόνο πεδίο οικονομικών αλλαγών αλλά και ασύμμετρων σχέσεων εξουσίας.

Οι αγορές, οι πολιτείες και οι κοινότητες αρθρώνονται στο συνδυασμένο αποτέλεσμα της διακυβέρνησης της εργασίας στο παγκόσμιο σύστημα.

Οι αγορές εκφράζουν θεσμικά την αρχή της ανταλλαγής. Είναι δε (οι αγορές) κοινωνικά κατασκευασμένες ολότητες που χρειάζονται ΡΥΘΜΙΣΗ. Ειδικά, η αγορά εργασίας χρειάζεται ρύθμιση με σκοπό τη διαφύλαξη της κοινωνικής συνοχής.

Η παγκόσμια αγορά και φυσικά αυτή της εργασίας είναι φαινόμενο μέγιστης σημασίας για τις εθνικές κοινωνίες της εργασίας, μια και οι σχέσεις του εθνικού και του παγκόσμιου είναι **ασύμμετρες**. Νωρίτερα οι εθνικές αγορές μπορούσαν να ρυθμίζονται με διανεμητική πολιτική. Στην Ευρώπη η κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση της εργασίας στη δημοκρατική σκηνή και η δημιουργία της πολιτείας της ευημερίας αποτέλεσε τη βάση μορφών κοινωνικής εναλλακτικής πολιτικής. Στην Ευρώπη η οργανωμένη εργασία έδωσε πίστη στη δημοκρατία, με σκοπό την απόκτηση πολιτικής (δικαίωμα ψήφου) και κοινωνικής

ταυτότητας (προστασία κοινωνική, ΕΣΥ).

Η δύναμη των Διεθνών Εταιρειών χαρακτηρίζεται από δύναμη χωρίς ευθύνη, δεδομένου ότι είναι υπόλογοι μόνο στους μετόχους τους. Οι παράγοντες αυτοί, παρόλη τη σημασία και την επιρροή τους στα αυτόνομα κράτη, δεν μπορούν να εγγυηθούν ΜΙΑ ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΑ ΔΙΑΚΥΒΕΡΝΗΣΗ.

Η παραδοσιακή αυτονομία τού κράτους είναι σε διαδικασία μετάβασης και αλλαγής με κύρια χαρακτηριστικά του τα ακόλουθα:

- Ρυθμίσεις ομοσπονδιακού κέντρου Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης.
- Επιπτώσεις των δραστηριοτήτων Πολυεθνικών Εταιρειών.
- Μαζική ΑΝΕΡΓΙΑ και Μαζική μετανάστευση αλλοδαπών και προσφύγων.
- Συσσώρευση προβλημάτων μεγάλης κλίμακας όπως ναρκωτικά, γυναίκες και νέοι αποκλεισμένοι από την αγορά εργασίας, περιβαλλοντικά προβλήματα, η οικογένεια που αλλάζει δραστικά με την κυριαρχία μονογονεϊκών οικογενειών κ.ά.

Η έμφαση στη σχετική αδυναμία της πολιτείας σε σχέση με την παγκόσμια κοινωνία δεν πρέπει να μας απομακρύνει από το γεγονός ότι τα είδη πολιτικής που μπορούν να ρυθμίσουν την εργασία μπορούν να εφαρμοσθούν ΜΟΝΟ σε Εθνικό Επίπεδο ή σε επίπεδο ΕΕ. Εκεί βρίσκεται και η σχετική υπεροχή τού Κράτους-Έθνους.

Η πολυεπίπεδη επίδραση τής παγκοσμιοποίησης λειτουργεί καταλυτικά στο ριζοσπαστικό μετασχηματισμό των κρατικών διοικήσεων, καθώς αυτές αναδιαρθρώνονται και διεισδύουν εκ νέου σε τοπικά και περιφερειακά δίκτυα.

Οι παγκόσμιες ΡΟΕΣ, αλλά και οι μορφές Περιφερειακής Ομοσπονδιακής Ευρωπαϊκής πολιτικής προωθούν είδη ΕΝΕΡΓΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΩΝ πολιτικών στην εργασία και γι' αυτό είναι αυτές που σημασιοδοτούν ένα κράτος ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΙΑΚΟ-ΕΝΕΡΓΟ που δρα καταλυτικά.

Η Ανοιχτή Μέθοδος Συντονισμού τής διαδικασίας τής Λισσαβόνας αποτελεί έκφραση τέτοιας ενεργούς διακυβέρνησης.

Η μέθοδος αυτή, που θεσμοθετήθηκε στη Λισσαβόνα, έθεσε ξεκάθαρα το θέμα Ασφάλειας/Προστασίας τής εργασίας και Ευελιξίας με κύρια έμφαση στη διαδικασία ενεργοποίησης των θεσμών τής Πρόνοιας με έμφαση την οργάνωση τής ευκαιρίας στην Εργασιακή Ζωή.

Πρέπει να δοθεί προτεραιότητα σ' αυτούς τους πολίτες που είναι πιο ΔΥΣΚΟΛΟ να εξυπηρετηθούν. Αυτό θέτει για πρώτη φορά την καθολικότητα των συστημάτων Κοινωνικής Συνοχής που δίνουν έμφαση στη ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗ εστιάζοντας στις ευπαθείς κοινωνικές ομάδες, τις κοινωνικές μειονότητες (γυναίκες και παιδιά που βρίσκονται σε φτώχεια), τους νέους και μακροχρόνια ανέργους, τα Α.Μ.Ε.Α. και τους εγκατεστημένους στη χώρα αλλοδαπούς.

Η διαδικασία από την Πρόνοια στην Απασχόληση δεν μπορεί να θεωρηθεί ως απλή μετάβαση προς την εργασία. Πρέπει να θεωρηθεί ως δυναμική διαδικασία που δημιουργεί σταδιοδρομία (καριέρα) για τα κοινωνικά επαγγέλματα κάτι πρωτόγνωρο για την Ελλάδα..

Η επαναλαμβανόμενη διακοπή της εργασίας δεν πρέπει να αντιμετωπίζεται από το σύστημα ως ξεχωριστό ατομικό γεγονός, αλλά να καλυφθεί ασφαλιστικά/εργασιακά. Κατά τον ίδιο λόγο η διανομή των εργασιακών επιδομάτων πρέπει να αναγνωρίσει την ανάγκη για κατάρτιση και μάθηση, καθώς και βελτίωση των δεξιοτήτων, αντί να συνεχίζει παθητικά να αφορά επιδόματα βοηθητικά τού χαμηλού μισθού.

Η Υπηρεσία Απασχόλησης πρέπει ενεργά να ασχοληθεί με την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση. Οι χαμηλές επενδύσεις σε υποδομές δημόσιου συμφέροντος όπως είναι οι δημόσιες μεταφορές, η παιδική φροντίδα, οι δημόσιοι χώροι αναψυχής, τα πάρκα, ο πολιτισμός, η υγεία, φανερώνουν όχι μόνο χαμηλό επενδυτικό κλίμα αλλά και κίνηση ξέμακρη από την απασχόληση.

Ένας σημαντικός τομέας δράσης για την εργασία του μέλλοντος είναι το πεδίο της γνώσης-πληροφορίας. Είναι γνωστό ότι ο επαγγελματικός βίος γίνεται σύνθετος και ότι η εργασία αποκτά ακανόνιστες μορφές που συνάδουν με την πληθυντικότητα που συγκροτεί η παγκοσμιοποίηση.

Κυρίαρχο χαρακτηριστικό της παγκοσμιοποίησης είναι η γνώση-πληροφορία οι οποία ρυθμίζει πλέον την όποια κοινωνική και οικονομική υπόσταση.

Η νέα αυτή κατάσταση φαίνεται να χαρακτηρίζεται από διαδικασία ενοποίησης της εργασίας και των μορφών της με κυρίαρχο χαρακτηριστικό τη μεταβατικότητα των μορφών της. Εργασία, κατάρτιση, επιχειρηματικότητα, σταθμοί εργασίας μεταξύ δυο θέσεων (εργασίας), η ενσωμάτωση της φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων, των παιδιών, των ατόμων με μαθησιακές δυσκολίες, όλα φαίνεται ότι πρέπει να αντιμετωπισθούν ολιστικά σε τοπικό επίπεδο.

Παράλληλα αυτές οι τελευταίες αλλαγές σε παγκόσμια αλλά και σε τοπική κλίμακα έχουν δημιουργήσει τις προϋποθέσεις για μια αποκατάσταση των κοινωνικών κατηγοριών στοχεύοντας σε έναν νέο κοινωνικό πυρήνα, την οικογένεια, όπου τώρα είναι πολύ διαφορετική από ότι παλαιότερα. Οι μονογονεϊκές οικογένειες αποτελούν ένα μεγάλο τμήμα των κοινωνιών μας, η οικιακή απασχόληση και η γυναικεία αναπαραγωγική εργασία είναι αιτίες των αλλαγών αυτών. Ο ελεύθερος χρόνος έχει ενταχθεί πλέον μέσα στο σύστημα εργασία – ζωή που ομογενοποιείται πλέον.

Η εργασία καθώς και η ζωή έξω από αυτήν μεταμορφώνονται πλέον οργανωτικά σε μία ενιαία μορφή. Η φύση της παραγωγής και αυτών που αναπαράγουν καθίστανται ασαφή καθώς η παραδοσιακή παραγωγή μεταφέρεται σε αλλοδαπές χώρες όπου ελέγχεται κερδοσκοπικά από τα παλαιά βιομηχανικά κέντρα.

Η "αποβιομηχάνιση" στον Πρώτο Κόσμο δημιουργεί δομές στην οικονομία των υπηρεσιών όπου αναπαράγεται η δράση στα πεδία όπου πραγματοποιείται η συλλογική χρήση κοινωνικής αναπαραγωγής σε τομείς δηλαδή όπως είναι η υγεία, η εκπαίδευση και η κοινωνική προστασία. Οι προτεινόμενες ρυθμίσεις αφορούν προσβάσεις στις κοινωνικές υπηρεσίες της πολιτείας οι οποίες πρέπει να χαρακτηρίζονται από την ικανότητα προσπέλασής τους από τις λαϊκές μάζες..

Εφόδια όπως η εκπαίδευση, υγεία, η κοινωνική προστασία, η εξειδίκευση, αποτελούν στοιχειώδη κοινωνικά δικαιώματα σε μια προηγμένη δημοκρατική πολιτεία.

Η υποδομή για την ανατροφή ενός παιδιού όπως είναι η προσχολική μάθηση/εκπαίδευση, το νηπιαγωγείο, η φύλαξη του παιδιού, τα πολιτιστικά κέντρα, τα κέντρα απασχόλησης

νέων, όλα θεωρούνται βασικά δεδομένα για την κοινωνική ανάπτυξη αποτελώντας την βάση για μια κοινωνική πολιτεία . Χωρίς τα παραπάνω είναι δύσκολο στις μέρες μας να αναδειχθεί μια κοινωνία σε ανθρώπινη και να γίνει ανταγωνιστική . Βλέπετε ο ανταγωνισμός είναι βασισμένος σε μορφές ανθρώπινης συνεργασίας και αλληλεγγύης και όχι το αντίθετο. Η μικρότερη τοπική μονάδα, η γειτονιά και η οικογένεια έχουν μετατραπεί σε έναν νέο ακρογωνιαίο λίθο της τοπικής κοινωνικής ανάπτυξης που στηρίζεται στην κοινωνική αλληλεγγύη.

Αυτός είναι και ο τρόπος για τον οποίο η τοπική ανάπτυξη πρέπει να περιλαμβάνει όλες τις προοπτικές της ανάπτυξης – οικονομία , κοινωνία , την σωματική και πνευματική ανάπτυξη Θα πρέπει επίσης να περιλαμβάνει την ανάπτυξη και την ανακατανομή των πόρων. Ο στόχος πρέπει να είναι αρχικά η υποστήριξη στην ανάπτυξη και στην εξέλιξη των τοπικών περιοχών στο εσωτερικό του εθνικού πλαισίου .Στη συνέχεια να διασφαλιστεί η κατανομή μιας τέτοιας ανάπτυξης όπου θα είναι ευρέως διανεμημένη και τρίτον οι κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένες ομάδες και περιοχές να συμμετέχουν όλο και περισσότερο σε αυτήν την ανάπτυξη .

Εκεί ακριβώς βρίσκεται και η έννοια της ευέλικτης-ασφαλείας όπου η πολιτική της απασχόλησης συναντά την πολιτική για την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση και η απασχόληση πρέπει να γίνει περισσότερο ευέλικτη, αλλά και η κοινωνική προστασία να γίνει περισσότερο ορατή και με καλύτερες προδιαγραφές.

Η σύνθεση των δύο πεδίων της απασχόλησης και της κοινωνικής προστασίας αποτελεί τη βάση για τη δημιουργία της τόσο σημαντικής κατηγορίας της κοινωνικής εμπιστοσύνης και αυτοπεποίθησης που αναφερθήκαμε νωρίτερα. Μέσα ακριβώς σ' αυτά τα πλαίσια πρέπει να δούμε το ρόλο των κοινωνικών εταιρειών, των φορέων της κοινωνικής οικονομίας και των Μη-Κυβερνητικών-Οργανώσεων.

Ενώ η κυβέρνηση έχει τον τελικό λόγο σ' όλα αυτά, η ενεργός συμμετοχή της κοινωνίας των πολιτών είναι απολύτως βασική για την εξασφάλιση αποτελεσμάτων στα Εθνικά Σχέδια Δράσης. Η κοινωνία των πολιτών χρειάζεται εργαλεία, για να λειτουργήσει και να φέρει τα προσδοκώμενα αποτελέσματα.

Οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί αποτελούν τέτοιες μορφές προωθώντας τη συνοχή, την εμπιστοσύνη και την ομαλή επικοινωνία, όλα αναγκαία δεδομένα για **διάφανες ανταλλαγές**. Οι κοινωνικοί συνεταιρισμοί πρέπει να εγκαθιδρυθούν ως οι ειδικοί σε κοινωνικά θέματα που λαμβάνουν χώρα στην περιοχή τους. Η εγκαθίδρυση εμπιστοσύνης και εξειδίκευσης μπορούν να βοηθήσουν στην ανάπτυξη αποτελεσματικών και μακροχρόνιων συνεταιρισμών.

Οι Κοινωνικές Εταιρικές μορφές μπορούν να εστιάσουν τη δράση τους στις εξατομικευμένες ανάγκες της περιοχής τους, να προσφέρουν βοήθεια σε ευπαθείς ομάδες και εκπαίδευση σε μειονεκτούντες ομάδες. Το πλέον σημαντικό είναι ότι βοηθούν στην ανάπτυξη τεχνικών εφαρμογών, οι οποίες μειώνουν την απόσταση με τα μεγάλα πολιτιστικά και κοινωνικά κέντρα συντελώντας στη χώρο-χρονική σύγκλιση μεταξύ των περιοχών.

Οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί μπορούν να εκφράζουν σε τοπικό επίπεδο μορφές πολιτικής ευέλικτης ασφαλείας με έμφαση όλους αυτούς που δεν μπορεί να φθάσει η κρατική κεντρική πολιτική. Δείχνουν πως σε επίπεδο περιοχής η συνοχή σε πολιτικό, κοινωνικό και

πολιτιστικό επίπεδο μπορεί να σχεδιασθεί με τη συμμετοχή οργανώσεων των μειονοτήτων, των γυναικών, των νέων, των εθελοντικών φορέων, των περιβαλλοντικών ενώσεων. Οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί μπορούν να λειτουργήσουν διπλά, δηλαδή ως σχεδιαστές αλλά και ως εφαρμοστές πολιτικής και προγραμμάτων για την ενεργοποίηση της απασχόλησης. Έχουν την άμεση αντιπροσώπευση των τοπικών δυνάμεων, των ενώσεων, των συνεταιρισμών και μπορούν να συγκροτούν την ενεργό βάση για το σχηματισμό τού κοινωνικού κεφαλαίου.

Με το κοινωνικό κεφάλαιο οι κοινωνίες και οι οικονομίες τους έρχονται κοντά σε ένα πυκνό δίκτυο ενώσεων όπου συγκροτείται η βάση διασύνδεσης τής ευελιξίας τής εργασίας με την κοινωνική προστασία.

Εκείνο που πρέπει να επισημανθεί, επίσης, είναι η ανάγκη για βελτίωση τής ποιότητας τού ανθρώπινου δυναμικού. Η βελτίωση και η ενίσχυση τής Ενεργούς Μάθησης αποτελεί κύριο τρόπο βελτίωσης τής ανταγωνιστικότητας.

Η παγκοσμιοποίηση και οι νέες τεχνολογίες έχουν δημιουργήσει λοιπόν δραστικές εξελίξεις στη διακυβέρνηση και την εργασία. *Λόγω αυτού του φαινομένου το Κράτος δε μειώνεται αλλά αλλάζει.* Οι νέες προτάσεις για ασφάλεια και ευελιξία σημαίνουν ότι η εμπιστοσύνη είναι παντού και πάντοτε βασική για τη λειτουργία τής διακυβέρνησης τής εργασίας, η οποία πρέπει να στηρίζεται στις τοπικές κοινότητες.

Οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί και άλλες εταιρικές μορφές δομημένες σε τοπικό επίπεδο αποτελούν τις κύριες μορφές για την κοινωνική ανάπτυξη και απασχόληση σε συνθήκες παγκοσμιοποίησης.

Κυβερνητικότητα και Παγκοσμιοποίηση

Οι κυβερνήσεις πρέπει πλέον να συναποφασίζουν σε έναν κόσμο μεγάλων κοινωνικό-πολιτικών αλλαγών που επηρεάζουν τις εσωτερικές διεργασίες. Κατά παράδοξο τρόπο, οι παγκόσμιες αγορές φαίνεται ότι βοηθούν, τις απόμακρες και μικρές περιοχές, που έχουν να προσφέρουν κάτι το ιδιαίτερο πολιτιστικά ή στην παραγωγή ιδιαίτερων προϊόντων (niche products and services) λόγω της απελευθέρωσης των επικοινωνιών και της αντίστοιχης μείωσης του κόστους της επικοινωνίας.

Μια ενιαία τοπική ανάπτυξη προϋποθέτει για παράδειγμα ενέργειες όπου θα δραστηριοποιήσουν και τις δύο πλευρές της τοπικής αγοράς δηλαδή και την προσφορά αλλά και την ζήτηση. Ο ρόλος των κοινωνικών συνεταιρισμών με την συλλογική τους δράση στο γενικότερο πλαίσιο εξαρτάται από τις τοπικές συνθήκες, από την φύση και το είδος των διαφορών που υπάρχουν στις υπάρχουσες παρεχόμενες υπηρεσίες. Καθώς επίσης και από την στρατηγική που πρέπει να ακολουθηθεί για να επιληφθεί αυτού του είδους των διαφορών με τα τοπικά συμβούλια της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης.

Είναι γεγονός ότι το νέο "κοινωνικό" περιβάλλον εκφράζεται με νέες έννοιες, όπως κοινωνικό κεφάλαιο, κοινωνική συνοχή, τοπικά σύμφωνα απασχόλησης, που έχουν γίνει μέρος του νέου λεξιλογίου της κοινωνικής ανάπτυξης.

Τα κύρια θέματα που συνθέτουν την τοπική ατζέντα (όπως την Τοπική Ατζέντα 21) σήμερα είναι το πώς οι τοπικοί πόροι θα αξιοποιηθούν καλύτερα, πώς θα γίνει η εταιρική σχέση μεταξύ του Δημοσίου, του Ιδιωτικού και του Τρίτου Τομέα (ΜΚΟ, και εθελοντισμός) στις τοπικές περιοχές, ώστε αυτές να αναδείξουν την τοπική τους

κληρονομιά, το φυσικό και πολιτιστικό περιβάλλον σε μία γενική προσέγγιση από Κάτω προς τα Πάνω.

Η Ελλάδα βαίνει προς μια κατάσταση η οποία είναι σε μια διαρκή ανάπτυξη των αγορών συνοδευόμενη από την αυξανόμενη συνειδητοποίηση ότι μια τέτοια ανάπτυξη θα πρέπει να είναι καλύτερα κατανοημένη γεωγραφικά , όχι μόνο έχοντας σαν βάση την δίκαιη κατανομή αλλά διασφαλίζοντας ότι τέτοιου είδους ανάπτυξη δεν θα παρακωλύεται από τις αρνητικές επιπτώσεις της υπερσυγκέντρωσης όπως είναι η έλλειψη στέγης, επαρκούς δικτύου μαζικών μεταφορών, ικανής διανομής τοπικών αγαθών και γενικά η μη αποδεκτή ποιότητα ζωής .

Από τον Κορπορατισμό στην συμμετοχική και συνεταιριστική οικονομία.

Εάν μέχρι τώρα ο Τριπαρτισμός (Εργασία, Εργοδοσία, Κράτος) ήταν σχετικά περιορισμένος στις μεταπολεμικές Σκανδιναβικές χώρες και στην Βόρεια Αμερική, τα τελευταία χρόνια πολλές κυβερνήσεις έχουν αυξήσει την συνεργασία τους με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους, συμπεριλαμβανομένων και αυτών της κοινωνικής οικονομίας, ιδιαίτερα σε θέματα απασχόλησης και κατάρτισης. Φυσικά όλα αυτά σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Το πως δουλεύει το σύστημα σε τοπικό επίπεδο είναι μια λεπτομέρεια η οποία ακόμη βρίσκεται σε ανάπτυξη.

Ο Τριπαρτισμός στην Αυστρία, Γερμανία, Δανία, Ολλανδία, σε τοπικό επίπεδο, φαίνεται ότι έχει αναπτυχθεί αξιόλογα, επιτρέποντας την εφαρμογή όσων έχουν συμφωνηθεί σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Γενικά, όμως, ο Τριπαρτισμός παρουσιάζει μία κρίση αντιπροσώπευσης, γιατί δεν έχει να πει πολλά για τους άλλους κοινωνικούς φορείς της "κοινωνικής οικονομίας", όπως του εθελοντισμού, των ΜΚΟ και των φορέων των κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένων. Άλλα συναφή θέματα που πρέπει να λυθούν αφορούν την σχέση Τριπαρτισμού με τις Ενεργείες Πολιτικές στην Αγορά Εργασίας. Σε χώρες με συγκρουσιακό εργασιακό, πολιτιστικό και πολιτικό περιβάλλον, όπου απουσιάζει η τυπική μεσολάβηση (mediation και εδώ έγκειται η σημασία της νομικό-διοικητικής θεώρησης) υπάρχει ένα εργασιακό κλίμα περιορισμένης εμπιστοσύνης μεταξύ των εταίρων. Το φαινόμενο οξύνεται ιδιαίτερα σε συνθήκες αδύνατης παρουσίας του κράτους, ως θεσμικού γενικού ισοδυνάμου που να μηδενίζει τις μικρές εστίες εξουσίας οι οποίες έχουν η καθεμία περισσότερο κέρδος ως προσωπικές εξουσίες παρά ως συνεταιριστικές μορφές.

Κοινωνικά Partnerships.

Σε πολλές χώρες ο θεσμός των εταιρικών μορφών είναι καθιερωμένος, όπως λ.χ. στο Βέλγιο (Υπο-Περιφερειακές Πλατφόρμες Sub-Regional Platforms στην περιοχή της Φλάνδρας), στην Ιρλανδία (Εταιρικές βάσεις σε περιοχή –AREA BASED PARTNESHIPS-A.B.P.) και στον Καναδά (Εταιρείες Ανάπτυξης για το Μέλλον της Κοινότητας). Στην Ιταλία, ο νόμος του 1995 που προώθησε την ανάπτυξη σε υποανάπτυκτες περιοχές της χώρας προσκαλεί τα συνδικάτα, τους εργοδότες και τις

τοπικές αρχές να συνεργασθούν και να παρουσιάσουν προτάσεις για την ανάπτυξη παραγωγικών δραστηριοτήτων (εκτός υποδομών) οι οποίες είναι ενταγμένες σε αναπτυξιακά σχέδια σε επίπεδο υπό-περιοχής.

Τον Ιούνιο του 1996, το Συμβούλιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ζήτησε την πειραματική εισαγωγή των "Περιφερειακών Συμφώνων Απασχόλησης-Π.Σ.Α.", με σκοπό να δώσει το στίγμα της όλης προσπάθειας. Σήμερα υπάρχουν πάνω από 90 τέτοιες περιφερειακές ή τοπικές εταιρικές συμφωνίες υπό την αιγίδα των Περιφερειακών Συμφώνων Απασχόλησης στις χώρες, μέλη της Ε.Ε.

Το πλεονέκτημα αυτών των Π.Σ.Α, είναι ότι φέρουν μαζί τους εργαζόμενους, τους εργοδότες και τις εθελοντικές ομάδες για συγκεκριμένη δράση σε τοπικό επίπεδο. Οι σχέσεις αυτές δεν αποκλείουν καμιά ομάδα, όπως γίνεται στην περίπτωση του Τριπαρτισμού. Οι εταιρικές σχέσεις δημιουργούν τα forum, όπου μπορεί να πραγματοποιηθεί μια συλλογική λύση του προβλήματος που είναι συμβατή με την τοπική ιδιομορφία.

Ο Δρ. Charles F. Sabel ονόμασε την έννοια αυτή "δημοκρατικό πειραματισμό". Αυτή η έννοια αποτελεί ένα θετικό παράδειγμα για την αντιπροσωπευτική δημοκρατία. Είναι γεγονός ότι τέτοιες μορφές δημοκρατικής έκφρασης αποτελούν σύμπτωμα ενός φαινομένου το οποίο οφείλεται στην ανάπτυξη νέων ομάδων στην κοινωνική οικονομία η οποία αποτελεί τον τρίτο τομέα της οικονομίας μεταξύ της δημόσιας και ιδιωτικής οικονομίας. Φαίνεται ότι η αντιπροσωπευτική δημοκρατία με την παραδοσιακή της μορφή χάνει την σημασία της όσο περνάει ο χρόνος ενώ η συμμετοχική δημοκρατία αυξάνεται διαρκώς ως φαινόμενο. Οι εταιρικές σχέσεις εκφράζουν για πρώτη φορά μια νέα έννοια πολιτικής συμμετοχής, όπου κανένας φορέας δεν αποκλείεται από αυτές. Από τον Τριπαρτισμό (Εργασία, Εργοδοσία και Κράτος) έχουμε τώρα ένα νέο πολιτικο-κοινωνικό φαινόμενο το οποίο είναι πολυμεριστικό. Οι εταιρικές αυτές μορφές εκφράζουν νέες δυνάμεις κοινοτικού- κοινωνικού πεδίου, ικανές να ανασυνθέσουν το κοινωνικό κεφάλαιο.

Το κοινωνικό κεφάλαιο εκφράζει μορφές κοινωνικής οργάνωσης, δίκτυα, θεσμούς συμμετοχής και κοινωνικής εμπιστοσύνης σε τοπικό επίπεδο, τα οποία δρουν καταλυτικά για τον συντονισμό και την συνεργασία προς αμοιβαίο όφελος. Η κοινωνική αλληλεγγύη και εμπιστοσύνη είναι απαραίτητη για τον σχηματισμό του κοινωνικού κεφαλαίου, πράγμα που έχει ως άμεσο αποτέλεσμα την κοινωνική συνοχή μειώνοντας ταυτόχρονα το κόστος των συναλλαγών μεταξύ των φορέων και επομένως επιταχύνοντας την κοινωνική ανάπτυξη. Η μείωση του κόστους των συναλλαγών επιφέρει ομογενοποίηση του κοινωνικού πεδίου και συγκρότηση μιας εύρυθμης λειτουργίας στις κάθε είδους κοινωνικές ανταλλαγές (οικονομικές, πολιτικές). Οι υπηρεσίες και η κυκλοφορία των καταναλωτών - πολιτών αναπτύσσονται, δεδομένου ότι η κοινωνική συνοχή βασίζεται στο κοινωνικό , κεφάλαιο, πράγμα που βοηθά στην εύρυθμη και οικονομικότερη διανομή των πλουτοπαραγωγικών πηγών. Με τον τρόπο αυτό μειώνεται η εγκληματικότητα και ο κοινωνικός αποκλεισμός γεγονός που συνεπάγεται εξοικονόμηση πόρων από δαπάνες για ασφάλεια, φυλακές, δικαστήρια, κλοπές και νομικές προσφυγές. Το κοινωνικό κεφάλαιο είναι η βάση των κοινοτικών-κοινωνικών αρχών της ισότητας η "equity".

Τέτοιες προοπτικές έχουν αποτελέσει την βάση κοινωνικο-οικονομικής ανάπτυξης στην περιοχή της Τρίτης Ιταλίας, Ιρλανδία, Καταλονία, Βασκία, όπως αποδεικνύει η μελέτη των

Ιρλανδικών Τοπικών Εταιρικών Συμφώνων (ΟΟΣΑ, 1996). Η μελέτη αυτή έχει δείξει ότι υπάρχει πρόβλημα με το θέμα επίλυσης των συγκρούσεων μεταξύ των εταιρών, μια και η άμεση συμμετοχή δημιουργεί προβλήματα στην λήψη αποφάσεων μεταξύ των διορισμένων αξιωματούχων και των δημοκρατικά εκλεγμένων φορέων στους οποίους έχει επενδυθεί η εμπιστοσύνη των τοπικών ψηφοφόρων.

Υπάρχει επίσης το πρόβλημα της διάχυσης της εξουσίας για την λήψη αποφάσεων σε διαφορετικούς εταίρους, πράγμα που μπορεί να δημιουργήσει συγκρούσεις μεταξύ τους. Το θέμα των νέων τεχνολογιών οι οποίες απειλούν παλιές θέσεις εργασίας καθώς και οι θέσεις των φορέων των εργαζομένων αποτελούν αιτία για τέτοιες συγκρούσεις, γιατί διαφέρουν. Παράλληλα, οι φορείς των εργοδοτών επιμένουν μονομερώς στην μείωση του εργατικού κόστους. Σημαντικά προβλήματα υπάρχουν στο θέμα της παρακολούθησης και της αποτίμησης των διαφόρων οικονομικών δράσεων. Είναι γνωστό ότι τέτοιες εταιρικές σχέσεις στηρίζονται σε δημόσια χρηματοδότηση, διότι είναι συνδεδεμένες με την κυβέρνηση σε τοπικό και μέσο κυβερνητικό επίπεδο. Τέτοιες σχέσεις αποτελούν βασική έκφραση μιας εθνικής πολιτικής ανάπτυξης σε τοπικό επίπεδο. Είναι αναγκαίο να αναπτυχθεί η αξιολόγηση της αποτελεσματικότητας της χρήσης των δημόσιων χρημάτων ανά περίπτωση. Δηλαδή, η εθνική πολιτική που ευθύνεται για την διανομή των πόρων σε τοπικό επίπεδο πρέπει να γίνεται με κριτήριο την έννοια του κόστους και τις νέες μορφές αξιόπιστης κοινωνικής λογιστικής. Ο ρόλος της πολιτικής ηγεσίας σκοπό έχει να επιταχύνει ρυθμίζοντας κοινωνικές και οικονομικές επενδύσεις προς την τοπική κοινωνία και την περιφέρεια. Παράλληλα υπάρχει ένα θέμα που σχετίζεται με τους βαθμούς ελευθερίας και αυτονομίας του τοπικού-πολιτικού. Οι περιφερειακοί παράγοντες θέλουν αυτονομία, ενώ η κεντρική διοίκηση επιθυμεί μηχανισμούς ελέγχου και αξιολόγησης με κριτήρια εθνικού μεγέθους. Είναι δεδομένο ότι το εθνικό επίπεδο πρέπει να βοηθήσει τα τοπικά και περιφερειακά επίπεδα να αναπτυχθούν πέραν των πολιτικών κατευθύνσεων, βοηθώντας την ανάπτυξη των κριτηρίων οικονομικής και κοινωνικής ανάπτυξης.

Ο ρόλος των τοπικών αρχών, των δήμων, των κοινοτήτων σε χώρες - μέλη του Ο.Ο.Σ.Α. - έχει αναπτυχθεί, αναλαμβάνοντας στρατηγικές δυναμικές, όπου κύρια έκφραση τους είναι η συμμετοχή στις εθνικές πολιτικές απασχόλησης.

Είναι γεγονός ότι η τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση είναι σε θέση να αναγνωρίσει τις ιδιαίτερες ανάγκες που αντανακλούν τις πιέσεις των πολιτών και των τοπικών ψηφοφόρων. Αρκετές δημοτικές αρχές διαθέτουν σημαντικούς πόρους για την οργάνωση και λειτουργία των υπηρεσιών απασχόλησης. Υπηρεσίες για "one-stop-stop", υπηρεσίες με τα σχετικά info-ciosques έχουν αναπτυχθεί από πολλούς δήμους, όπου οι πολίτες έχουν πρόσβαση σε υπηρεσίες οι οποίες παρέχονται από τις τοπικές αρχές.

Οι εθνικές κυβερνήσεις έχουν κάνει σημαντικά βήματα, μέσω των οποίων οι δήμοι δραστηριοποιούνται. Στην Δανία οι δήμοι υποχρεούνται από το 1994 να προσφέρουν απασχόληση σε όλα τα άτομα κάτω των είκοσι ετών, καθώς και στους μακροχρόνια ανέργους. Στην Σουηδία οι δήμοι έχουν υποχρεωθεί από το 1995 να λάβουν μέτρα για να βοηθήσουν άτομα κάτω των είκοσι ετών με την υποστήριξη των Δημόσιων Υπηρεσιών Απασχόλησης. Στο Βέλγιο, από το 1997, όλες οι κοινότητες υποχρεούνται να δημιουργήσουν τοπικές υπηρεσίες απασχόλησης για τους μακροχρόνια ανέργους, αυτούς

που είναι άνεργοι πέραν των τριών ετών. Στην Γερμανία, η ομοσπονδιακή κυβέρνηση χρηματοδοτεί δραστηριότητες που δημιουργούν απασχόληση για τους λαμβάνοντας ήδη επιδόματα "πρόνοιας".

Είναι γεγονός ότι πρέπει να μελετηθούν σε κάθε περίπτωση οι συνθήκες για μια αποτελεσματική συνεργασία μεταξύ των Δήμων και των Υπηρεσιών Απασχόλησης. Οι τοπικές εταιρικές σχέσεις έχουν βοηθήσει την ανάπτυξη της απασχόλησης μέσω της ικανοποίησης των τοπικών αναγκών, ιδιαίτερα στην παροχή κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών. Πρέπει η αποτελεσματική συνεργασία μεταξύ των Δήμων και των Δημόσιων Υπηρεσιών Απασχόλησης να επιτευχθεί, δεδομένου ότι αποτελεί τον κύριο τρόπο συνεργασίας του Κράτους με την Τοπική Κοινότητα.

Κρίνεται απαραίτητο στις μελέτες που διεξάγονται στο παρόν αλλά και στο μέλλον να εξετάζεται πώς μπορεί να βελτιστοποιηθεί η ανάπτυξη αλλά και η κατανομή αυτής της ανάπτυξης με έναν τρόπο όπου θα προάγει την κοινωνία και θα συμπεριλαμβάνει και θα υποστηρίζει την τοπική και την περιφερειακή ανάπτυξη μέσα από το φάσμα μιας διαρκούς εθνικής ευημερίας. Οι μελέτες θα πρέπει να καθορίσουν αντίστοιχους ρόλους στην εφαρμογή, στην ανάπτυξη κατάλληλων δομών με συμπεφωνημένο το κατάλληλο πλαίσιο όπου θα έχουν αξιολογηθεί στην εκτέλεση τους, από την έναρξη του κάθε νέου προγράμματος ή σχεδιασμού που μπορεί να είναι το κλειδί μιας μελλοντικής επιτυχίας.

Για να επιτευχθεί ο ρόλος του περιγράμματος αυτού απαιτείται οι κοινοτικές ομάδες να καθοδηγούνται από αποτελεσματικά και ισχυρά τοπικά συμβούλια.

Οι κοινοτικές ομάδες πρέπει να έχουν δομημένη συνεργασία όπου θα έχει σχεδιαστεί από τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους, τις κοινοτικές ομάδες, τους τοπικούς συμβούλους και από τα γραφεία και τους οργανισμούς που σχετίζονται με την συγκεκριμένη πόλη.

Ένα αποτελεσματικό Κοινοτικό Συμβούλιο πρέπει να έχει τα παρακάτω στοιχεία

- 1) Έναν ισχυρό, ανεξάρτητο και ουσιαστικό ηγετικό πρόσωπο στην προεδρική έδρα.
- 2) Μια σαφή και με προέχουσα επικεντρωμένη στρατηγική στην ανάπτυξη όπου θα είναι πραγματοποιήσιμη και ελέγξιμη.
- 3) Μια σαφή ιδέα για το που αρχίζουν οι ευθύνες του αλλά και που οι ευθύνες αυτές τελειώνουν.
- 4) Τον χρόνο και τα μέσα να αναπτύξει τις δεξιότητες σαν στρατηγικές και την ικανότητα του να δράσει σαν μια ομάδα
- 5) Την δυνατή πεποίθηση στις διαβουλεύσεις σαν μια διπλή διαδικασία ουσιαστικής διάδρασης.
- 6) Την πραγματική δέσμευση από όλα τα μέλη του Συμβουλίου στον αντικειμενικό στόχο των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιρισμών και την συνειδητοποίηση ότι αυτά τα μέσα των Συνεταιριστικών σχεδίων θα έχουν απήχηση σε κάθε μέλος - δικαιούχο του οργανισμού.
- 7) Υποστήριξη στα μέλη του Συμβουλίου από τους οργανισμούς, τους οποίους ανήκουν, στον αντικειμενικό στόχο και στα σχέδια του Συνεταιρισμού – συμπεριλαμβάνοντας την προθυμία στην από κοινού οικονομική ενίσχυση.

Εφαρμογή

Η εφαρμογή των συμφωνημένων σχεδίων είναι όπως είναι φανερό το πρώτο βήμα για να εξασφαλιστεί η επιτυχία του αντικειμενικού στόχου. Οι κοινωνικοί συνεταιρισμοί θέλοντας να χειριστούν με άλλους τρόπους τις τοπικές οικονομίες έχουν αναπτύξει μια σειρά μηχανικών εφαρμογών , οι οποίες εξαρτώνται από την έκταση που επιδίδουν στις απευθείας πρωτοβουλίες, στην αλληλεγγύη με τα άλλα γραφεία και την κατά κύριο λόγο εμπλοκή στην εφαρμογή συμβουλών παρασυρόμενοι από τους άλλους . Η μελέτη των κοινωνικών και αγροτικών συνεταιρισμών μας έχει βοηθήσει στο να προσδιορίσουμε την διαδικασία εφαρμογής του προγράμματος με τους ακόλουθους τρόπους :

- 1) Προσδιορισμός των ομάδων –στόχων που έχουν προτεραιότητα καθώς και των γεωγραφικών περιοχών που βασίζονται στις κοινωνικό-οικονομικές μελέτες και εκτιμήσεις των μελών και του προσωπικού του Τοπικού Συμβουλίου.
- 2) Προσδιορισμός των ελλείψεων , των “ κενών ” στην παροχή υπηρεσιών και υποστήριξη στις ομάδες πληθυσμού που τις χρησιμοποιούν.
- 3) Διερεύνηση των σημαντικότερων ελλείψεων ώστε να προσδιοριστούν οι ακριβείς χειρισμοί που απαιτούνται , καθώς και να πεισθούν οι μελλοντικοί χρηματοδότες για τον συσχετισμό και τις επιπτώσεις που αυτοί θα έχουν από αυτές τις ελλείψεις.
- 4) Υλοποίηση πιλοτικών πρωτοβουλιών, κατά κανόνα σε συνεργασία με τις υπηρεσίες του Κράτους και της Κοινότητας και με την συν-χρηματοδότηση των Συν-εταιρισμών και τις υπηρεσίες που είναι σχετικές με το αντικείμενο.
- 5) Αξιολόγηση της επιτυχίας της πορείας του έργου και προτάσεις για πιθανές τροποποιήσεις και περαιτέρω ανάπτυξη.
- 6) Ανάπτυξη των επιτυχημένων δράσεων από την πορεία του έργου, κοινωνική υποστήριξη, ενίσχυση υλικής υποδομής.
- 7) Προώθηση και διαφήμιση των αποτελεσμάτων και των πλεονεκτημάτων.
- 8) Προσδιορισμός μακροχρονίων θεμάτων και επιπτώσεων και ανάπτυξη πολιτικών ούτως ώστε αυτά τα θέματα να υποστηριχθούν.

Το κλειδί της επιτυχίας στην εφαρμογή ενός κοινωνικού προγράμματος είναι η ανάγκη δημιουργίας εμπιστοσύνης ανάμεσα στους διαφόρους εταίρους και η ανάγκη των ομάδων των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιρισμών να εγκαθιδρύσουν σαν οι ειδικοί σε κοινωνικά θέματα που λαμβάνουν χώρα στην περιοχή τους. Μόνο η εγκαθίδρυση της εμπιστοσύνης και της εξειδίκευσης μπορούν να αναπτυχθούν αποτελεσματικοί και μακροχρόνιοι συνεταιρισμοί ανάμεσα στα διάφορα μέλη που τους απαρτίζουν.

Τα πρώτα άμεσα στοιχεία από τις μελέτες περιπτώσεων και από τις απόψεις των χρηστών της κοινότητας είναι ότι οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί έχουν ανταποκριθεί ικανοποιητικά σε όσους έχουν εμπλακεί τοπικά. Οι στηριζόμενες στην εντοπιότητα εξατομικευμένες υπηρεσίες που εφαρμόζονταν από ειδικούς στην κοινότητα γενικά, και η κατανομή σε συνεταιρισμό που συνεργάζεται με άλλες υπηρεσίες , μπορεί να είναι αποτελεσματικές και να αναπληρώσουν τα κενά που είναι γνωστά στην παροχή

υπηρεσιών για αυτές τις ομάδες στόχου .

Παράλληλα όμως οι Τοπικοί Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί πρέπει να διαθέτουν τα μέσα ούτως ώστε να εκπληρώνουν αυτό το ρόλο και πρέπει να έχουν πρόσβαση στους σχεδιαστές της πολιτικής . Αυτό απαιτεί:

- 1) Χρόνο και μέσα για μια αποτελεσματική παρακολούθηση και αξιολόγηση των πρωτοβουλιών ούτως ώστε να εκτιμηθεί κατά πόσο αυτές , έχουν μια ευρεία πολιτική σχέση.
- 2) Χρόνο και μέσα ούτως ώστε να γίνεται ανταλλαγή εμπειριών από όλους τους Κοινωνικούς Συνεταιρισμούς και να αποκομίζονται εμπειρίες σε πολιτικά θέματα .
- 3) Πρόσβαση στον πολιτικό σχεδιασμό για να διασφαλίσουν ότι οι εισηγήσεις τους θα ληφθούν υπόψη των σχεδιαστών και πιθανόν μέσα από αυτή την θέση να τεθούν υπό αναθεώρηση οι επιτροπές που έχουν σχηματιστεί από τους υπάρχοντες εθνικούς οργανισμούς , καθώς και οι περιφερειακοί και οι τοπικοί αντιπρόσωποι . Αυτό σημαίνει ότι οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί πρέπει να είναι αποτελεσματικοί και να έχουν εμπειριστατωμένες απόψεις σε κοινωνικά θέματα όπου αυτές θα αναβαθμίζονται , δεν θα αντικαθίστανται από την κοινωνική γνώμη, χωρίς να εξαιρούνται βέβαια οι ίδιοι.

Συμπεράσματα

Η παγκοσμιοποίηση επιφέρει τρομακτικές αλλαγές στην διοίκηση των κρατών εθνών επιβάλλοντας μηχανισμούς ολικής κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης και την αποκέντρωση των υπηρεσιών η οποία γίνεται για λόγους οικονομικούς αλλά και λόγω αναγκών της συμμετοχικής δημοκρατίας η οποία επιβάλλεται από τις συνθήκες ανταγωνισμού και την επιτάχυνσης της ανταγωνιστικότητας. Οι νέες συνθήκες ανταγωνισμού και ο επακόλουθος καταμερισμός εργασίας έχουν ως αποτέλεσμα την μερική αντικατάσταση του τύπου μαζικής παραγωγής από νέες μορφές ευέλικτης παραγωγής, που βασίζονται στις μικρές μονάδες και στην εργασία σε ομάδες.

Οι τοπικοί κοινωνικοί συνεταιρισμοί αποτελούν μια τέτοια ανάπτυξη λόγω της ευελιξίας που επέρχεται και επεκτείνεται και στον τομέα της κοινωνικής αναπαραγωγής της εργασίας..

Είναι γνωστό ότι οι αλλαγές στον χώρο της παραγωγικής διαδικασίας επιφέρουν αντίστοιχες αλλαγές και στην δημόσια διοίκηση. Αυτό σημαίνει, ότι οι νέες μορφές οργάνωσης εργασίας που επέρχονται με την επανάσταση στις επικοινωνίες εκφράζονται με την μορφή της Νέας Δημόσιας Διαχείρισης (New Public Management), κατά την οποία ο πολίτης πρέπει να έχει σχέσεις πελάτη με τις τοπικές υπηρεσίες. Ο πολίτης πρέπει να έχει πρόσβαση στις Δημόσιες πληροφορίες σε άμεσο επίπεδο, αφού η νέα οικονομία βασίζεται στην γνώση και στην επεξεργασία της η οποία γίνεται στο πιο κοντινό, στην δράση / παραγωγή, επίπεδο. Η νέα σχέση πολίτη και τοπικού κράτους αποτελεί το κέντρο βάρους μιας νέας οικονομικής συγκυρίας. Οι κοινωνικοί συνεταιρισμοί επιτυγχάνουν αυτό ακριβώς.

Οι νέες αλλαγές στην παραγωγική διαδικασία και η κυριαρχία της γνώσης στην εν γένει παραγωγή επιφέρουν μεγάλες καινοτομίες και στην κύρια φύση παροχής κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών ένταξης στην αγορά εργασίας.

Ο ρόλος των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιρισμών

Ο ρόλος των Κοινωνικών Συνεταιρισμών θα πρέπει να συνεχίσει να είναι διπλός και να συσχετίζεται και με τον σχεδιασμό αλλά και με την εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων. Θα πρέπει να επικεντρώνονται στην προώθηση των προγραμμάτων και να δοκιμάζουν καινοτόμες προσεγγίσεις που θα είναι κοντά στις ανάγκες των ομάδων στόχων. Να αναπληρώνουν τις υπάρχοντες ελλείψεις στην παροχή υπηρεσιών και οι εξατομικευμένες λύσεις να συναντούν τοπικές συγκεκριμένες ανάγκες .

Στο επίπεδο της στρατηγικής οι Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί θα πρέπει να διασαφηνίσουν το ρόλο τους στην νέα τοπική ανάπτυξη / τοπικό κυβερνώντα χώρο .Αυτό επίσης δέχεται επιρροές και από τις τοπικές συνθήκες. Ακόμη, οι Συνεταιρισμοί θα πρέπει να αναλάβουν ένα τοπικό συντονιστικό ρόλο μέσα στο εύρος της γεωγραφικής περιοχής που έχουν αναλάβει . Μπορούν να λειτουργήσουν κατά κύριο λόγο στα στρατηγικά επίπεδα σχεδιασμού σαν ειδικοί στα κοινωνικά θέματα συμπεριλαμβάνοντας και εστιάζοντας στην επιρροή που μπορεί να αναπτύξει το εύρος των καθημερινών τοπικών προβλημάτων , έτσι ώστε να ενισχύει τις επιδιώξεις της κοινότητας στο σύνολο της. Για να ικανοποιηθούν αυτοί οι ρόλοι, θα πρέπει ο Κοινωνικοί Συνεταιρισμοί να αποδείξουν την επιδεξιότητά τους στο σύνολο της κοινότητας . Θα πρέπει να αποδείξουν ότι αυτοί πραγματικά μπορούν να εκπροσωπήσουν με τον καλύτερο τρόπο τα συμφέροντα αυτών των ομάδων στο επίπεδο των αποφάσεων .Ωστόσο αυτό δεν πρέπει να γίνει σε βάρος των κοινωνικών αντιπροσώπων .

Οι Συνεταιρισμοί θα πρέπει να συνεχίσουν να διασφαλίζουν και να στηρίζουν το δικαίωμα των κοινοτήτων να εκφράζουν από μόνοι τους τις δυσαρέσκεις τους στα διάφορα θέματα που τους απασχολούν .

Τοπική Ανάπτυξη .

Το σύνολο της τοπικής κοινωνίας είναι ένα κομμάτι της τοπικής ανάπτυξης. Μια ολοκληρωμένη τοπική ανάπτυξη πρέπει να εμπεριέχει την διάδοση της εθνικής ανάπτυξης, όπως επίσης και την προοπτική καθώς και την επάνοδο των προνομίων μιας τέτοιας ανάπτυξης με έναν τρόπο όπου θα συντηρεί την κοινωνία στο σύνολο της . Ακόμη θα πρέπει να εμπεριέχει την ευρύτερη συμμετοχή των κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένων ομάδων στην προσπάθεια για την δική τους ανάπτυξη. Ποτέ οι συνθήκες δεν ήταν τόσο ευνοϊκές ούτως ώστε να επιδιώξουν τέτοιου είδους αντικειμενικούς στόχους και ποτέ δεν είχαν την δυνατότητα ώστε να δημιουργήσουν μεγαλεπήβολους στόχους μια που ούτε η ίδια η κοινωνία μας έχει αναπτύξει.

Οι κοινωνικές επιχειρήσεις που έχουν την μορφή των Συνεταιρισμών, μορφή που πραγματικά είναι μοναδική μπορεί να διαχειριστεί την κοινωνική οικονομία και όχι μόνο .

Οι νέες μορφές εταιρικής σχέσης, όπως είναι ο πολυμερισμός (multipartyism), αποτελούν επιτυχημένες μορφές κοινωνικής καινοτομίας και εκφράζουν την νέα σημαντική ανάδυση

του τοπικού κράτους και της οικονομίας του. Η διάσταση αυτή πρέπει να αναπτυχθεί και στην χώρα μας, για να δώσει την ευκαιρία για "πραγματική" απασχόληση και περιφερειακή ανάπτυξη.

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**NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANIZATION. CONTEMPORARY
DEMANDS FOR THE SUPPORT OF HUMAN RESOURCES.
COUNSELLING AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE**

(ΝΕΕΣ ΜΟΡΦΕΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ. ΣΥΓΧΡΟΝΕΣ ΑΝΑΓΚΕΣ ΥΠΟΣΤΗΡΙΞΗΣ
ΤΟΥ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟΥ ΔΥΝΑΜΙΚΟΥ, ΣΥΜΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΑΓΓΕΛΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ
ΠΡΟΣΑΝΑΤΟΛΙΣΜΟΣ)

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The presentation explores the development of new forms of work organization in relation to the contemporary role of the state in managing human resources and Counselling and Vocational Guidance systems. It is divided in the following parts:

The dynamic development of new forms of work organization

The first part highlights the dynamic development of new forms of work organization since the early 1980s. The main factors for this development are analyzed, namely the process of deindustrialization and the corresponding increase of services sector jobs that are identified by the enlargement of skills, the demise of Fordism, the marked intensification of economic competition, the influence of Japanese management principles, the adoption of new widely applicable technologies and the increase of high skilled people entering the labour market. The concept of labour flexibility is the key feature in contemporary employee relations and work forms and is divided between functional and numerical flexibility. The former places emphasis to the quality of work and the need of adequate training, while the latter to the quantitative use of labour through the forms of part-time working, fixed term contracts, sub-contracting e.t.c.. In this context, the new forms of work organization can be identified through the concepts of multi-skilling, job rotation, job enrichment and the forms of part-time working, team working, Total Quality Management systems, tele-working e.t.c.. Undoubtedly, these forms set the relevant demands for the support of human resources in today's complex employment conditions.

**The contemporary demands for the coordination and support of the policies
towards human resources**

The second part of the presentation considers the coordinating role of the contemporary state to promote new work forms by supporting human resources and relating education and training to employment. As for the European countries, in particular, the challenges which derive from the global competition, the high unemployment rates since the mid-1980s and the threat of social exclusion, for some social groups, promote the adoption of a development policy aiming at the coordination between competitiveness, economic development and social prosperity. The current state policies are not just restricted to the creation of new jobs. The knowledge society, multi skilling work and the endless flow of

information impose on state a crucial coordinating function. This means that the contemporary state will have to enable people to have direct access to information, to support the connection between education and employment and, in conjunction with social partners, to promote employment and social rights.

In this context, some key features of the Greek labour market are identified, mainly the low rates of part time working and continuous vocational training, the relatively high use of fixed terms contracts and the high rates of long-term unemployment. Unemployment is a major issue as far as Greece is concerned. The Greek labour market is identified by some key structural features that have to be pointed out. These encompass:

- the high unemployment rates for young people aged 15 – 24,
- the negative correlation between education levels and employment for the young people aged 20 - 24,
- the low employment rates for the people aged 20 - 29.

These findings demonstrate that the structural special characteristics of the Greek labour market concern the group of citizens aged 20-29 and thus underline their limited access to the labour market. It seems that in Greece, the majority of young people delay in entering the labour market in order to find a "good" full-time and permanent job. This trend should be taken into account because in contemporary work conditions of rapid changes and labour market fluctuations, every belated access to the labour market might prove detrimental to one's future employment prospects. Thus, the active support and systematic information offered to citizens about current employment conditions, before and after their entrance into the labour market, should be one of the basic priorities of current employment policies and of Counselling and Vocational Guidance systems in order to achieve the target of relating economic development to work quality.

The operation of the Greek National Centre for Vocational Orientation (EKEP)

The final part presents the operation of the Greek National Centre of Vocational Orientation (EKEP) as a competent institutional body for the coordination, support, certification, provision of quality information and consolidation of those offering Counselling and Vocational Guidance services in Greece at the sectors education, training and employment.

Εισαγωγή

Η παρούσα εισήγηση αποτελεί μία παρουσίαση της δυναμικής ανάπτυξης των νέων μορφών οργάνωσης της εργασίας, όπως αυτή συνέβη από τη δεκαετία του 1980 κυρίως λόγω σημαντικών οικονομικών και κοινωνικών αλλαγών. Θεωρώντας ότι οι εξελίξεις αυτές υπογραμμίζουν τις σύγχρονες πολιτικές διαχείρισης του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, προβάλλεται η συντονιστική και υποστηρικτική λειτουργία του κράτους και της κοινωνίας για την ικανοποίηση των σημερινών αναγκαιοτήτων στο χώρο της εργασίας. Στο πλαίσιο

αυτό αναλύονται ειδικότερα διαρθρωτικά χαρακτηριστικά της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας (κατά κύριο λόγο η ανεργία των νέων και η αδυναμία πρόσβασης τους στην αγορά εργασίας) και παρουσιάζεται η λειτουργία του Ελληνικού Εθνικού Κέντρου Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού (ΕΚΕΠ) ως φορέας συντονισμού και υποστήριξης των σύγχρονων υπηρεσιών συμβουλευτικής και επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού.

Η δυναμική ανάπτυξη των νέων μορφών οργάνωσης της εργασίας

Η διαμόρφωση των σύγχρονων εργασιακών σχέσεων και μορφών οργάνωσης της εργασίας (όπως είναι η πολυειδίκευση, μερική απασχόληση, ομαδική εργασία – team working -, εναλλαγή των εργασιακών ρόλων - job rotation-, τηλεργασία κ.α.) είναι το αποτέλεσμα μίας σύνθετης διαδικασίας εξέλιξης, που προσδιορίζεται χρονικά από τις αρχές της δεκαετίας του 1980. Η περίοδος αυτή καθόρισε τη δυναμική της ανάπτυξης των σύγχρονων μορφών εργασίας, κυρίως λόγω των σημαντικών αλλαγών που έλαβαν χώρα στα επίπεδα της οικονομίας, κοινωνίας και πολιτικής αντίστοιχα. Επιπρόσθετα, κάτω από την όξυνση της έντασης του οικονομικού ανταγωνισμού, της αποβιομηχάνισης και της απόμαζικοποίησης των σχέσεων εργασίας αποτύπωσε μία αναλυτική επεξεργασία των εργασιακών σχέσεων στη βάση της "συνέχειας" ή της "ασυνέχειας" αντίθετα των καθιερωμένων διαδικασιών οργάνωσης τους (Blyton and Turnbull, 1998: 3-14). Οι κυριότεροι παράγοντες της ανάπτυξης των νέων μορφών οργάνωσης της εργασίας μπορούν να συνοψιστούν στους εξής :

- στην οικονομική κρίση του 1973 και την αποδόμηση της βιομηχανικής παραγωγής με την παράλληλη αύξηση του τομέα των υπηρεσιών που χαρακτηρίζεται από τη διεύρυνση των εργασιακών δεξιοτήτων,
- στην εξάντληση των ορίων του Φορντικού συστήματος παραγωγής και της Ταυλορικής οργάνωσης της εργασίας, που προσδιόρισαν την οικονομία και εσωτερική οργάνωση των μεγάλων επιχειρήσεων, τη μηχανοποίηση και τυποποίηση των εργασιακών καθηκόντων,
- στην όξυνση του παγκόσμιου οικονομικού ανταγωνισμού και στην αύξηση του διεθνούς καταμερισμού της εργασίας,
- στην αύξηση των ποσοστών ανεργίας στις χώρες της Δύσης από τα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1980,
- στην εφαρμογή της νέας τεχνολογίας (μικροηλεκτρονικής),
- στην αυξημένη επίδραση των συστημάτων διοίκησης των Ιαπωνικών επιχειρήσεων,
- στην αυξημένη επιρροή των νεο-φιλελεύθερων πολιτικών απορύθμισης των αγορών εργασίας και τέλος,
- στην αύξηση των ποσοστών αυτών που εισέρχονται στην αγορά εργασίας με αυξημένα τυπικά προσόντα.

Κεντρική θέση στις νέες συνθήκες οργάνωσης της εργασίας κατέχει ο όρος ευελιξία της εργασίας (labour flexibility), ο οποίος θα λέγαμε "υπογραμμίζει" ολόκληρο το νέο πλαίσιο

ανάλυσης που προσδιορίζει τη διάρθρωση των αγορών εργασίας και επιχειρήσεων και την οργάνωση των πολιτικών απασχόλησης. Η ευελιξία της εργασίας χωρίζεται σε λειτουργική – ποιοτική (πολυειδίκευση, ομαδική εργασία, αναβάθμιση των δεξιοτήτων, εμπλουτισμός της εργασίας – job enrichment- κ.α.) και σε αριθμητική ευελιξία (που σημαίνει την ποσοτική χρήση της εργασίας σύμφωνα με τις διακυμάνσεις της ζήτησης – μερική απασχόληση, προσωρινή εργασία κ.α.-). Στη βάση της ανάπτυξης της ευέλικτης εργασίας προέκυψαν μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας και μοντέλα, όπως ο περίφημος τύπος της "Ευέλικτης Επιχείρησης" από τον Atkinson (1984: 28-31), ο οποίος διέκρινε την ευέλικτη δομή των επιχειρήσεων με βάση την κατηγοριοποίηση του προσωπικού σε “βασικούς” και “περιφερειακούς” εργαζομένους. Οι πρώτοι κατέχουν θέσεις μόνιμης και πλήρους απασχόλησης, που χαρακτηρίζονται από πολλαπλές δεξιότητες, υψηλό επαγγελματικό στάτους και προνοποθέσεις προαγωγής, ενώ οι δεύτεροι κατέχουν θέσεις προσωρινής ή μερικής απασχόλησης, ημι-ειδικευμένης ή ανειδίκευτης εργασίας με αβέβαιες επαγγελματικές προοπτικές και κακές συνθήκες εργασίας. Σ’ ένα ευρύτερο επίπεδο ανάλυσης αναδύθηκε το μοντέλο της “Ευέλικτης Εξειδίκευσης” από τους Piore και Sabel (1984) οι οποίοι έκαναν λόγο για τη διαμόρφωση ενός εναλλακτικού προτύπου παραγωγής που βασίζεται σε δίκτυα μικρών ευέλικτων επιχειρήσεων τα οποία συνδυάζουν την παραγωγή εξειδικευμένων ποιοτικών προϊόντων με την εφαρμογή της μικροηλεκτρονικής τεχνολογίας. Ειδικά η χρήση της μικροηλεκτρονικής και των υπολογιστών διαμορφώνει νέες συνθήκες τεχνικού καταμερισμού της εργασίας και μία ενεργητικότερη σχέση εργαζομένου και τεχνολογίας, καθώς απαιτεί τη δραστηριοποίηση του πρώτου για την απόκτηση της κατάλληλης τεχνογνωσίας διαχείρισης των νέων συστημάτων και την ανάληψη νέων εργασιακών ρόλων.

Σύμφωνα με το πλαίσιο που έως τώρα έχουμε περιγράψει, οι νέες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας μπορούν να προσδιοριστούν με βάση :

- Την πολυειδίκευση και τη διάχυση των εργασιακών ρόλων σε μεγάλη κλίμακα δραστηριοτήτων (μορφές που βρίσκουμε στις βασικές, καλές θέσεις εργασίας),
- την ποσοτική χρήση της εργασίας με βάση τις αυξομειώσεις του οικονομικού κύκλου και της ζήτησης (μορφές όπως η συμβάσεις ορισμένου χρόνου, η μερική και εποχιακή απασχόληση),
- την προσαρμογή του εργασιακού χρόνου με βάση την πίεση της παραγωγικής δραστηριότητας (βάρδιες, υπερωρίες κ.τ.λ.).

Επιπλέον, ως σύγχρονες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας μπορούν να χαρακτηριστούν επίσης:

- **η ομαδική εργασία**, που ορίζεται ως η εργασία κατά ομάδες 8 έως 15 ατόμων που είναι υπεύθυνες για την παραγωγή έργου μέσα σε αναγνωρισμένα όρια και τα μέλη τους λειτουργώντας ευέλικτα αναλαμβάνουν την αλληλοσυμπλήρωση των καθηκόντων τους επιδιώκοντας την ικανοποίηση οικονομικών, κοινωνικών, πολιτιστικών κριτηρίων και επιδιώξεων (Mueller, 1994: 383-394),

- **τα συστήματα Διοίκησης Ολικής Ποιότητας (Total Quality Management)**, που επιδιώκουν την προώθηση της "ποιότητας" σε όλες τις δομές του οργανισμού (διοίκηση, εργαζόμενους, προμηθευτές, καταναλωτές) και υποστηρίζουν τη συνεχή βελτίωση για το "κοινό συμφέρον" όλων (Legge, 1995:219-220),
- Τα ευέλικτα συστήματα παραγωγής **just- in- time**, που βασίζονται στην παραγωγή "ποιοτικών" προϊόντων σύμφωνα με τις ρευστές απαιτήσεις της ζήτησης και την αντιμετώπιση των χρονικών τριβών κατά τη διάρκεια της παραγωγικής διαδικασίας,
- **η τηλεργασία**, που αφορά κυρίως αυτοαπασχολούμενους εργαζομένους, οι οποίοι εργάζονται από το σπίτι τους στο μισό του εβδομαδιαίου εργασιακού τους χρόνου. Υπολογίζεται ότι περίπου το 4,5% του εργατικού δυναμικού των ευρωπαϊκών χωρών απασχολείται με τηλεργασία, ενώ στην Ελλάδα η τηλεργασία αναφέρεται στο 1,3% του εργατικού δυναμικού, ωστόσο, τα τελευταία χρόνια τα ποσοστά της συνεχώς αυξάνονται (Γαβρόγλου, 2001: 41-43).

Η ανάπτυξη των παραπάνω δομικών συσχετισμών στα σύγχρονα περιβάλλοντα εργασίας, όπως είναι φυσιολογικό, δημιουργεί νέες καταστάσεις και απαιτήσεις στην οργάνωση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού και ανασύρει τις ανάγκες για την πρόσβαση του πολίτη στη γνώση και στην πληροφόρηση σχετικά με τις νέες συνθήκες εργασίας, την επαγγελματική του εκπαίδευση και κατάρτιση, τη δια βίου μάθηση και την εξοικείωση του με τις νέες τεχνολογίες. Οι απαιτήσεις αυτές καθορίζουν το ρόλο των σημερινών κρατών και κοινωνιών, επιβάλλοντας το αντίστοιχο πλαίσιο της πολιτικής υποστήριξης των αναγκών του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού και της ουσιαστικής διασύνδεσης της εκπαίδευσης με την απασχόληση.

Οι σύγχρονες ανάγκες για το συντονισμό των πολιτικών υποστήριξης του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού

Δεδομένου των μετεξελίξεων στους χώρους της εργασίας, της οικονομίας και κοινωνίας, οι ρόλοι που αναλαμβάνουν τα σύγχρονα κράτη σε συνεργασία με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους εμφανίζονται ιδιαίτερα σημαντικοί, αφού καλούνται να υποστηρίξουν την οικονομική ανάπτυξη με την κοινωνική ευημερία των πολιτών. Σήμερα πλέον, τα κράτη δεν περιορίζονται στη δημιουργία νέων θέσεων απασχόλησης. Η κοινωνία της γνώσης, των πολλών δεξιοτήτων και η ακατάπαυστη ροή των πληροφοριών μεταβιβάζουν στο κράτος μία κρίσιμη συντονιστική και υποστηρικτική λειτουργία που να εξασφαλίζει στο ανθρώπινο δυναμικό την άμεση πρόσβαση στην πληροφορία, να υποστηρίζει τη διασύνδεση της εκπαίδευσης με την απασχόληση και σε συνεργασία με τους κοινωνικούς εταίρους να προωθεί τα κοινωνικά και εργασιακά δικαιώματα.

Προβλήματα που απασχολούν τις χώρες στο παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, όπως η ανεργία, η ανεπαρκής συμμετοχή στην απασχόληση και οι φτωχές συνθήκες εργασίας τέθηκαν ήδη από το 1994 στη δέσμη μέτρων των χωρών του ΟΟΣΑ για τη θέσπιση στρατηγικών απασχόλησης (jobs strategy) που αποδίδουν έμφαση στη μακροοικονομική ανάπτυξη, την ολοκληρωμένη διάδοση της τεχνολογίας, την αύξηση της ευελιξίας του εργασιμίου χρόνου, την προώθηση της επιχειρηματικότητας, τις ενεργητικές πολιτικές απασχόλησης και την υποστήριξη των εργασιακών δεξιοτήτων (OECD, 1999 : 142).

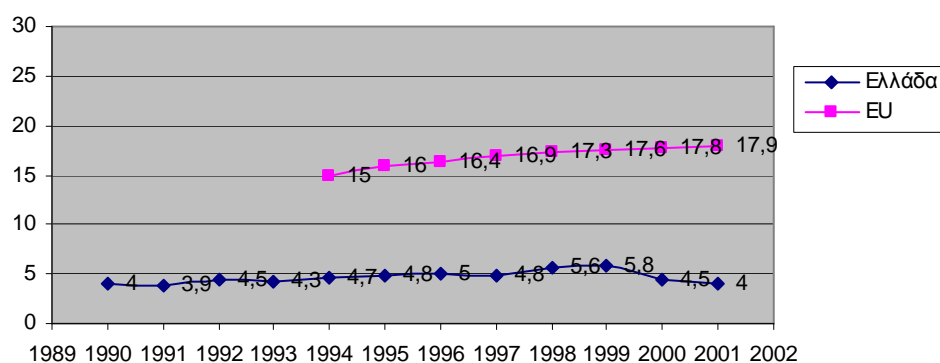
Στις χώρες της Ευρώπης, ειδικότερα, η όξυνση του παγκόσμιου οικονομικού ανταγωνισμού, τα ιδιαίτερα υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας από τα μέσα της δεκαετίας του 1980 και η απειλή του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού ορισμένων κοινωνικών στρωμάτων οδήγησαν στην προώθηση ενός αναπτυξιακού προτύπου που έχει ως στόχο το συνδυασμό της ανταγωνιστικότητας με την οικονομική και κοινωνική ανάπτυξη. Έτσι, τα Συμβούλια του Άμστερνταμ 1997 και της Νίκαιας το 2000, θέσπισαν την ατζέντα για την αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας και την προώθηση της κοινωνικής πολιτικής, ενώ το Συμβούλιο της Λισσαβόνας το 2000 έθεσε το στόχο για περισσότερες και καλύτερες θέσεις απασχόλησης με κριτήριο την αύξηση των ποσοστών απασχόλησης στο όριο του 70% μέχρι το 2010. Οι παραπάνω στόχοι και οι σύγχρονες ανάγκες για εκπαίδευση, απασχόληση, εργασιακή και κοινωνική ποιότητα αφορούν τα κράτη στο σύνολο τους. Η επίτευξη τους οφείλει να βασιστεί στην εναρμόνιση των επιμέρους πολιτικών των ευρωπαϊκών κρατών, να συνδυάσει δηλαδή τα ιδιαίτερα θεσμικά, κοινωνικά και πολιτιστικά χαρακτηριστικά που διακρίνουν την κάθε ευρωπαϊκή χώρα ξεχωριστά. Παρακάτω παρουσιάζεται η εξέλιξη διαρθρωτικών δομών της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας και κυρίως χαρακτηριστικά που ανασύρουν τις ανάλογες απαιτήσεις για την επίτευξη των στόχων αυτών. Αρκεί να σημειωθούν, στο σημείο αυτό, τα μεγάλα ποσοστά ανεργίας των νέων στη χώρα μας, ιδιαίτερα των νέων μεταξύ 15 και 24 ετών και η αδυναμία πρόσβασης τους στην αγορά εργασίας. Παρουσιάζεται τέλος, η σημερινή σημασία της συντονισμένης πολιτικής της Συμβουλευτικής και του Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού, ως λειτουργία που καλείται να προωθήσει τη διασύνδεση εκπαίδευσης - απασχόλησης, την προώθηση της ενημέρωσης γύρω από τρέχοντα ζητήματα εκπαίδευσης, κατάρτισης, εργασίας και την πρόσβαση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού στην πληροφόρηση.

Δομές και εξελίξεις στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας

Ιδιαίτερα γνωρίσματα της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας αποτελούν η αυξημένη παρουσία των μικρομεσαίων επιχειρήσεων στην ελληνική παραγωγή, η ανάπτυξη μη-τυπικών εργασιακών δεξιοτήτων, τα υψηλά ποσοστά της αυτοαπασχόλησης και του αγροτικού τομέα, τα χαμηλά ποσοστά των εργαζομένων που συμμετέχουν σε συνεχιζόμενη επαγγελματική κατάρτιση (Η Ελλάδα σύμφωνα με τα στοιχεία της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής διατηρεί το χαμηλότερο ποσοστό με 15% - European Commission, 2002: 31), τα χαμηλά ποσοστά της μερικής απασχόλησης και τη σχετικά εκτεταμένη παρουσία της απασχόλησης ορισμένου χρόνου (Διαγράμματα 1 & 2).

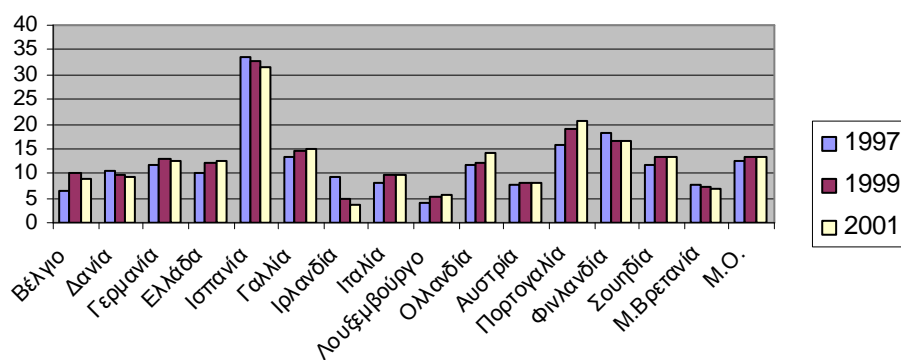
Το ποσοστό ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα παρουσίασε αυξητικές τάσεις κατά τη διάρκεια της περιόδου μεταξύ 1990 και 2001, αγγίζοντας το 11,6% το 1999 (European Commission, 2002: 177 - Διάγραμμα 3), ενώ σύμφωνα με πρόσφατα στοιχεία, το 2000 παρουσίασε φθίνουσα πορεία και μόλις το 2002 έπεσε κάτω από το όριο του 10% αγγίζοντας το 9,6%, (Παρατηρητήριο Απασχόλησης Ερευνητική -Πληροφορική Α.Ε. (ΠΑΕΠ), 2003 : 42-43).

Διάγραμμα 1.
Ποσοστά μερικής απασχόλησης σε Ελλάδα και Ευρώπη μ.ο. (1990-2001)



Πηγή: European Commission, 2002: 173,177

Διάγραμμα 2.
Ποσοστά απασχόλησης ορισμένου χρόνου στην Ευρώπη, 1997-1999-2001

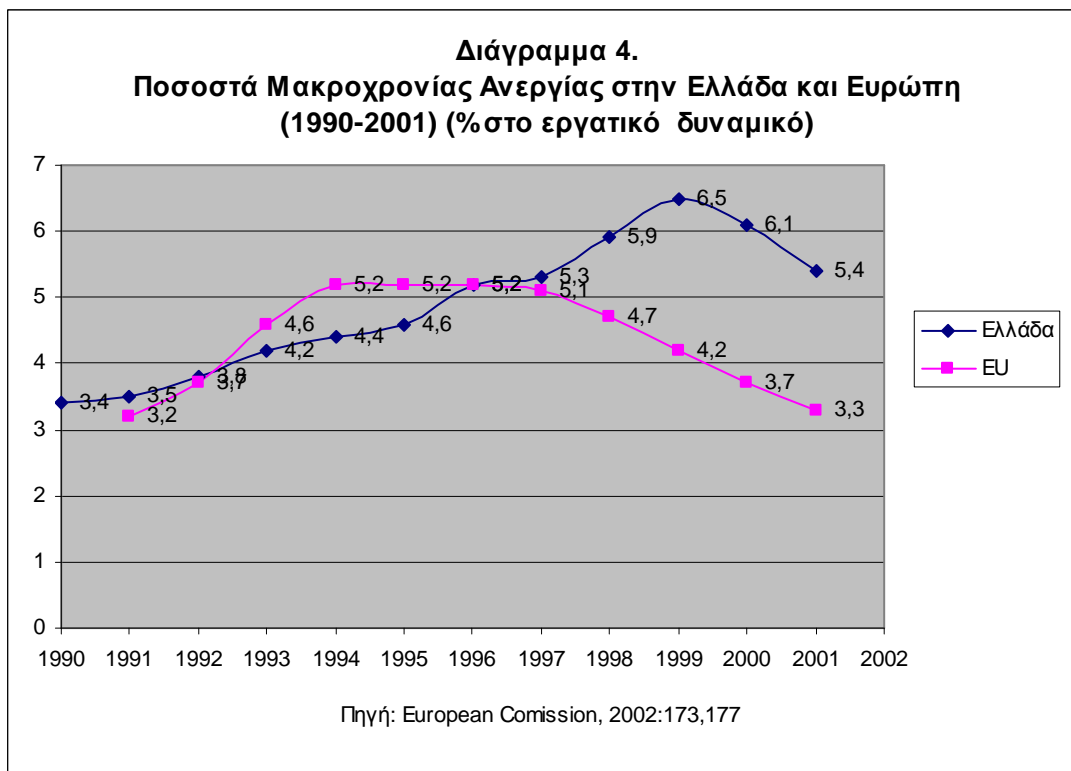
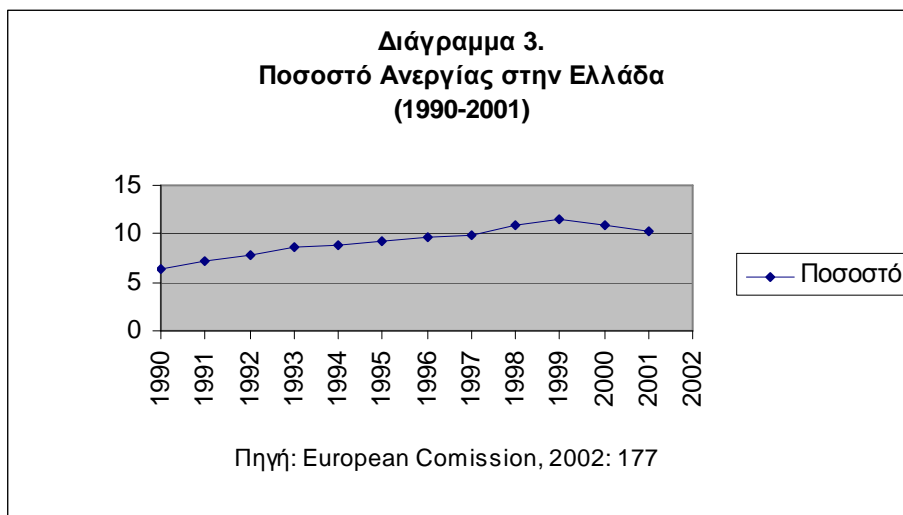


Πηγή: European Commission, 2002: 173-188

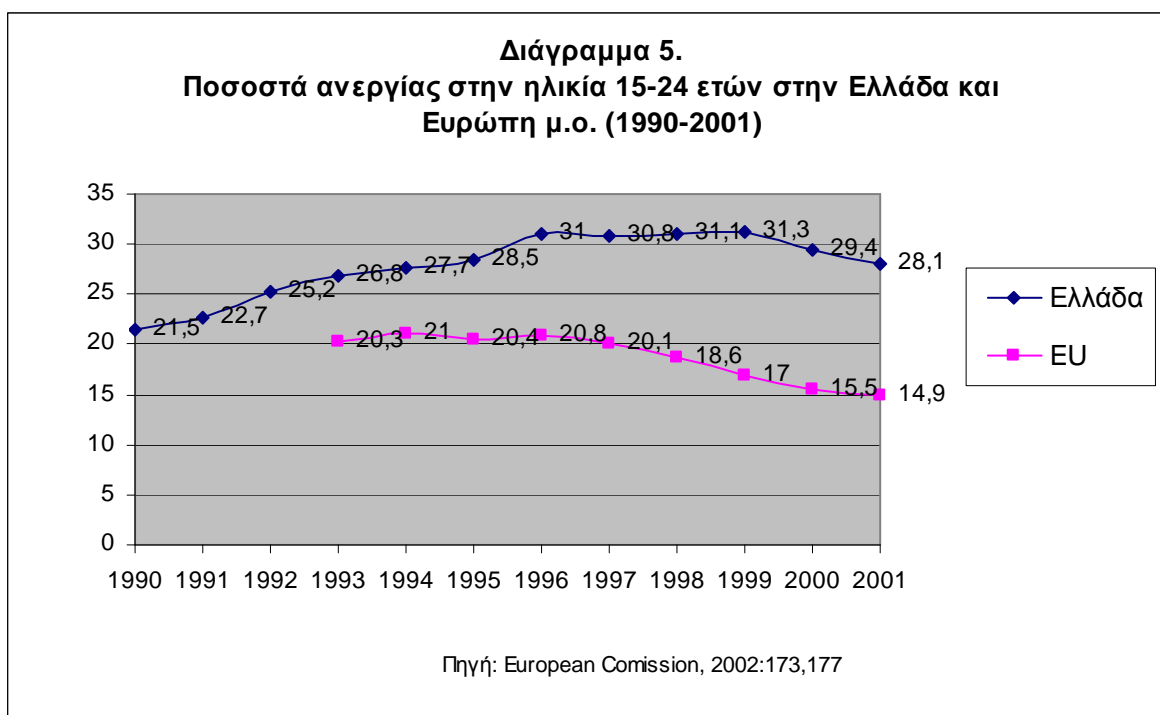
Αυτό όμως που πρέπει να σημειώσουμε είναι το γεγονός ότι η ανεργία στην Ελλάδα παρουσιάζει κάποιες ιδιαίτερες διαρθρωτικές παραμέτρους και δεν προσδιορίζεται από τις ανισορροπίες μεταξύ ζήτησης και προσφοράς εργασίας, καθόσον δεν αποτελεί προϊόν απολύσεων και συνυπάρχει με κενές θέσεις εργασίας (αναντιστοιχίες δεξιοτήτων), χαρακτηριστικά που σημειώνονται και στο Εθνικό Σχέδιο Δράσης για την Απασχόληση του 2002. Οι ειδικές παράμετροι που παρουσιάζονται είναι το ιδιαίτερα υψηλό ποσοστό ανεργίας στους νέους, ιδιαίτερα στους νέους με αυξημένα τυπικά προσόντα, και το

αντίστοιχο υψηλό ποσοστό της μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας (Διάγραμμα 4). Συνοψίζοντας, παρατηρούμε :

- τα υψηλά ποσοστά ανεργίας των νέων μεταξύ 15-24 ετών.
- την αρνητική συσχέτιση μεταξύ εκπαιδευτικού επιπέδου και απασχόλησης για την ηλικιακή κατηγορία των 20-24 ετών.
- τα χαμηλά ποσοστά απασχόλησης της ηλικιακής κατηγορίας 20-29 ετών

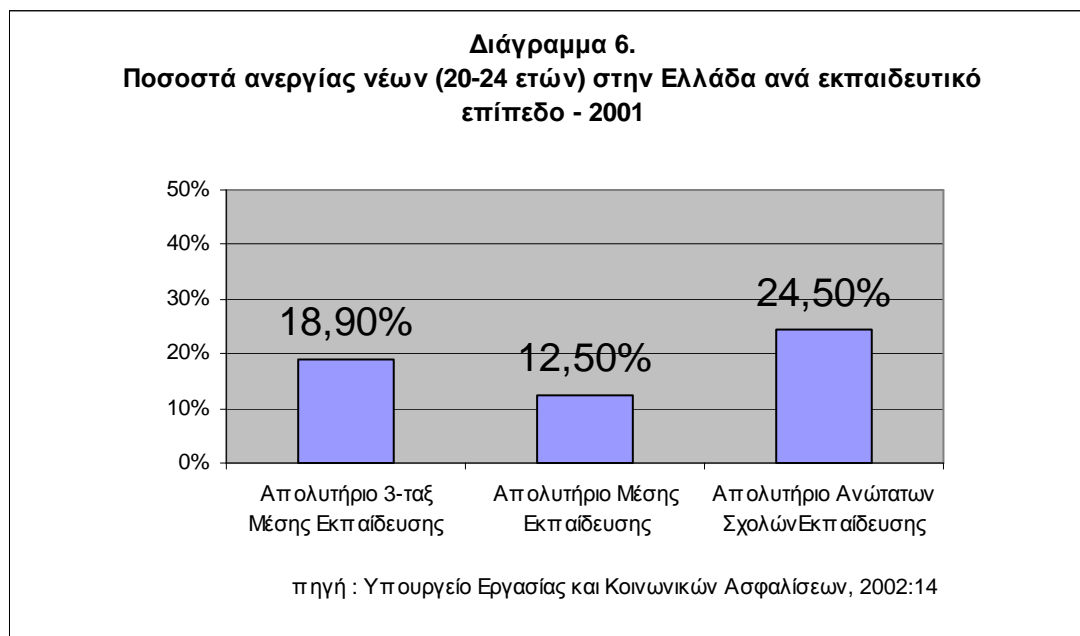


Αναλυτικότερα, τα συγκριτικά στοιχεία φανερώνουν ότι το ποσοστό ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα για την ηλικιακή κατηγορία μεταξύ 15 και 24 ετών, σε αντίθεση με τον Ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο, παρουσίασε μία αύξηση της τάξης του 6,6 % την τελευταία δεκαετία αγγίζοντας το ποσοστό του 28,1% το 2001 έναντι 14,9 του Ευρωπαϊκού μέσου όρου (European Commission, 2002: 173, 177 - Διάγραμμα 5.) Ενώ, τα ποσοστά απασχόλησης για την ηλικιακή κατηγορία μεταξύ των 15-24 ετών ανέρχονται σε 41% στον Ευρωπαϊκό μέσο όρο και ποικίλουν από 60% σε χώρες όπως η Δανία και Ολλανδία και κάτω από 30% στην Ελλάδα, Ιταλία, Βέλγιο και Γαλλία (European Commission, 2002: 18).



Αναφορικά με την ανεργία σε σχέση με το εκπαιδευτικό επίπεδο των νέων μεταξύ 20 και 24 ετών, διακρίνουμε ότι το ποσοστό ανεργίας μεταξύ των κατόχων απολυτηρίου ανωτάτων σχολών εκπαίδευσης κυμαίνεται στο 24,50 % , των κατόχων μέσης εκπαίδευσης σε 12,50% και αυτών με απολυτήριο 3τάξιας μέσης εκπαίδευσης σε 18,90% (Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, 2002:14 - Διάγραμμα 6). Παρατηρούμε δηλαδή ότι στην Ελλάδα παρουσιάζεται ένα υψηλό ποσοστό ανεργίας στους νέους μεταξύ 20 και 24 ετών, οι οποίοι χαρακτηρίζονται από υψηλά τυπικά προσόντα και παρουσιάζουν μία σχετική αδυναμία πρόσβασης στην αγορά εργασίας. Το γεγονός αυτό έχει ιδιαίτερη σημασία αν συνδυαστεί με τη θετική συσχέτιση που υπάρχει ανάμεσα στην τυπική εκπαίδευση και τα ποσοστά απασχόλησης του πληθυσμού. Δίχως καμία αμφιβολία, οι σύγχρονες εξελίξεις που συμβαίνουν στο χώρο της εργασίας απαιτούν την αναβάθμιση του περιεχομένου των εργασιακών δεξιοτήτων και τα ποσοστά απασχόλησης των υψηλά εκπαιδευόμενων ανθρώπων είναι αρκετά υψηλότερα από αυτά των χαμηλά

εκπαιδευομένων στη συνολική ηλικιακή κλίμακα μεταξύ 15 και 64 ετών (Πίνακας 1). Έτσι, ενώ η κατοχή ανώτατης τυπικής εκπαίδευσης φαίνεται να εξασφαλίζει υψηλότερα ποσοστά απασχόλησης και χαμηλότερα ποσοστά ανεργίας συγκριτικά με τις χαμηλότερες βαθμίδες εκπαίδευσης, στην Ελλάδα παρατηρείται ένας αρνητικός συσχετισμός μεταξύ εκπαίδευσης και απασχόλησης μεταξύ 20 και 24 ετών.



ΠΙΝΑΚΑΣ 1.

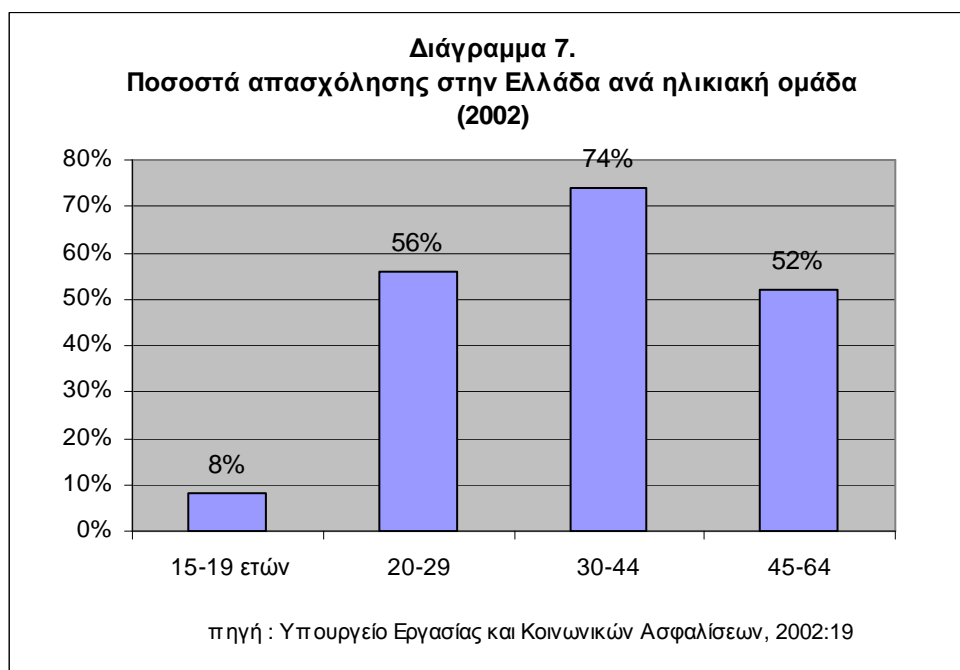
Ποσοστά απασχόλησης και ανεργίας στην Ελλάδα και Ευρώπη (Μ.Ο.) ανά εκπαιδευτικό επίπεδο το 2001 (15 - 64 ετών)

	Σύνολο		Τριτοβάθμια Εκπαίδευση		Μέση Εκπαίδευση		Χαμηλή	
	Απα	Ανεργ	Απα	Ανεργ	Απα	Ανεργ	Απα	Ανεργ
Ελλάδα	55.6	10.4	79	7.4	56.2	13.4	48.2	9
Ευρώπη	63.8	7.6	82.8	4.5	70.2	7.2	49	10.8

Πηγή: European Commission, 2002 : 24

Τέλος, τα ποσοστά απασχόλησης σε ολόκληρη της ηλικιακή κλίμακα του πληθυσμού αποτυπώνουν χαμηλότερα ποσοστά απασχόλησης στην ηλικιακή κατηγορία μεταξύ 20 και 29 ετών. Έτσι, ενώ το ποσοστό απασχόλησης στην Ελλάδα για το β' τριμ. του 2002 ανέρχεται σε 55,9% παρατηρούμε ότι η ηλικιακή κατηγορία που συγκεντρώνει το βάρος της απασχόλησης είναι αυτή μεταξύ 30 και 44 ετών. (Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, 2002:19 - Διάγραμμα 7). Επιπρόσθετα, οφείλουμε να παρατηρήσουμε ό,τι η Ελλάδα κατέχει το υψηλότερο ποσοστό μη-ενεργών ατόμων που δηλώνουν ότι δεν επιθυμούν εργασία (35,6% έναντι 26,7% του ευρωπαϊκού μέσου όρου) κυρίως λόγω οικογενειακών υποχρεώσεων, εκπαιδευτικών υποχρεώσεων και συντάξεων (Υπουργείο

Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, 2002: 23-25).



Τι μας δείχνουν όλα αυτά τα στατιστικά στοιχεία ; Παρατηρούμε ότι οι ιδιαίτερες παράμετροι στη διάρθρωση της ελληνικής αγοράς εργασίας εντοπίζονται κατά κύριο λόγο στο ηλικιακό στάδιο μεταξύ των 20 και 30 ετών όπου και αποτυπώνονται τα φαινόμενα των υψηλών ποσοστών της ανεργίας των νέων, ιδιαίτερα των νέων με αυξημένα τυπικά προσόντα, και χαμηλών ποσοστών απασχόλησης. Το γεγονός αυτό, σε συνδυασμό με το φαινόμενο της εκούσιας αποχής από την εργασία, που παρουσιάζεται στην Ελλάδα, υποδηλώνει μία αδυναμία ένταξης στην αγορά εργασίας και μία παρατεταμένη προετοιμασία για την εξασφάλιση μίας θέσης εργασίας μόνιμης και πλήρους απασχόλησης. Βέβαια, στις σημερινές συνθήκες δυναμικής κίνησης και ρευστότητας των αγορών εργασίας κάθε παρατεταμένη αποχή, εκούσια ή ακούσια, από την αγορά εργασίας θεωρείται παρακινδυνευμένη, λόγω της ταχύτητας εξέλιξης των τεχνολογιών, επαγγελματικών γνώσεων και δεξιοτήτων. Στο πλαίσιο αυτό, η ενεργοποίηση, υποστήριξη και πληροφόρηση των πολιτών γύρω από τρέχοντα ζητήματα εργασίας, τόσο πριν, όσο και μετά την ένταξη τους στην εργασία πρέπει να αποτελεί πρώτιστη ανάγκη των σημερινών πολιτικών απασχόλησης και των συστημάτων Συμβουλευτικής και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού για την ουσιαστική σύνδεση της οικονομικής ανάπτυξης με την εξασφάλιση της ποιότητας στην επαγγελματική και κατ' επέκταση κοινωνική ζωή των πολιτών.

Η λειτουργία του Εθνικού Κέντρου Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού

Οι σύγχρονες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας επηρεάζουν αναπόφευκτα τη λειτουργία της συμβουλευτικής και του επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού. Η ίδια η έννοια της

σταδιοδρομίας αποτελεί στοιχείο αναπροσδιορισμού καθώς η αντίληψη για την αντικειμενική και "γραφειοκρατική" σταδιοδρομία της βιομηχανικής εποχής υποχωρεί, προς όφελος μίας υποκειμενικής και δια-βίου ανάπτυξης της σταδιοδρομίας, όπου το άτομο, οι δεξιότητες και ικανότητες του βρίσκονται σε μία διαλεκτική διαπραγμάτευση με το επαγγελματικό και κοινωνικό του περιβάλλον (Κρίβας, 2001:53-62). Αυτό πρακτικά σημαίνει η σύγχρονη σχέση ατόμου και εργασίας είναι σε όλα της τα στάδια περισσότερο ενεργητική επομένως η συμβουλευτική, ο επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός, η επιστημονική βοήθεια, η στήριξη και η διεύρυνση των δεξιοτήτων του ατόμου καθορίζουν τη δράση του πριν και μετά την είσοδο του στην επαγγελματική ζωή. Η ενεργοποίηση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού για πληροφόρηση γύρω από τις αναγκαιότητες των σύγχρονων μορφών οργάνωσης της εργασίας θεωρούνται βασικά προαπαιτούμενα μίας ολοκληρωμένης σύνδεσης του με τον κόσμο της εργασίας. Στο πλαίσιο της συντονιστικής λειτουργίας των υπηρεσιών και πολιτικών, η υποστήριξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, τόσο πριν όσο και μετά την ένταξη του στην αγορά εργασίας αποτελεί βασική δραστηριότητα ενός συστήματος Συμβουλευτικής και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού που προωθεί την οικονομική ανάπτυξη και εξασφαλίζει την κοινωνική και επαγγελματική ποιότητα.

Στη χώρα μας το Εθνικό Κέντρο Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού (ΕΚΕΠ) αποτελεί τον κεντρικό συντονιστικό φορέα Συμβουλευτικής και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού. Ιδρύθηκε με το Ν.2525/97 και λειτουργεί από το 2000 με το Π.Δ. 232/ΦΕΚ 179/29-7-1998 , υπό την εποπτεία των Υπουργείων Εθνικής Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων και Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, με στόχο να αποτελέσει το συνδετικό κρίκο ανάμεσα στην εκπαίδευση και στην αγορά εργασίας. Το ΕΚΕΠ διαδραματίζει ένα ρόλο επιτελικό, συμβουλευτικό και συντονιστικό και αποτελεί φορέα πληροφόρησης, υποστήριξης, πιστοποίησης και ενδυνάμωσης της δράσης των φορέων που προσφέρουν υπηρεσίες επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού στην Ελλάδα. Παράλληλα, αποσκοπεί στην εναρμόνιση της εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης με τις ανάγκες της αγοράς εργασίας και στη σύζευξη Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού, Εκπαίδευσης, Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης, Απασχόλησης. Για το σκοπό αυτό συνεργάζεται με το Παιδαγωγικό Ινστιτούτο και τον ΟΑΕΔ, αλλά και οργανισμούς όπως τον ΟΕΕΚ, τη Γενική Γραμματεία Νέας Γενιάς, τη Γενική Γραμματεία Ισότητας, τη Γενική Γραμματεία Επιμόρφωσης Ενηλίκων, τα Γραφεία Διασύνδεσης των ΑΕΙ/ΤΕΙ και άλλους φορείς που αναπτύσσουν δραστηριότητες επαγγελματικής πληροφόρησης και προώθησης στην αγορά εργασίας.

Συνοπτικά παρουσιάζουμε τα κυριότερα έργα που έχουν αναπτυχθεί από το ΕΚΕΠ:

1. Είναι ο επιτελικός φορέας για το σχεδιασμό και την παρακολούθηση του Συστήματος Συμβουλευτικής, Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού και Σύνδεσης με την Αγορά Εργασίας (επιμέρους Σύστημα 6 - Σ6) του Εθνικού Συστήματος Σύνδεσης της Επαγγελματικής Εκπαίδευσης και Κατάρτισης με την Απασχόληση (Ε.Σ.Σ.Ε.Κ.Α.). Σύμφωνα με το Νόμο Υπ' Αριθμ. 3191 (ΦΕΚ 258/ 7-11-2003), βασικές λειτουργίες του Συστήματος Συμβουλευτικής, Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού και Σύνδεσης με την Αγορά Εργασίας (Σ6) είναι :

- α. Η ενημέρωση των ενδιαφερομένων για επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση ή κατάρτιση και των γονέων τους για τις ειδικότητες και εξειδικεύσεις της επαγγελματικής

εκπαίδευσης και της επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης, η διερεύνηση των προσόντων, ικανοτήτων και κλίσεων των ενδιαφερομένων και η συμβουλευτική υποστήριξη τους στην επιλογή της κατάλληλης ειδικότητας ή εξειδίκευσης και του κατάλληλου προγράμματος σπουδών (συμβουλευτική και επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός).

- β. Η υποστήριξη της σύνδεσης των εκπαιδευομένων, των καταρτιζομένων και των αποφοίτων με την αγορά εργασίας, και η παρακολούθηση της απασχολησιμότητας τους.
- γ. Η υποστήριξη των ανέργων για την ένταξη ή επανένταξη τους στην αγορά εργασίας, καθώς και των ήδη εργαζομένων για την πρόληψη της ανεργίας.

Οι λειτουργίες του Σ6 καλύπτονται από τις δραστηριότητες του Ε.Κ.Ε.Π., τις δραστηριότητες των αρμοδίων υπηρεσιών του ΥΠ.Ε.Π.Θ. και του Παιδαγωγικού Ινστιτούτου (Π.Ι.) στο πλαίσιο της δευτεροβάθμιας εκπαίδευσης, τις δραστηριότητες του Ο.Α.Ε.Δ. μέσω των αρμόδιων υπηρεσιών και εποπτευόμενων φορέων του και τις δραστηριότητες του Ο.Ε.Ε.Κ. μέσω των αρμόδιων υπηρεσιών και οργάνων του.

2. Διαμόρφωση κριτηρίων πιστοποίησης της επάρκειας των προσόντων λειτουργών Συμβουλευτικής και Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού,
3. Εκπαίδευση, κατάρτιση και επιμόρφωση στελεχών του τομέα του Επαγγελματικού Προσανατολισμού σε συνεργασία ή και συμπληρωματικά με τους υπάρχοντες (δομές) των δύο υπουργείων.
4. Ενημέρωση σε θέματα εκπαίδευσης, κατάρτισης, απασχόλησης, συμβουλευτικής και επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού, δια βίου μάθησης και κινητικότητας μέσω της ιστοσελίδας του (www.ekep.gr).
5. Παροχή τεχνογνωσίας σε θέματα συμβουλευτικής και επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού μέσω της εξοπλισμένης σε τεχνικό και ηλεκτρονικό εξοπλισμό βιβλιοθήκης του.
6. Διοργάνωση συνεδρίων, ημερίδων και άλλων παρεμφερών εκδηλώσεων σχετικά με τα θέματα της αρμοδιότητας του.
7. Έναρξη της υλοποίησης μίας ολοκληρωμένης βάσης δεδομένων που θα απαντά μέσω του διαδικτύου σε ερωτήματα σχετικά με την εκπαίδευση - κατάρτιση, απασχόληση, συμβουλευτική και επαγγελματικό προσανατολισμό.
8. Συμμετοχή στο Δίκτυο Euroguidance με στόχο την επικοινωνία, παραγωγή και τη διάχυση της ποιοτικής πληροφόρησης για τον επαγγελματικό προσανατολισμό μεταξύ των χωρών της Ε.Ε.
9. Διαχείριση και συνεχή ανανέωση της Δικτυακής Πύλης Ploteus (www.ploteus.net) που παρέχει πληροφορίες για τις ευκαιρίες μάθησης, τα εκπαιδευτικά συστήματα, προγράμματα σπουδών, τις υποτροφίες, τη διαμονή και την κοινωνική ασφάλιση στις χώρες της Ευρώπης.

Το ΕΚΕΠ αναλαμβάνει ουσιαστικό ενεργό ρόλο στη διασύνδεση του συστήματος υπηρεσιών πληροφόρησης και επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού, της εκπαίδευσης, κατάρτισης με την απασχόληση, προωθεί τη γνώση και υποστηρίζει την αναβάθμιση του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, είτε αυτό προετοιμάζεται εκπαιδευτικά και κοινωνικά για την είσοδο του στην επαγγελματική ζωή είτε έχει ενταχθεί ενεργά στην αγορά εργασίας.

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VI. PLENARY SESSION

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MULTICULTURAL COUNSELLING SKILLS- Necessity for the future

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I Immigration as a challenge from a guidance perspective

Introduction

According to the Treaty of Amsterdam (1 May 1999) the policy on asylum, free movement of persons, visa policy, rules governing the crossing of the external borders of the European Union, immigration policy and the rights of nationals of third countries have become a full Community responsibility. Within a period of five years (by 1 May 2004) after the entry of the Treaty of Amsterdam the European Council should take a number of measures in the political fields above to progressively establish the European Union as an area of freedom, security and justice for all nationals.

The mobility of people in Europe will additionally grow when ten new countries (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) will join the European Union on 1 May 2004. This expansion, the biggest in the history of the EU when it comes to the number of countries, will bring 75 million new citizens to the community. On Mayday 2004, the total population of the European Union will rise up to almost 380 million people. This enlargement will probably lead to a more active labour force mobility, especially from the new EU member states to the "old" EU countries where the standard of living and salaries are higher.

The increasing number of immigrants and refugees in modern European societies directly influence the daily work of guidance counsellors who deal with clients from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds in employment and education sectors. Guidance counsellors have a key position in facilitating the integration of the migrant groups into all dimensions of life in their new home country.

Especially important in this context is to help immigrants acquire sufficient command of the language spoken in the country and other vital skills through education and training supporting their future employability on the labour market. However, many guidance

counsellors have not been equipped with the specific competencies to cope with the challenge of cultural and ethnic diversity at their work.

Immigrants in Finland

There are currently 104 000 immigrants (2002) in Finland. The biggest immigrant groups come from the neighbouring countries and are represented by the Russians (24 000), the Estonians (12 000) and the Swedes (8 000). The Finnish society, just like any other society in Europe, is confronted with the fact that the immigrant population is growing quite rapidly and as a consequence also the number of nationalities these immigrants represent is increasing. This reality creates a challenge to our social system: on one hand, it is a question of accepting and recognising that we live in a multicultural society, and on the other hand, the strategies to support the integration of the newcomers in education and training systems and in the labour market will have to be developed.

In 2002, the average unemployment rate among immigrants was as high as 29 % while it was around 10 % among Finns at the same time. The significance of skills and knowledge is emphasised at all sectors of the Finnish society in the beginning of 21st century. The goal of the Finnish education and training policy is to raise the level of education of all citizens - including immigrants and ethnic minorities residing permanently in Finland - because working life constantly presents new skills requirements for all employees. Maintenance of the welfare society requires participation of all citizens in work, education and training. Lifelong learning and lifelong guidance are in a key role answering to these requirements.

Guidance and counselling for immigrants

Employment sector

All immigrants permanently residing in Finland are entitled to the same services in employment offices as Finnish citizens. In the biggest employment offices there are international employment consultants who are specialised in serving migrants. They help migrants find jobs and with other issues important to them.

Integration of immigrants in Finland is supported in many ways. Within five months after immigration, a personal integration plan for up to three years will be drawn up for unemployed immigrants together with representatives from the local employment office and municipality. The main aim of such a plan is that immigrants will acquire sufficient command of Finnish/Swedish language and other necessary skills needed to become employed. The key idea of the integration plan is first to identify the skills of immigrants, and based on the results received, help them on to find a job or get vocational training. Achieving these goals is further helped by integration training provided for adult immigrants that can take the form of labour market training courses or independent training. Vocational and preparatory training for immigrants is also arranged. The use of interpretation services will be increased in order to help immigrants benefit better from the services available at employment offices (Launikari 2003).

Education sector

The leading principle in the education sector is to ensure that foreigners (*i.e. asylum-seekers, refugees, immigrants, returning Finnish emigrants, and other foreigners*) and Finns have equal opportunities for education and training, guidance services and social benefits for students.

Education allows people to make conscious decisions about their own lives. School-age foreigners who live in Finland are entitled to the same basic education as any native Finn. Adult foreigners should also have access to the education they need in working life, to further education and to training aimed at maintaining vocational skills. The aim is that degrees and qualifications from foreign educational institutions and studies abroad, and working experience in other countries, should be a recognised basis when foreigners are planning and continuing their education in Finland. One further aim is to achieve a functioning bi-lingualism, *i.e.* to ensure that foreigners learn Finnish or Swedish as well as maintain their own first language and culture.

Some educational institutions provide foreigners with preparatory training for initial vocational education to help them complete their vocational qualifications. The length of the training varies from six months to a year. The aim of the preparatory training is to improve the language and other necessary skills of foreigners before they embark on regular vocational education.

Recent initiatives and developments in Finland

The Finnish Government adopts a Development Plan for Education and University Research for a six-year period every four years. The current plan covers the time span of 2003-2008. The strategic objectives stated in the Development Plan concerning education, training, educational and vocational guidance and counselling of immigrants can be summarised as follows: the competence level of teaching and guidance staff in educational institutions in the area of multiculturalism has to be raised so that the educators and guidance counsellors can better deal with the needs of immigrant clients in their daily work. Additionally, more resources are to be allocated to offer Finnish and/or Swedish language training to immigrants to support their integration in the Finnish society.

The Finnish Ministry of Education has defined seven areas that are important to be further developed in 2004 in the framework of the national education policy. One of these areas is called *Multicultural school and cultural conflicts*. The starting point there is that teachers and guidance counsellors should have more information on and extended knowledge of multicultural teaching and guidance, international cooperation, and cultural conflict reconciliation in schools as well as in the wider society. For that purpose separate funding is being allocated to offer in-service training on the above issues to teachers and guidance practitioners in Finland in 2004. The outcome from this should be: the better the educators and guidance counsellors are trained in the area of cultural diversity, the better information,

guidance and counselling they can provide their immigrant clients with, e.g. about educational and vocational opportunities in Finland as well as abroad, and to encourage them to make independently successful choices concerning their career and life.

Based on a national initiative a publication *Best practices in the field of multicultural counselling in Europe* (working title) will be compiled in Finland in 2004. The idea is to invite some 10-12 experts from various European countries to share their experiences and knowhow of issues relating to multicultural counselling competencies. The publication will be produced in English so that it will be professionally useful for the European/international guidance community. An additional aspect is that the book will be structured so that it can be easily used for both initial and continuing training of guidance counsellors all over Europe.

The Permanent Secretaries of the following three Finnish ministries - the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health - will be addressed by Finnish guidance experts to present a proposal for setting up a cross-sectoral and multi-professional national task force to map out what are the current guidance and counselling services available to immigrants in Finland, how those services are structured and resourced, and how they could be developed further to better meet the needs of the immigrant groups. It is estimated that the work of the task force could commence during 2004 provided that the high policy level authorities approve the proposal.

As a concrete example of activities carried out to promote multiculturalism and multicultural counselling in Finland are the plans to strengthen the role of multicultural counselling in the new counsellor education programmes at the university of Jyväskylä. Multicultural counselling will be integrated into the programmes as an essential element for all counsellors. Furthermore, there are plans that multicultural counselling could also be an option for specialization studies for those counsellors who are working in multicultural institutions or for whom these studies are a special interest for some other reason.

Higher education guidance and counselling services are among those areas which need to be further developed in Finland. Currently there are about 7.000 international degree-oriented students and well above 6.000 international exchange students in Finnish universities and polytechnics (Kinnunen 2003). Therefore, multiculturalism is a growing challenge also in higher education institutions, and a special attention should be paid to developing multicultural counselling skills of guidance and counselling personnel working with international students (e.g. Lairio & Puukari 2003).

Developing multicultural counselling skills are not the only way to respond to the above challenges. A recent study showed that generally the international students in Finland were rather satisfied with the teaching and guidance services provided, but many of them found it difficult to get to know people and make friends in Finland. This is a clear indication that there is a need to develop a new type of campus culture which is more open to get the international students involved in social activities and relations outside the formal studies. In addition, the study revealed that about half the respondents had experienced some form

of unjust behaviour, such as social exclusion or even racism during their stay in Finland. Although part of these results can be attributed to the communication culture in Finland which is not often actively open to people from other culture, this is still a serious message which has to be addressed carefully. (Kinnunen 2003)

II Multicultural Counselling Skills through Training

Introduction

The researchers of multicultural counselling underline that besides general counselling skills, special multicultural skills are required of a counsellor. Experiences of counsellors concerning their multicultural competence are connected to the nature of the client's needs of counselling, the counsellor's possibilities of counselling, cultural distance of the counsellor and the client, client's gender and his or her earlier experiences (refugee, migrant).

All counsellors are ethnocentric to a certain extent: they believe that the values and world view of their own culture, people and race are better than those of the others. This affects significantly the way in which they interpret life experiences and set behaviour norms. To be able to help a client, a counsellor should broaden his or her world view and way of thinking. (Daniels & D'Andrea 1996.)

Many studies of multicultural counselling (e.g. Armour 1997, Hackney & Cormier 1996; Herring 1997; Locke 1986; Sue & Sue 1990) point out that it is necessary for the counsellor to recognize the culturally bound nature of a counselling process, the difference between the counsellor's and the client's cultural expectations and standards. The counsellor has to be prepared also for cultural differences during the counselling process and recognize the problems of different cultures.

The foundations of the new training

The important aspects above were the starting point for developing an in-service training course on multicultural counselling carried out in Finland in 2002. The training course was partially based on the ideas developed in the European *RAINBOW* project 1999-2001 (for more information see <http://rainbow.cimo.fi>). A team of Finnish experts in multicultural counselling designed the course in which altogether 33 school counsellors and immigrant teachers from different regions of Finland participated. For facilitating the teaching and learning process on the course the participants were divided into three small groups. Each of these groups had one teacher responsible for giving feedback on the distance learning tasks and supporting the members of the group in their activities both during the contact teaching periods and during the distant learning periods.

The course consisted of three two-day contact teaching periods and two distance learning periods. The first contact teaching period was held in March 2002, second in June 2002

and the last one in September 2002. During the first distance learning period a virtual learning space - developed during the original Rainbow project - was used.

Objectives of the training course

The objectives were to provide the participants with

- 1) basic ideas on intercultural communication and basic concepts related to multicultural guidance and counselling
- 2) applicable counselling approaches to be used with multicultural clients
- 3) understanding of ethical issues in multicultural counselling
- 4) updated knowledge on how guidance and counselling services of immigrants are organised in Finland and in other European countries

Key elements and content in the course

The most important element that was focussed on during the training was to increase/develop intercultural awareness among participants. A great deal of activities, training materials, some of the distance learning tasks and a number of discussions dealt with this specific issue from different perspectives.

One key dimension in the course was sharing thoughts and experiences among participants. This sharing was especially used while dealing with distance learning tasks between the contact teaching periods. Creating professional networks and personal relationships was emphasised, e.g. the last distance learning tasks were focussing on building local networks with immigrants and guidance practitioners in various institutions that offer services to immigrants. The participants found these tasks being of great help to their everyday work and also with regard to gaining more understanding of different cultures.

The main content themes were:

- Key concepts and processes in multicultural counselling
- Multicultural society and intercultural communication
- Multicultural guidance and counselling systems and good practices in selected European countries (Denmark, Estonia, Greece, Iceland, Norway)
- Cultural differences in counselling and culture-sensitive counselling in practice
- Multicultural counselling competences
- Ethics in multicultural guidance and counselling

Overview of the contact and distant learning periods

The overall working time for the students to complete the training was 120 hours during a six-month period (March-September 2002).

The first 2-day contact teaching period in March 2002 gave an overview of the main theoretical concepts and ideas related to multicultural society, intercultural communication and multicultural counselling.

The first distance learning period (April-May 2002) was based on tasks related to multicultural counselling competences and practices. Each course participant completed individually three tasks on the internet in the virtual learning space at the Rainbow www-service (<http://rainbow.cimo.fi/>). A discussion forum available there was also used, for instance, in sharing experiences on good books, films and other forms of art dealing with multiculturalism and cultural diversity.

The second 2-day contact teaching period in June 2002 was used as a follow-up session for processing the issues of the distance learning tasks further and to give the participants an opportunity to learn from international experts about good practices as well as guidance and counselling systems developed for immigrants in other European countries. In addition, three specific cultures - Kurdish, Islamic and Russian culture according to the participants' wishes - were presented in short workshop by immigrants who have lived in Finland for a number of years.

The second distance learning period (July-August 2002) was used for networking purposes: the course participants were expected to start setting up personal-professional networks in their own region with immigrants and immigrant organisations as well as with personnel of organisations offering guidance, counselling and advisory services to immigrants.

The third 2-day contact teaching period in September 2002 included group discussions where the networking experiences were shared among the participants. Lectures and other activities during this last contact teaching period summarised the topics presented during the course and raised questions dealing with the future challenges of the multicultural guidance and counselling.

Pedagogical approaches used during the course

Pedagogical approaches used during the course all had the same goal: a special emphasis was made to create an open and supportive atmosphere which encouraged all participants to share their ideas, present questions and constructive criticism. An important part of the pedagogy was to concentrate on selected key concepts, deal with them first in small groups and afterwards discuss the most relevant aspects with the whole group of 33 participants. These key aspects were also present in all the distance learning tasks.

The participants were given literature and material lists on multicultural counselling which they could use during and after the course. The distance learning tasks and discussion in the small groups were used for linking theory with practice. This theory-practice linking was supported also by giving the participants individual feedback on their distance learning tasks.

One group work method developed by Vance Peavy (see Peavy 1993, 1997) has proved to be an especially good method to be used at the beginning of an in-service training. The method is used for developing personal strengths, which in this case were focussed on multicultural counselling. Each participants in a small group comprising about 5-8 members

tells told a story about a guidance or counselling situation where he or she has been able to successfully be of help to a client from another culture. Meanwhile the other group members write notes on all kinds of strengths (knowledge, skills, empathy etc.) the story-teller has which enable him or her to be of help. The participants then share their observations, and at the end of each feedback round, give the story-teller their notes. The group leader supports the group and makes brief oral summaries to facilitate the group process. Genuine positive feedback with notes to be read again later on is a very powerful way of helping people to become more aware of their strengths in multicultural counselling and to encourage them to further develop their strengths.

Discussion

The in-service training course addressed both the *universal trend* and the *focussed trend* in multicultural counselling. The universal trend emphasises that every guidance session contains multicultural issues: all individuals belong to many cultures that have different values (see also Fukuyama 1990). *The focussed trend* emphasises the importance of culture-specific understanding and the special nature of certain cultural groups. According to this trend, a cultural group is defined mainly by race and ethnic background. People should be seen both as individuals and as members of a culturally different group (Sue et al. 1992) believe that the universal and focussed multicultural approaches are not necessary contradictory. Both offer views that can enrich our understanding of multicultural counselling.

Daniels and D'Andrea (1996) emphasise that the trainers of school counsellors have a crucial role in decreasing counsellors' ethnocentrism. They point out that a single-course approach is not an adequate way. In our experience, an in-service training course consisting of three contact teaching periods and two distance learning periods can already provide a good starting point for developing teachers' and counsellors' multicultural competence.

Locke (1990, 18) notes that in multicultural study counsellors' education the crucial point is to learn to work with people from different cultures rather than just to study cultures at a theoretical level (Locke 1990, 18). This idea was one of the main reasons for the last distance learning period focusing on networking which encouraged the participants in creating personal contacts with immigrants and experts working with immigrants. The experiences of these networking activities appeared to be very positive and rewarding for the participants. We do need theoretical introductions and reading books helps in reflecting our first-hand experiences, but without working with people the theory cannot be linked to everyday reality. It is for the people (ourselves and our clients) we are learning multicultural counselling competences!

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**NEW FORMS OF WORK ORGANIZATION AND GENDER
(ΝΕΕΣ ΜΟΡΦΕΣ ΟΡΓΑΝΩΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΥΛΟ)**

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Abstract

This paper begins with a brief overview of the most important structural and functional changes in the organization of labour, which have been brought about by the globalization process. As a result of these changes, it is noted, the “traditional” or “typical” forms of work of the industrial period are being decomposed, giving way to “new forms” of work organization –part-time work, tele-work, seasonal or contingent work, etc. These forms are not necessarily “new”, but they are gradually becoming socially acceptable constructions in the age of globalization. Given the increasing importance of these socio-economic phenomena, we examine the consequences they have for the position of women in employment, as well as in society in general. We focus on some aspects of the “new work organization” which have particularly important consequences for working women: (1) the relationship between family and employment under the new conditions, (2) the role of new technologies and the relationship to female employment, (3) the consequences of home-work and tele-work for women’s employment and social conditions, (4) part-time work and its consequences, and (5) social insurance and social security of women under the new forms of work. Overall we conclude that the “new forms of work organization” have positive, but also multiple negative consequences on the position of women in the labour market and in society. The positive effects are mainly the increase in employment opportunities and the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of some sectors of the female population who can capitalize on the new developments. The negative effects are strongly tied to the weak socio-economic position of the greatest majority of the female population, which further deteriorates under the new employment conditions.

Εισαγωγή

Η διαδικασία παγκοσμιοποίησης ταυτίστηκε με την κατάρρευση των περιορισμών στη διακίνηση των συντελεστών, καθώς και των προϊόντων της παραγωγής, δηλαδή στην κατοχύρωση της ελεύθερης διακίνησης και εγκατάστασης ανθρώπων και αγαθών με στόχο τον περιορισμό του κόστους της παραγωγής, την αύξηση της παραγωγικότητάς της και την αύξηση του κέρδους. Έτσι, περισσότερο από οποιαδήποτε άλλη φάση οικονομικής αναδιάρθρωσης, το κεφάλαιο μπόρεσε να

αξιοποιήσει ταυτόχρονα την επέκταση των αγορών --η οποία οδήγησε σε αυξημένη ζήτηση--, με την αξιοποίηση των συγκριτικών πλεονεκτημάτων των συντελεστών παραγωγής διαφόρων σημείων του πλανήτη --η οποία επέτρεψε την παραγωγή με χαμηλότερο κόστος. Το αποτέλεσμα ήταν η δομική αναμόρφωση του *μοντέλου παραγωγής*, με κύρια χαρακτηριστικά το “σπάσιμο”, συχνά τον κατακερματισμό της παραγωγικής διαδικασίας, και την μετατόπιση-μετεγκατάσταση τμημάτων της παραγωγικής δομής και διαδικασίας σε διαφορετικά μέρη της χώρας ή/και του πλανήτη (sub-contracting, out-sourcing) (National Research Council, 1999).

Οι διεργασίες αυτές επέτρεψαν ή/και επιτάχυναν μια σειρά από σημαντικές, στρατηγικής σημασίας αλλαγές στη *δομή και οργάνωση των μονάδων παραγωγής*. Οι σημαντικότερες από αυτές ήταν: (1) η «σμίκρυνση» (downsizing) του μεγέθους των επιχειρήσεων¹⁷, η οποία είχε σοβαρές επιπτώσεις για την ασφάλεια και την σταθερότητα της απασχόλησης (Farber, 1997; Lee Hecht Harison, 1997), και (2) η διαδικασία «ισοπέδωσης» των ιεραρχικών δομών των επιχειρήσεων, η οποία είχε σοβαρές επιπτώσεις για τον τρόπο οργάνωσης και διοίκησης της εργασίας (Batt, 1996; Scott et al, 1996). Ειδικότερα όσον αφορά την οργάνωση της εργασίας επήλθαν ριζικές αλλαγές με πιο χαρακτηριστικές: (i) την περικοπή των επιπέδων οργανωτικής ιεραρχίας, κυρίως με τον περιορισμό των διευθυντικών θέσεων, (ii) την συνακόλουθη σύμπτυξη των αρμοδιοτήτων σε λιγότερα άτομα ή/και θέσεις και (iii) την ανάπτυξη της *ομαδικής εργασίας* (teamwork)¹⁸ για την επιτέλεση συγκεκριμένων έργων ή δράσεων. Οι αλλαγές αυτές κατέστησαν ευμετάβλητα και συχνά ασαφή τα όρια, τις υποχρεώσεις και τα δικαιώματα που ταυτίζονταν με συγκεκριμένες θέσεις εργασίας και μετέθεσαν τον έλεγχο και την ευθύνη επιτέλεσης έργου από μεμονωμένα διοικητικά στελέχη (managers-supervisors) στα μέλη της πολύ-λειτουργικής πλέον ομάδας έργου (National Research Council, 1999; Tannenbaum et al, 1996; Batt, 1999a; Osterman, 1996; Hunter, 1998a).

Μέσω των συνεχιζόμενων αυτών διεργασιών, της αλληλεπίδρασής τους και της επέκτασής τους, σηματοδοτήθηκε μια διαδικασία αποδόμησης της λεγόμενης “τυπικής” ή “παραδοσιακής” οργάνωσης της εργασίας (Gottschall, 2002) και των μορφών απασχόλησης που αυτή συνεπάγεται, και την ανάδυση «νέων μορφών» οργάνωσης της εργασίας. Εξετάζοντας τους δύο αυτούς «ιδεότυπους»¹⁹ ως κυρίαρχες κοινωνικές κατασκευές, διαπιστώνουμε, κατ’ αρχήν, ότι στην «τυπική» ή “παραδοσιακή” οργάνωση της εργασίας, η οποία είναι μια “*κοινωνική κατασκευή* που σχετίζεται με την εκβιομηχάνιση” (Silvera, 2000), η απασχόληση χαρακτηρίζεται κυρίως από τα εξής χαρακτηριστικά: (1) τη μονιμότητα – σταθερότητα του χώρου παραγωγής, (2) τη μονιμότητα – σταθερότητα της εργασιακής σχέσης και της επαγγελματικής ανέλιξης μέσα από την απόκτηση εμπειρίας και νέων γνώσεων και δεξιοτήτων στο συγκεκριμένο χώρο εργασίας, (3) το πλήρες

17 Ενδεικτική είναι η αναφορά του American Management Association, ότι από το 1978 έως το 1996, οι 100 μεγαλύτερες επιχειρήσεις των ΗΠΑ είχαν απολύσει το 22% του προσωπικού τους, και οι ίδιες ανέφεραν την μεταφορά δραστηριοτήτων εκτός της επιχείρησης (outsourcing) ως τον βασικό λόγο για την “σμίκρυνση”. American Management Association (1996).

18 Όπως όλες οι άλλες «νέες μορφές απασχόλησης», έτσι και η εργασία σε ομάδες δεν είναι νέα ιδέα. Ήδη από τη δεκαετία του 1920 η Mary Parket Follett κατέγραφε τις ευεργετικές επιπτώσεις της αξιοποίησης της ομαδικής εργασίας στις επιχειρήσεις, αλλά κατά τις επόμενες δεκαετίες το θέμα αυτό πραγματεύονταν μόνον σε ακαδημαϊκό και όχι επιχειρηματικό επίπεδο Graham, (1995). Ακόμα για στοιχεία σχετικά με το βαθμό διεύθυνσης της ομαδικής εργασίας στην παραγωγή βλέπε: Cappelli et al, 1997, Gittleman et al, 1998.

19 Τα χαρακτηριστικά αυτά αναφέρονται κυρίως ως εκφράσεις του «ιδεότυπου» κατά Weber της «παραδοσιακής» μορφής απασχόλησης, ως το κοινωνικά αποδεκτό πρότυπο του μοντέλου παραγωγής της βιομηχανικής εποχής, παρά ως αποκλειστικά και πάγια χαρακτηριστικά της απασχόλησης.

εργασιακό ωράριο – 8ωρο—το οποίο και αποτελούσε βασικό κεκτημένο των συνδικαλιστικών και κοινωνικών αγώνων, (4) τον σαφή καταμερισμό εργασίας και εξουσίας, όπου ο κάθε εργαζόμενος ή/και θέση εργασίας είχε ένα σαφές εργασιακό αντικείμενο, και σαφή οικονομικά και κοινωνικά δικαιώματα και υποχρεώσεις που απέρρεαν από αυτό, (5) κατοχυρωμένα συνδικαλιστικά δικαιώματα που συνδέονταν είτε με το συγκεκριμένο εργασιακό αντικείμενο κατ' επάγγελμα (επαγγελματικά σωματεία), είτε με τη συγκεκριμένη μονάδα παραγωγής (εργοστασιακά σωματεία), (6) Εισόδημα επαρκές για τη στήριξη της οικογένειας, και ιδιαίτερα της άνεργης συζύγου και των ανήλικων τέκνων, και (7) η κοινωνική ασφάλιση παρεχόμενη τουλάχιστον εν μέρει από το κράτος πρόνοιας, επίσης για τη στήριξη του εργαζόμενου και της οικογένειάς του.

Η “παραδοσιακή” αυτή μορφή απασχόλησης αντικαθίσταται, ως πρότυπο αποδεκτό και ισχύον σε ολοένα μεγαλύτερο βαθμό, από «νέες μορφές» «άτυπης» (atypical ή non-standard) απασχόλησης (Simard, Chenevert, and Tremblay, 2000; Macbride-King, 1997, 1998; Booth, 1997) που χαρακτηρίζονται από: (1) την άρση της μονιμότητας –σταθερότητας του εργασιακού χώρου, καθώς αυτός αλλάζει και μετατίθεται ανάλογα με τις ανάγκες της παραγωγής ή/και των εργαζομένων, (2) την άρση της μονιμότητας της εργασιακής σχέσης, (3) την άρση του σταθερού οκτάωρου ωραρίου εργασίας και την προώθηση ευέλικτων ωραρίων εργασίας –απογευματινά και βραδινά ωράρια, εργασία Σαββατοκύριακου, βάρδιες σπαστών ωραρίων, κ.ά. (4) τον συνεχή επαναπροσδιορισμό –συχνά ασαφή– των θέσεων εργασίας και των συναφών υποχρεώσεων και δικαιωμάτων που συνδέονται με την επιτυχή ολοκλήρωση του συγκεκριμένου έργου που το άτομο ή/και η ομάδα αναλαμβάνει, (5) την ευελιξία στον τρόπο και τα κριτήρια αμοιβής της εργασίας, επίσης σχετιζόμενα με την επιτυχή ολοκλήρωση του συγκεκριμένου έργου που το άτομο ή/και η ομάδα αναλαμβάνει, (6) ασάφεια ως προς τα κριτήρια συλλογικής οργάνωσης για άσκηση συνδικαλιστικών δικαιωμάτων, καθώς ανατρέπεται ο διαχωρισμός της εξουσίας και το αντικείμενο διεκδίκησης των εργαζομένων (όπως στην ομαδική εργασία), ή/και ανατρέπονται οι «κλασικές» συνθήκες υποστήριξης της συνδικαλιστικής οργάνωσης και δράσης από τη διάσπαση του χώρου και χρόνου εργασίας, και (7) ανατρέπεται η κατοχύρωση της κρατικά εξασφαλισμένης κοινωνικής ασφάλισης και κοινωνικής πρόνοιας σε σχέση και με το άτομο και με την οικογένειά του.

Σαν αποτέλεσμα, η «ιδεοτυπική» κατά τον 20 αιώνα «δουλειά», που απασχολούσε το άτομο καθ' όλη τη διάρκεια της ζωής του, με προβλεψιμότητα, επαγγελματική αναπτυξιακή προοπτική, κοινωνικο-οικονομική ασφάλεια, οικογενειακή ασφάλεια, αντικαθίσταται από «δουλειά» που είναι: μη προβλέψιμη, ευέλικτη ή/και ασαφής ως προς τον τόπο, το χρόνο, τις συνθήκες εργασίας και την αμοιβή, με εναλλαγές στις υποχρεώσεις και τις δραστηριότητες, καθώς και τα δικαιώματα, εναλλασσόμενη μεταξύ τυπικής και άτυπης εργασίας, εναλλασσόμενη μεταξύ μισθωτής εργασίας και αυτό-απασχόλησης, με περιόδους απασχόλησης και ανεργίας, που έχει ως προϋπόθεση “μη-παραδοσιακές” γνώσεις και δεξιότητες –γνώση νέων τεχνολογιών, ευελιξία, προσαρμοστικότητα, σφαιρικότητα, συνεργατικότητα, αυτονομία, κλπ., και απαιτεί συνεχή ανανέωση γνώσεων --δια βίου εκπαίδευση.

Ακόμα, η παραδοσιακή οργάνωση της εργασίας έχει ταυτιστεί με το πρότυπο του “άνδρα τροφού” (male bread-winner) (Gottschall, 2002, Wichterich, 1999), καθώς κατά τη διάρκεια του 20^{ου} αιώνα, η μεγάλη πλειοψηφία του εργατικού δυναμικού ήταν άνδρες που εργάζονταν για να συντηρούν την οικονομικά εξαρτημένη “γυναίκα-νοικοκυρά” και τα λοιπά μέλη της οικογένειας. Οι γυναίκες, στο βαθμό που ήταν ενταγμένες στην «παραδοσιακή» αγορά εργασίας, απασχολούνταν, σε πολύ μεγαλύτερα ποσοστά, σε άτυπες ή μη-παραδοσιακές μορφές απασχόλησης: μερική ή περιστασιακή

απασχόληση, μη-κατοχυρωμένη, με περιορισμένο εισόδημα και επισφαλή ασφάλιση.²⁰ Το κύριο ερώτημα που σήμερα τίθεται σε σχέση με τη διάσταση αυτή είναι: *εάν, σε ποιο βαθμό και προς ποια κατεύθυνση, η εδραίωση και επέκταση νέων μορφών απασχόλησης επιφέρει αλλαγές την θέση της γυναίκας στο χώρο της εργασίας, αλλά και της κοινωνίας και των λοιπών θεσμών γενικότερα.*

Στη συνέχεια της παρούσας εργασία θα προχωρήσουμε σε μια σκιαγράφηση των σημαντικότερων διαστάσεων των νέων μορφών απασχόλησης και των επιπτώσεων που αυτές έχουν στη ζωή και τη θέση των γυναικών. Ειδικότερα θα επικεντρωθούμε σε ορισμένες από τις «νέες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας» που έχουν ιδιαίτερες επιπτώσεις στις *γυναίκες ως εργαζόμενες*: (1) στη σχέση οικογένειας και απασχόλησης στις νέες συνθήκες, (2) στο ρόλο των νέων τεχνολογιών, (3) στην κατ' οίκον εργασία και τηλε-εργασία, (4) στη μερική απασχόληση, και (5) στην κοινωνική ασφάλιση και την κοινωνική προστασία.

1. Φύλο, Απασχόληση και Οικογένεια στη Νέα Οργάνωση της Εργασίας

Μια από τις σαφέστερες τάσεις των τελευταίων τριών δεκαετιών είναι η αύξηση της γυναικείας απασχόλησης σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο. Αυτό ισχύει τόσο για τις αναπτυγμένες, όσο και τις αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες, και αποτελεί μια εμφανώς μη-αναστρέψιμη διαδικασία (U.S. Department of Labour, 1993). Στις χώρες της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης το ποσοστό απασχόλησης των γυναικών κατά την τελευταία πενταετία κυμαίνεται στο 50-52% (European Women's Lobby, 2000). Βέβαια, η ένταξη των γυναικών στην Ευρωπαϊκή, καθώς και την παγκόσμια αγορά εργασίας διαφοροποιείται ανάμεσα σε χώρες, καθώς και μέσα στην ίδια χώρα, ανάλογα με: την ηλικία, τη φυλή, το βαθμό πολιτισμικής και κοινωνικής ένταξης –μειονότητες, μετανάστες, πρόσφυγες--, το εκπαιδευτικό επίπεδο, το κοινωνικο-οικονομικό επίπεδο (Monthly Labour Review, 1997).

Η γυναικεία απασχόληση, με τις μορφές που έχει προσλάβει κατά τον 20ο αιώνα, και τις ποιοτικές και ποσοτικές αλλαγές που έχει υποστεί, σε συνδυασμό με την ραγδαία αύξηση στο επίπεδο εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης –ιδιαίτερα της τελευταίας γενιάς— έχει τροποποιήσει τον παραδοσιακό ρόλο της γυναίκας. Έτσι, χαρακτηριστικό σήμερα είναι *το μοντέλο του «διπλού ρόλου»* της γυναίκας, το οποίο εδραιώνεται και επεκτείνεται. Η γυναικεία ταυτότητα, ιδιαίτερα στις αναπτυγμένες χώρες, δεν διαμορφώνεται πλέον με βάση την αποκλειστική απασχόληση με τις *οικογενειακές εργασίες* και την *αναπαραγωγή*, σε συνδυασμό με μη-αμειβόμενη εργασία εντός ή εκτός του οίκου, αλλά καθοριστικό συστατικό της ταυτότητας αυτής έρχεται να αποτελέσει η *αμειβόμενη εργασία*, ως συνθήκη κατοχύρωσης της ισότητας, της αυτονομίας, και της πρόσβασης στην ισχύ και την εξουσία στα πλαίσια του ιδιωτικού και του δημόσιου βίου.

Οι δομικές και λειτουργικές όμως αυτές αλλαγές δεν έχουν τροποποιήσει μόνο τον κοινωνικό ρόλο του γυναικείου φύλου, αλλά έχουν επιφέρει και ριζικές αλλαγές στην οικογενειακή ζωή και στα αναπαραγωγικά σχήματα των δυτικών κυρίως κοινωνιών. Δεδομένου ότι η περίοδος ανάπτυξης και εδραίωση της επαγγελματικής ταυτότητας συμπίπτει με την περίοδο δημιουργίας οικογένειας και τεκνοποίησης, οι περισσότερες γυναίκες με «διπλό ρόλο» σήμερα τείνουν να μεταθέτουν την ηλικία γάμου και να περιορίζουν τον αριθμό των παιδιών τους. Βέβαια, τη στρατηγική αυτή συμμερίζεται και ένα συνεχώς αυξανόμενο ποσοστό ανδρών και είναι αποτέλεσμα όχι μόνο αλλαγών στη διαμόρφωση της γυναικείας ταυτότητας και των νέων προσωπικών στρατηγικών των

²⁰ Για πληρέστερα συγκριτικά και διαχρονικά δεδομένα βλέπε μεταξύ άλλων τα στοιχεία του ILO, www.ilo.com.

γυναικών, αλλά και πολλαπλών αλλαγών σε οικονομικό, κοινωνικό και πολιτισμικό επίπεδο, σε επίπεδο καταναλωτικής συμπεριφοράς, αξιών, προτεραιοτήτων, κλπ.

Βέβαια πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι οι γυναίκες είναι αυτές που, ανεξαρτήτως λοιπών χαρακτηριστικών --φυλής, κοινωνικής τάξης, τόπου κατοικίας, επιπέδου εκπαίδευσης, κλπ.--, εξακολουθούν να φέρουν *κυρίως το βάρος του συνδυασμού εργασίας και οικογένειας*, με αποτέλεσμα: να μειώνεται δραστικά ο χρόνος που διαθέτουν για τον εαυτό τους, να αυτοπεριορίζονται στις δραστηριότητες που αναπτύσσουν, να επιβάλλουν στον εαυτό τους υπερβολικές απαιτήσεις, και επιπρόσθετα να βιώνουν ενοχές για την αδυναμία αφιέρωσης στα παιδιά τους ή για τον περιορισμό του χρόνου που ξοδεύουν με αυτά, κ.ά.

Ακόμα πρέπει να διαπιστώσουμε ότι οι γυναίκες εξακολουθούν να έχουν ακόμα τους παραδοσιακούς ρόλους της «παροχής φροντίδας» και στα λοιπά μέλη της οικογένειας πέρα από τα παιδιά – ηλικιωμένους γονείς, συγγενείς, κ.ά. Η φροντίδα αυτή επιβαρύνει ακόμα περισσότερο τις γυναίκες από πλευράς χρόνου και ενέργειας –τόσο σωματικής όσο και συναισθηματικής. Οι διαφορές αυτές μεταξύ ανδρών και γυναικών στην ανάληψη του «διπλού ρόλου» επιβεβαιώνουν ότι και στις νέες συνθήκες εργασίας, τα δύο φύλα δεν ανταγωνίζονται στην αγορά εργασίας με ίσους όρους, καθώς τίθενται διαφορετικές προϋποθέσεις τόσο για την προσφορά, όσο και για τη ζήτηση της εργασίας τους.

Επίσης σημαντική είναι η διαπίστωση ότι οι απαιτήσεις και της «νέας» αγοράς εργασίας διατυπώνονται ακόμα με βάση «τον ιδεατό εργαζόμενο» που έχει παραδοσιακά *ανδρικά* χαρακτηριστικά, δηλαδή: αυτόν που μπορεί να δουλεύει πολλές ώρες και σε ευέλικτα ωράρια για να ανταποκρίνεται στις ταχύτητες της διεθνούς αγοράς, μπορεί να προσαρμόζει τις προσωπικές και λοιπές του λειτουργίες στις ανάγκες της εργασίας, γενικά μπορεί να είναι ευέλικτος όσον αφορά τη διάθεση του χρόνου και της ενέργειάς του. Οι απαιτήσεις όμως αυτές δεν συμβαδίζουν με τις απαιτήσεις για την κάλυψη των πάγιων και σταθερών αναγκών της οικογένειας και των μελών της για στέγαση, σίτιση, φροντίδα, επίβλεψη, περίθαλψη, κλπ. Έτσι, εξ' ορισμού, οι απαιτήσεις της νέας αγοράς εργασίας παραμένουν σε μεγάλο βαθμό «προκατειλημμένες» κυρίως ενάντια στις γυναίκες, αλλά και στους άνδρες που ενίοτε αναλαμβάνουν την οικογενειακή φροντίδα. Βέβαια όπως θα δούμε προσφέρουν και νέες ευκαιρίες για απασχόληση, αλλά με το σχετικό κόστος.

2. Φύλο και Νέες Τεχνολογίες στη Νέα Οργάνωση της Εργασίας

Οι ΤΠΕ (Τεχνολογίες της Πληροφορίας και της Επικοινωνίας) είναι τεκμηριωμένο πλέον ότι έχουν παίξει και εξακολουθούν να παίζουν, καθοριστικό ρόλο στη διαμόρφωση και τη ανάπτυξη των νέων μορφών απασχόλησης. Οι ΝΤΠΕ έρχονται ειδικότερα να καθορίσουν τη θέση της γυναίκας, (i) τόσο *έμμεσα*, μέσω των αλλαγών που επέφεραν στην οργάνωση της παραγωγής και της απασχόλησης, οι οποίες με τη σειρά τους *άλλαξαν και αλλάζουν* τη θέση της γυναίκας στην αγορά εργασίας και την κοινωνία γενικότερα, (ii) όσο και *άμεσα*, μέσω της σχέσης που οι γυναίκες *ανάπτυξαν και αναπτύσσουν* με τις νέες τεχνολογίες καθαυτές, σχέση η οποία είναι καθοριστική για τη θέση της γυναίκας στην «νέα» αγορά εργασίας και την κοινωνία γενικότερα. Σχετικά με τις έμμεσες επιπτώσεις της αναδόμησης της παραγωγής στη θέση της γυναίκας θα αναφερθούμε στις επόμενες ενότητες. Επί του παρόντος διατυπώνουμε ορισμένες διαπιστώσεις σχετικά με τη άμεση σχέση των γυναικών με τις νέες τεχνολογίες καθαυτές.

Μια πρώτη διαπίστωση στη σχετική βιβλιογραφία: όσο *αδιαμφισβήτητες* είναι οι πολλαπλές θετικές επιπτώσεις της εξέλιξης της τεχνολογία, και δη των ΤΠΕ, σε όλα τα επίπεδα της

κοινωνικής και οικονομικής ζωής, τόσο αδιαμφισβήτητο είναι και το γεγονός ότι διαμορφώνουν νέες συνθήκες έντονης κοινωνικής ανισότητας και αποκλεισμού (Flecker, Meil and Pollert, 1998 Gregory, 1983, Mortensen, 1983). Μια νέα μορφή «φτώχειας», ένα νέο κριτήριο κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού αναδύεται με την επέκταση και την εδραίωση της τεχνολογίας σε όλο το φάσμα των κοινωνικο-οικονομικών δραστηριοτήτων, διαχωρίζοντας χώρες, κοινωνικά υποσύνολα και άτομα ανάλογα με το επίπεδο κατοχής, ανάπτυξης και αξιοποίησης της νέας τεχνολογικής γνώσης, διαχωρίζοντας: φτωχούς από πλούσιους, νέους από γέρους, κατοίκους αστικών περιοχών από κατοίκους αγροτικών περιοχών, μορφωμένους από αγράμματους, και περισσότερο από όλα μέσα σε όλες αυτές τις κατηγορίες, διαχωρίζοντας άνδρες από γυναίκες. Όπως προκύπτει, για παράδειγμα από το Human Development Report (UNDP 1999), ο τυπικός χρήστης του βασικού εργαλείου εργασίας και επικοινωνίας, το διαδίκτυο (internet), είναι: άνδρας, κάτω των 35 ετών, με πανεπιστημιακή μόρφωση, με υψηλό εισόδημα, ζει σε αστική περιοχή αναπτυγμένης χώρας και μιλάει Αγγλικά. Έτσι, παρατηρούμε ενδεικτικά από τα σχετικά στοιχεία του 1998-2000, ότι οι γυναίκες αποτελούσαν το 38% των χρηστών του διαδικτύου στις ΗΠΑ, 25% στη Βραζιλία, 17% στην Ιαπωνία, και Νότια Αφρική, το 7% στην Κίνα, και κάτω από το 4% στις Αραβικές χώρες.

Οι λόγοι για τους οποίους, και οι δομές και διαδικασίες μέσω των οποίων, οι γυναίκες ιδιαίτερα αποκλείονται από την ισότιμη κατάκτηση και αξιοποίηση των νέων τεχνολογιών της πληροφορίας και της επικοινωνίας είναι πολλαπλοί και σύνθετοι και πρόσφατα αναπτύσσεται ένα μεγάλο σώμα ερευνών και αναλύσεων σχετικά με το θέμα αυτό.²¹ Στην παρούσα εργασία μόνο ορισμένες παρατηρήσεις μπορούμε επιγραμματικά να καταθέσουμε. Σε γενικές γραμμές διαπιστώνεται ότι ο «τεχνολογικός αναλφαβητισμός» των γυναικών ξεκινάει από νωρίς στη ζωή των ατόμων με τις διαδικασίες κοινωνικοποίησης στα πλαίσια της οικογένειας και του σχολείου. Πολλαπλές είναι πλέον οι έρευνες που τεκμηριώνουν ότι οι γονείς, με βάση παραδοσιακά σεξιστικά πρότυπα και αντιλήψεις, εξασφαλίζουν τις προϋποθέσεις για την εξοικείωση των αγοριών τους με τα νέα τεχνολογικά προϊόντα και τα λογισμικά τους, αλλά όχι των κοριτσιών τους, ξοδεύοντας, για παράδειγμα, διπλάσια ποσά για τα αγόρια από ότι για τα κορίτσια (Silvera, 2000). Ακόμα και στις ΗΠΑ όπου έχουν γίνει σχετικές μελέτες, τεκμηριώνεται ότι τα αγόρια χρησιμοποιούν υπολογιστές πέντε φορές περισσότερο από ότι τα κορίτσια (Silvera, 2000). Άλλες έρευνες στα πλαίσια του σχολείου δείχνουν ότι τόσο η στάση των εκπαιδευτικών, όσο και των αγοριών μέσα στην τάξη τείνουν άμεσα ή/και έμμεσα να αποκλείουν τα κορίτσια από την ισότιμη πρόσβαση σε υπολογιστές και νέα τεχνολογικά όργανα και την απόκτηση γνώσεων σχετικά με αυτά και πάνω σε αυτά (Hartman, 1986, 1987).

Στη δευτεροβάθμια και κυρίως στην τριτοβάθμια εκπαίδευση, τα κορίτσια, κυρίως λόγω της κοινωνικοποίησής τους και των προτύπων που προβάλλονται, καθώς και τις ευκαιρίες που τους προσφέρονται, εξακολουθούν να αποτελούν μειονότητα στους τομείς παραγωγής της γνώσης που σχετίζεται με τις θετικές επιστήμες γενικότερα, και τις νέες τεχνολογίες ειδικότερα (National Center for Education Statistics, 1998; Mitter and Rowbotham, 1995). Άρα λαμβάνουν, μέσω του εκπαιδευτικού συστήματος, λιγότερα εφόδια για ένταξη στην νέα, τεχνολογικά εμπλουτισμένη αγορά εργασίας σε θέσεις: υψηλού κύρους και υψηλών απολαβών, με καλύτερες προοπτικές επαγγελματικής εξέλιξης, με καλύτερες προοπτικές συνεχιζόμενης εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης στο χώρο της εργασίας που θα αυξάνει και θα αναπροσαρμόζει τα τυπικά και ουσιαστικά τους προσόντα. Αυτό επιβεβαιώνεται από τα στοιχεία σχετικά με την ένταξη των γυναικών σε θέσεις

²¹ Μόνον ενδεικτικά αναφέρουμε την κλασική πλέον μελέτη της Hartman (1987), Volume I και Volume II, και τον επίσης σημαντικό συλλογικό τόμο με την επιμέλεια των Mitter and Rowbotham (1995).

εργασίας σχετιζόμενες με τις νέες τεχνολογίες. Στην πρώτη φάση της τεχνολογικής επανάστασης οι γυναίκες, ιδιαίτερα των αναπτυσσόμενων χωρών, απορροφήθηκαν σε δουλειές συναρμολόγησης ηλεκτρονικών προϊόντων, όσο όμως προχωρούσε η διαδικασία αυτοματοποίησης της παραγωγής, και αυξάνονταν οι τεχνικές και δεξιότητες αλλά και γνώσεις αναγκαίες για την επιτέλεση των νέων εργασιών, τόσο μειώνονταν ο αριθμός των συμμετεχόντων γυναικών. Σήμερα που οι ΤΠΕ έχουν αναμορφώσει την απασχόληση στον τομέα των υπηρεσιών, απορροφάται ένας μεγαλύτερος αριθμός γυναικών στον τομέα αυτό, οι γυναίκες όμως εξακολουθούν να συγκεντρώνονται κυρίως σε εργασίες καταχώρησης δεδομένων (data entry) με συγκριτικά χαμηλότερες αμοιβές, κύρος και εξουσία (Hafkin and Taggart, 2001).

Ακόμα όμως και με συγκρίσιμα με άνδρες επιστημονικά και τεχνολογικά εφόδια, στις γυναίκες δεν παρέχονται οι ίδιες ευκαιρίες πρόσληψης λόγω των προκαταλήψεων των εργοδοτών που βασίζονται τόσο σε στερεοτυπικές σεξιστικές αντιλήψεις (οι γυναίκες δεν είναι εξ' ίσου ικανές, δεν διαθέτουν ορθολογιστική σκέψη, δεν διαθέτουν δυνατότητες άσκησης εξουσίας, κλπ), όσο και σε οικονομικά-επιχειρηματικά κριτήρια (φόβος αποχώρησης για τεκνοποίηση) (Acker and van Jouten, 1992). Αλλά ακόμα και όταν προσλαμβάνονται, οι γυναίκες δεν έχουν ίσες ευκαιρίες εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης για επαγγελματική εξέλιξη (Abrahamsson, 2001) γιατί δεν εκλαμβάνονται ως ασφαλής επένδυση από τους εργοδότες, αλλά και γιατί η κατάρτιση παρέχεται εκτός εργασιακού ωραρίου και συγκρούεται με τις συμβατικές οικογενειακές τους υποχρεώσεις. Άρα μια από τις βασικότερες προϋποθέσεις για κάλυψη «νέων» θέσεων απασχόλησης, που είναι η δια βίου εκπαίδευση, καταστρατηγείται εν τη γενέσει της. Η συνθήκη αυτή επιδεινώνεται σε συνθήκες εργασίας με μη-πλήρη απασχόληση, όπως σημειώνεται και στη συνέχεια.

3. Φύλο, Κατ' οίκον εργασία και Τηλε-εργασία

Ο κατακερματισμός και η κατανομή της παραγωγής σε πολλαπλά σημεία, συχνά ανά τον κόσμο, και το sub-contracting έχουν εν πολλοίς βασιστεί όχι μόνο στη διαμόρφωση νέων μονάδων παραγωγής, αλλά στην ενίσχυση της *κατ' οίκον εργασίας* (home work), δηλαδή στην παραγωγή αγαθών ή υπηρεσιών με επιμέρους ανάθεση έργου σε εργαζομένους, που απασχολούνται σε χώρους εργασίας της επιλογής τους, συνήθως το σπίτι τους, και συνήθως πληρώνονται με το κομμάτι (piece-work) (Boris, 1994). Η μορφή αυτή εργασίας δεν αποτελεί καινούριο φαινόμενο, καθώς υπήρξε μια από τις πιο εντατικές μορφές εργασίας και από την εποχή της βαριάς βιομηχανίας. Δεν ήταν όμως ποτέ τόσο εκτεταμένη, με τάσεις προς την καθιέρωσή και τη νομιμοποίησή της. Βέβαια σχετικά με την έκταση που έχει πάρει σημειώνεται ότι η μορφή αυτή παραγωγής ήταν και εξακολουθεί να είναι σε μεγάλο --αν όχι στο μεγαλύτερο βαθμό-- αφανής, καθώς δεν καταγράφεται στις εθνικές στατιστικές, δεν καλύπτεται από την εργατική νομοθεσία καθώς δεν αποτελεί ακόμα τυπικά αναγνωρισμένη σχέση εργασίας και δεν έχει κατοχυρωμένα δικαιώματα και υποχρεώσεις.

Όπως όλες οι άλλες μορφές άτυπης εργασίας, η κατ' οίκον εργασία έχει θετικά και αρνητικά χαρακτηριστικά για τους εργαζόμενους. Το *θετικό στοιχείο* αυτής της μορφής απασχόλησης θεωρείται η έλλειψη άμεσης εποπτείας και ελέγχου από τον εργοδότη και η έλλειψη προκαθορισμένου ωραρίου εργασίας. Επιπρόσθετα για τις γυναίκες, το θετικό, και μάλιστα το καθοριστικό στοιχείο, είναι ότι οι συνθήκες αυτές επιτρέπουν τον συνδυασμό της εργασίας με την εκπλήρωση των συμβατικών οικογενειακών υποχρεώσεων. Το ερώτημα βέβαια που μένει σε κάθε περίπτωση να απαντηθεί είναι εάν αυτή η επιλογή των γυναικών είναι αποτέλεσμα «ελεύθερης επιλογής» ή λαμβάνεται λόγω έλλειψης άλλων επιλογών. Το *αρνητικό στοιχείο* αυτής της μορφής

απασχόλησης θεωρείται κυρίως το γεγονός ότι, ακριβώς επειδή είναι αφανής, ο/η εργαζόμενος/η δεν έχει κανέναν έλεγχο γύρω από την αμοιβή του, την ασφάλειά του, τη σταθερότητα της εργασίας του, δεν συμμετέχει σε οργανώσεις και δεν συνδικαλιζείται, και έτσι δεν υπάρχει τρόπος εξασφάλισης της προστασίας των εργασιακών δικαιωμάτων, δεν καλύπτεται από όργανα και θεσμούς προστασίας της εργασίας, είτε εθνικά, είτε διεθνή, και έτσι δεν υπάρχει πλαίσιο κοινωνικής προστασίας. Αυτός είναι και ο λόγος για τον οποίον το μεγαλύτερο μέρος των εργαζομένων αυτών σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, αποτελείται από χαμηλόμισθες, ανειδίκευτες, γυναίκες, των λιγότερο αναπτυγμένων χωρών. Ακόμα δε και στις πλέον αναπτυγμένες χώρες, όπως τις Η.Π.Α. έχει πολλαπλώς τεκμηριωθεί ότι η πλειοψηφία των κατ' οίκον εργαζομένων γυναικών, που ασχολούνται κατά κύριο λόγο σε υπαλληλικές θέσεις: (1) λαμβάνει σημαντικά χαμηλότερες αμοιβές, συνήθως αμειβόμενη «με το κομμάτι», και όχι για τον συνολικό χρόνο επιτέλεσης ενός έργου, (2) δεν πληρώνεται για γιορτές και διακοπές, ασφάλεια υγείας και ζωής, σύνταξη, (3) καλύπτει μόνη της το κόστος στέγασης και των συναφών εξόδων για τη διεκπεραίωση της εργασίας στο σπίτι, (4) χρησιμοποιεί τα δικά της «εργαλεία δουλειάς» ή σε πολλές περιπτώσεις τα νοικιάζει από τον εργοδότη (υπολογιστές, fax, κλπ), και τέλος (5) αποτελεί την πρώτη κατηγορία εργαζομένων που μένουν χωρίς δουλειά και εισόδημα σε περιόδους περικοπών ή κρίσης (Gregory, 1983, Mortensen, 1983).

Αυτό που σήμερα διαφοροποιεί την κατ' οίκον εργασία είναι ότι δεν περιορίζεται πλέον, όπως παραδοσιακά, στην παραγωγή αγαθών *έντασης εργασίας* όπως η παραγωγή υφασμάτων και ρούχων, αλλά σήμερα έχει περάσει κυρίως στην παροχή υπηρεσιών, και σε αρκετά μεγάλο βαθμό *υπηρεσιών εντάσεως κεφαλαίου*, ιδιαίτερα στους νέους τομείς της τεχνολογίας και της επικοινωνίας – π.χ. λογισμικών-, των γραφικών τεχνών, των πολυμέσων και των καλών τεχνών που χρησιμοποιούνται στην παραγωγή και την επικοινωνία –σχεδιαστές, κλπ. Στις κατηγορίες αυτές όμως οι γυναίκες τείνουν να υπο-εκπροσωπούνται λόγω του ότι δεν διαθέτουν την απαραίτητη εκπαίδευση, ή/και τα αναγκαία μέσα λόγω έλλειψης επαρκούς εισοδήματος. Σαν αποτέλεσμα, οι γυναίκες που απασχολούνται κατ' οίκον, τείνουν να παραμένουν σε θέσεις χαμηλής ειδίκευσης, χαμηλής παραγωγικότητας, και χαμηλής αμοιβής.

Και όταν εντάσσονται στις θέσεις υψηλής ειδίκευσης και αμοιβής, κυρίως ως ελεύθεροι επαγγελματίες, οι γυναίκες το κάνουν σε μεγάλο βαθμό για να μπορέσουν να συνδυάσουν την απασχόλησή και την επαγγελματική καταξίωσή τους με τις οικογενειακές τους υποχρεώσεις, γεγονός που επιφέρει τις προαναφερθείσες εντάσεις και πιέσεις. Αυτό ισχύει ιδιαίτερα στην περίπτωση της τηλε-εργασίας, όπου με τη χρήση των ΤΠΕ, εργαζόμενοι, και κυρίως γυναίκες, μπορούν να διεκπεραιώσουν τα εργασιακά τους καθήκοντα σε εναλλακτικούς χώρους, μεταξύ των οποίων και το σπίτι τους. Μορφωμένες, αστές γυναίκες με οικογένεια και παιδιά τείνουν να επιλέγουν αυτή τη μορφή απασχόλησης για να μπορούν να συνδυάσουν εργασία και οικογένεια. Λόγω του διπλού αυτού ρόλου, συχνά η ολοκλήρωση των επαγγελματικών υποχρεώσεων γίνεται το βράδυ, τη νύχτα ή το σαββατοκύριακο, με αποτέλεσμα, να εντείνεται το άγχος, η πίεση και η πνευματική και σωματική κούραση της εργαζόμενης γυναίκας (Huws et al, 1996).

Ακόμα η τηλε-εργασία περιορίζει τις προοπτικές επαγγελματικής ανόδου γυναικών που δεν έχουν κατοχυρώσει υψηλά κοινωνικο-οικονομικά και επαγγελματικά προσόντα. Στην «παραδοσιακή» οργάνωση της εργασίας, γυναίκες που ήταν ενταγμένες στα κατώτερα και μεσαία κλιμάκια των επιχειρήσεων μπορούσαν να εξασφαλίσουν την άνοδο και την εξέλιξή τους μέσα στην εργασιακή ιεραρχία και να κατακτήσουν υψηλές διοικητικές θέσεις με βάση την προϋπηρεσία τους και τα επιπρόσθετα προσόντα και γνώσεις που αποκτούσαν μέσω αυτής (Applebaum, 1987). Αυτό που

στην ουσία ήταν αποτέλεσμα μακροχρόνιων αγώνων για ίσες επαγγελματικές ευκαιρίες, ανατρέπεται, καθώς οι επιχειρήσεις προσλαμβάνουν εξειδικευμένα διοικητικά στελέχη απ' ευθείας από τα ανάλογα πανεπιστημιακά τμήματα, στα οποία όμως η φοίτηση γυναικών και ιδιαίτερα γυναικών των κατωτέρων κοινωνικο-οικονομικών στρωμάτων, είναι εξαιρετικά περιορισμένη. Αντίστροφα, γυναίκες που εργάζονται κατ' οίκον, αποσπασμένες από την επιχειρησιακή οργάνωση και την κουλτούρα της, δεν έχουν προοπτικές ανόδου και εξέλιξης, είτε εργασιακής, είτε κοινωνικο-οικονομικής (Chin, 1984; Olson, 1983; Pratt, 1984).

4. Φύλο και Μερική Απασχόληση στη Νέα Οργάνωση της Εργασίας

Η μερική απασχόληση δεν είναι κάτι το καινούργιο στην αγορά εργασίας, έχει όμως τις τελευταίες δεκαετίες προσελκύσει ιδιαίτερη προσοχή γιατί αποτελεί την προεξέχουσα μορφή «μη-συμβατικής» εργασίας (nonstandard work) στις συνθήκες παγκοσμιοποίησης. Μάλιστα, το διαφορετικό στοιχείο σήμερα δεν είναι τόσο η ποσοτική αύξηση των ατόμων που απασχολούνται μόνον μερικώς, όσο η ποιοτική διαφοροποίηση στην «κανονικότητα» ή «συμβατικότητα» που προσλαμβάνει μια μορφή εργασίας που «παραδοσιακά» θεωρούνταν «άτυπη» ή «μη-συμβατική». Όπως όλες οι άλλες μορφές απασχόλησης που απορροφούν ένα συνεχώς αυξανόμενο μέρος του εργατικού δυναμικού, έτσι και η μερική απασχόληση εμπεριέχει ταυτόχρονα θετικά και αρνητικά στοιχεία, προοπτικές και κινδύνους. Αυτό ισχύει βέβαια για το σύνολο των εργαζομένων με μερική απασχόληση. Ισχύει όμως ακόμα περισσότερο για τις εργαζόμενες γυναίκες για μια σειρά από λόγους.

Πολλαπλές από τις διεργασίες αναδόμησης της παραγωγής στα πλαίσια της παγκοσμιοποίησης συνέβαλαν στην αύξηση της μερικής απασχόλησης, αλλά κυρίως: το αίτημα για ευέλικτες μορφές εργασίας που περιορίζουν το κόστος των επιχειρήσεων, η ανάπτυξη του τομέα των υπηρεσιών και του εμπορίου, και η αύξηση της συμμετοχής των γυναικών, ιδιαίτερα γυναικών με παιδιά (Deutermann and Brown, 1978; Presser and Baldwin, 1980). Με βάση τα στοιχεία του ILO, εκτιμάται ότι στις αναπτυγμένες χώρες οι γυναίκες αποτελούν το 65-90% των μερικώς απασχολούμενων, ενώ στις αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες απασχολούνται κυρίως σε άτυπες και μη καταγεγραμμένες μορφές (κατ' οίκον εργασία) και τα ποσοστά απασχόλησής τους είναι δύσκολο να προσδιοριστούν (Silvera, 2000).

Αν και οι συνθήκες διαφέρουν ριζικά από χώρα σε χώρα, είναι σε γενικές γραμμές καταγεγραμμένο στη βιβλιογραφία ότι οι εργοδότες τείνουν να εκλαμβάνουν την μερική απασχόληση ως μια από τις βασικές στρατηγικές για περικοπή του κόστους της εργασίας. Αυτό επιτυγχάνεται κυρίως μέσω της περικοπής του κόστους των εργοδοτικών εισφορών, καθώς και της μείωσης των αμοιβών που λαμβάνουν οι μερικώς απασχολούμενοι για εργασία αντίστοιχη με αυτή που επιτελούν άτομα με πλήρη απασχόληση (Nollen et al, 1978; Applebaum, 1987). Αντίστροφα, από την πλευρά της ζήτησης της μερικής απασχόλησης, θεωρείται ότι παραδοσιακά, αλλά ιδιαίτερα σήμερα, οι γυναίκες «επιλέγουν» τη μερική απασχόληση ως τη –μόνη– λύση για να συνδυάσουν την εργασία με τις οικογενειακές υποχρεώσεις ανατροφής των παιδιών και φροντίδας ηλικιωμένων και άλλων ατόμων, η οποία εξακολουθεί να αποτελεί δική τους ευθύνη (Applebaum, 1987). Σε μεγάλο όμως βαθμό αποδέχονται τη μερική απασχόληση, όχι λόγω συνειδητής επιλογής, αλλά επειδή δεν έχουν άλλους τρόπους κάλυψης των οικογενειακών υποχρεώσεων, και κυρίως επειδή είναι κοινωνικά και οικονομικά ανίσχυρες και η μερική απασχόληση ήταν και παραμένει χαρακτηριστική των αδύναμων κοινωνικών ομάδων, αυτών που μεταξύ άλλων προσλαμβάνονται τελευταίοι και απολύονται πρώτοι (Presser and Baldwin, 1980).

Οι συνθήκες αυτές προσφοράς και ζήτησης της μερικής απασχόλησης καθορίζουν σε μεγάλο βαθμό και τα χαρακτηριστικά της που είναι: (1) χαμηλότερες αμοιβές και σε ωριαίο και σε συνολικό επίπεδο, (2) περιορισμένη εφαρμογή δικαιωμάτων ανεργίας, ασθένειας, εγκυμοσύνης, κ.ά., (3) περιορισμένη ή ανύπαρκτη προστασία από απόλυση, (4) περιορισμένη προστασία από νομοθεσία και όργανα προστασίας της εργασίας, (5) περιορισμός ή ανυπαρξία επαγγελματικής εξέλιξης, (6) περιορισμός προοπτικών κατάρτισης, (7) αδυναμία εξασφάλισης προϋποθέσεων για σύνταξη και άλλες μορφές κοινωνικής πρόνοιας. Έτσι στο βαθμό που οι γυναίκες αποτελούν τη

συντριπτική πλειοψηφία των μερικώς απασχολούμενων, αποτελούν και την πλειοψηφία αυτών που υπόκεινται στις αρνητικές επιπτώσεις αυτής της μορφής απασχόλησης.

5. Φύλο, Κοινωνική Ασφάλιση και Κοινωνική Προστασία στη Νέα Οργάνωση της Εργασίας

Οι ριζικές αλλαγές στην δομή και οργάνωση της παραγωγής βρίσκονται σε άμεση συνάρτηση με το πλαίσιο κοινωνικής ασφάλισης και προστασίας (Gummett, 1996). Όπως ήδη αναφέρθηκε, στο «παραδοσιακό» μοντέλο απασχόλησης, ο «άνδρας-τροφός» εργαζόταν και συντηρούσε την οικογένεια, και έτσι κάλυπτε και την ασφάλιση της «γυναίκας-οικοκυράς» που κατά κανόνα δεν συμμετείχε στην παραγωγή, αλλά μόνον στην αναπαραγωγή και την φροντίδα της οικογένειας. Οι αλλαγές στη δομή του μοντέλου αυτού που ανέτρεψε τους παραδοσιακούς ρόλους απασχόλησης, επέφεραν αλλαγές και στο σύστημα ασφάλισης και κοινωνικής προστασίας, και ιδιαίτερα των γυναικών.

Οι αλλαγές αυτές υπήρξαν ταυτόχρονα θετικές και αρνητικές. Οι αρνητικές αλλαγές ήταν ότι υποχώρησε σε αρκετά μεγάλο βαθμό το δίκτυο προστασίας που προσέφερε η τυπική ανδροκρατούμενη οικογένεια, χωρίς αυτό να αντικαθίσταται από άλλες μορφές κοινωνικής προστασίας της γυναίκας που εισέρχονταν στην αγορά εργασίας. Ακόμα η απασχόληση της γυναίκας κυρίως σε άτυπες μορφές εργασίας (μερική, κατ' οίκον, κλπ), εντείνει –όπως ήδη αναφέρθηκε-- την έκθεσή της σε πολλαπλούς εργασιακούς και άλλους κινδύνους, χωρίς να εξασφαλίζει την θεσμοθετημένη προστασία της από αυτούς και την κοινωνική της ασφάλιση. Από τη θετική όμως πλευρά διαπιστώνεται ότι οι διεργασίες αυτές, σε συνδυασμό με τις διεργασίες που σχετίζονται με την προάσπιση και εδραίωση των δικαιωμάτων της γυναίκας και της ισότητας ευρύτερα στις χώρες της Δύσης, ώθησαν στην ενίσχυση των νομικών μέτρων προστασίας των γυναικών από την πολιτεία και έθεσαν στο τραπέζι του δημόσιου διαλόγου και τα μέτρα προστασίας γενικά υπέρ των εργαζομένων που απασχολούνται σε θέσεις με ελλιπή κοινωνική ασφάλιση και προστασία (Walby, 2003, Peters and Wolper, 1995).

Σε θεωρητικό επίπεδο αναπτύσσεται τα τελευταία χρόνια ένας διάλογος σχετικά με την επίδραση των διεργασιών παγκοσμιοποίησης στην ισχύ του κράτους πρόνοιας, ο οποίος και εκφράζει την αμφίρροπη αυτή διεργασία αναγνώρισης και αντιμετώπισης της κοινωνικής προστασίας των ασθενέστερων κοινωνικών ομάδων και δη των γυναικών. Κατά ορισμένους η ισχύς των παγκόσμιων αγορών και των εκπροσώπων τους μειώνει την πολιτική ικανότητα του κράτους, το οποίο στην προσπάθειά του να προσελκύσει και να συγκρατήσει το διεθνές «παγκοσμιοποιημένο» κεφάλαιο στα εθνικά όρια, υιοθετεί ή/και αποδέχεται σιωπηρά συνθήκες πλήρους ευελιξίας και συνακόλουθης υποβάθμισης των συνθηκών απασχόλησης (Cerny, 1996; Crouch and Streck, 1997; Martin and Schuman, 1997). Κατά άλλους, η αρνητική αυτή επίδραση στην ισχύ του κοινωνικού κράτους δεν ισχύει, στο βαθμό που δεν μπορεί να στοιχειοθετηθεί (Walby, 2003; Hirst and Thompson, 1996, Taylor-Gooby, 1997).

Ανεξαιρέτως τοποθέτησης στο θεωρητικό πρόβλημα –η επεξεργασία του οποίου υπερβαίνει τα όρια της παρούσας εργασίας--, σε γενικές γραμμές αναγνωρίζεται ότι οι διεργασίες παγκοσμιοποίησης έχουν σχετιστεί με την αποδόμηση του κοινωνικού κράτους, ή/και την αδυναμία του να επιβάλλει στο κεφάλαιο τη συμβολή του στην κοινωνική προστασία των εργαζομένων, και δη των εργαζομένων στις νέες μορφές εργασίας. Η αποδόμηση βέβαια αυτή διαφοροποιείται έντονα ανάλογα με το επίπεδο ανάπτυξης και την πολιτική και πολιτισμική ταυτότητα των επιμέρους χωρών. Για παράδειγμα, τεκμηριωμένη είναι η διαφορά μεταξύ των

Ηνωμένων Πολιτειών και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης ως προς την εξασφάλιση ενός μίνιμουμ δικτύου κοινωνικής προστασίας των πολιτών, και δη των οικονομικά αδυνάτων. Και αυτό το δίκτυο έχει ακόμα εντονότερα ενισχυθεί από το γυναικείο κίνημα και τις οργανώσεις του που έχουν καταστεί αναγνωρίσιμες και υπολογίσιμες πολιτικές ομάδες πίεσης και διαμόρφωσης πολιτικής. Στις νέες συνθήκες απασχόλησης τόσο το κράτος, όσο και οι μη-κυβερνητικές οργανώσεις και οι λοιπές κοινωνικές ομάδες πίεσης είναι αναγκαίο να επανεξετάσουν και να επαναδιατυπώσουν σε θεωρητικό και σε νομικό επίπεδο, αλλά κυρίως στο επίπεδο της πράξης κάθε χώρας, τα ελάχιστα κριτήρια ασφάλισης και πρόνοιας στις συνθήκες παγκοσμιοποίησης της εργασίας. Εν τω μεταξύ, οι συνθήκες κοινωνικής ασφάλειας και πρόνοιας παραμένουν το πλέον ευάλωτο και λιγότερο αποδεκτό στοιχείο των νέων συνθηκών απασχόλησης, ιδιαίτερα για τις γυναίκες.

Εν κατακλείδι, οι νέες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας στα πλαίσια της παγκοσμιοποίησης προέκυψαν κατά κύριο λόγο ως στρατηγικές του κεφαλαίου για μείωση του κόστους εργασίας και αντίστοιχη αύξηση των κερδών στα πλαίσια των νέων συνθηκών. Οι στρατηγικές αυτές είχαν θετικές, αλλά και πολλαπλές αρνητικές επιπτώσεις στη θέση των γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας. Οι θετικές επιπτώσεις είναι κυρίως η αύξηση των ευκαιριών απασχόλησης και βελτίωσης της οικονομικής και κοινωνικής θέσης τουλάχιστον ορισμένων κατηγοριών γυναικών, ιδιαίτερα των μορφωμένων, αστών γυναικών των αναπτυγμένων χωρών. Αντίστροφα, οι αρνητικές επιπτώσεις σχετίζονται με την δεδομένη κοινωνικο-οικονομικά ανίσχυρη θέση του μεγαλύτερου ποσοστού των γυναικών σε παγκόσμιο επίπεδο, και ιδιαίτερα σε αναπτυσσόμενες χώρες, η οποία θέση και επιδεινώνεται, όπως παραπάνω σκιαγραφήθηκε, με την επέκταση και εδραίωση των νέων μορφών απασχόλησης. Οι στρατηγικές που πρέπει να ακολουθηθούν για την σταδιακή αναστολή των αρνητικών αυτών επιπτώσεων είναι: η ενεργοποίηση κοινωνικών και πολιτικών φορέων για τη βελτίωση της θέσης της γυναίκας μέσα στην κοινωνία γενικότερα, για την ενίσχυση των θεσμών στήριξης της ανατροφής των παιδιών και για την ενίσχυση των κεκτημένων δικαιωμάτων όλων των εργαζομένων, και των γυναικών συμπεριλαμβανομένων, για κοινωνική προστασία και ασφάλιση μέσα σε ένα συνεχώς μεταλλασόμενο κοινωνικο-οικονομικό και εργασιακό περιβάλλον.

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SELF-EVALUATION: A KEY TO ENTER THE LABOUR MARKET

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A. Introduction

I. The transformation of the European industrial or service societies to post-service or knowledge-based societies requires new skills and new forms of labour organization. Following this assumption, it is fair to say that new competences should arise based on informed learning. Our stance stems from self-evaluation methods of informal personal competences, which promotes personal development of individuals; particularly of those who are not included into academic career patterns. This is considered a decisive pre-condition to gain new general and vocational qualifications. In other words it is seen as a key to enter labour market. According to the empowerment approach, self-help actions to gain control over one's own live, attention to resources, strength and abilities, are processes which contribute to empowerment. This is the context of self-evaluation.

II. The need to design again the systems of evaluation and to upgrade the concept of evaluation as a process of control from the bottom to the top, may be seen as an answer to the continuously increasing problems, which have been recorded so far in the operation of these systems. This means firstly the acceptance of the flexible and socially orientated evaluation, which however will not be a process of shift of the central control but a process of judgment of the problems regarding structures and relations of an organism from the individual's - agent's viewpoint. An evaluation with the prevailing role of inner-and self-evaluation, without absolute and non-judicious criteria-values. Self-evaluation, which will not legitimize intentions for a policy, nor will it be a disguised self-control but it will be able to operate supportively, in order to imprint the social identity of the working people and in this way to operate in the direction of redefining the labor market, with the ultimate purpose of making it friendly to the Greek working man.

III. Our main research assumption is that self-evaluation is a key to enter labour-market. It should therefore be inseparable from the curriculum of CVT in Greece. In our framework self-evaluation concerns the development of unemployed individuals to evaluate their competences in order to be aware of the advantages that vocational training offers. Furthermore, this results in their awareness of the context of vocational training and thus in its assessment. Our research in CVTs of Athens aimed at finding how self-evaluation process is operating. Our conclusions illustrate a mismatch between scopes and results.

B. Theoretical Framework

Evaluation in Greece has been considered generally, as well as in relation to issues of education and training, at scientific level but also at the level of social reality, to be a modern situation, which has not been sufficiently evaluated and analyzed but constitutes a future issue. This situation has led to the non-judicious adoption of proposals-models

of evaluation regarding social policy and by extension the policy of vocational training, which is formalistic, epistemologically problematic and as it has been proven ineffective. The evaluation policies are not something new for the Greek reality. Experience up to now shows its incomplete and unorganized character, the domination of private enterprises in the field of the evaluation of vocational training and the absence of a public authority, subject to control by society, which will be responsible for the evaluation, elements that although they have driven the systems of evaluation in other countries into failure (Sanderson 2000), they are maintained in Greece because they are compatible with the structure of the Greek labor market.

In response to the issues that are raised as a direct priority by the E.U, such as the «knowledge based society» but also the «ineffectiveness» and the «quality» in education and in vocational training, systems of accreditation and evaluation have been developed, which are structured within a specific theoretical framework. The evaluation is obliged to cultivate the competition on the one hand, by improving the quality of the provided services and on the other hand to make the best use of the available financial resources, by connecting the education and training with the production. Namely, the basic characteristic of these systems is in fact the direct connection and their incorporation into the existing labor market, within a formalistic framework, in which the citizen - user of the procedures of education and training is customer - consumer without the possibility of an active participation in the specific process. This is also noticeable in the specific programs of self-directed learning in Greece, which have not been developed in order to cover needs in the framework of designing a new working policy, not even to meet individual needs, but only to absorb community funds (Illiadis 2000). All the above are not a peculiarity of the Greek reality but an element which characterizes the modern liberalism of Western Europe. The social policy reply to the needs of the users-customers, what interests us is what works (Martin and Sanderson 1999).

The pragmatism, which is typical of the modern western societies, is transferred also to the evaluation systems, which develop a specific logic that characterizes them. The specification of the target, the designing of the policy, the implementation and the evaluation are the four stages of policy (Jenkins - Smith and Sabatier 1993). When the beginning of the policy is the pursuit of the goal, then evaluation too will be orientated exclusively towards the specific goal, performing an instrumental function (Colebatch 1998). By extension the logic of evaluation will be non-political, but from the point of view of evaluation it will be neutral, as 'scientific' and therefore subject to political power. Then its main target will be the promotion of control from the top to the bottom and from the center to the periphery and therefore the preservation-consolidation of the present political-administrative structures (Henkel 1991, Kettunen 1994). At the same time, it can be used in order to settle issues of public dispute or to narrow the focus of discussion of political issues. Indeed the systems of evaluation often operate as an apologetic mechanism of authority, since they are used in order to legitimize changes which have already been accepted as necessary but have not been applied yet (Valovirta 2002).

Naturally the cause of all of the above-mentioned is not the use of the concept of evaluation itself, but the functionalist theory which has affected its implementation so far. When evaluation is based on the release of the organism-object from the institutional and social framework in which it exists, when the influence of authority and the concept of power are ignored, when basic elements such as inequality, conflict, sovereignty and control are

concealed (Thomson and Mc Hugh 1995), then political phenomena are restricted to the level of individual behaviors and individual action is defined as the result of a decision of assessment, which was taken in terms of interest or benefit and not as a product of structures, roles, relations. Then evaluation cannot be freed from its instrumental role and in no case can it contribute to the design of a better policy, of a better society.

The specific framework characterizes almost all the forms of evaluation in Greece. The programs of vocational training as they are elaborated in Greece are mainly a procedure which aims at the short-term survival of the working people in the mechanism of the labor market, without the latter being re-orientated. On the contrary, neither the structural deficiency, regarding accesses to the labor market, nor sideline occupation, nor multi-occupation are questioned, while additionally the flexibility of the market is increased. The consequence of all these is on the one hand the fact that no attention is paid to the support of the social identity of working people, on the other hand the fact that the state has not created an independent and well organized mechanism for the evaluation of the specific training programs. This deficiency is due to the fact that the prevailing mechanisms of evaluation of vocational training procedures are informal, non established, flexible, they are based exclusively on private initiative, they are not easily controllable by the mechanisms of the state and they concern procedures which are isolated from social development and orientated towards individual behavior.

The experience of other countries, however, has shown that the evaluation, structured according to the above-mentioned model, has failed (Pawson and Tilley 1997), doubt is cast on its instrumental utility, the optimism that accompanied rationalism, as far as the operation of the systems of accreditation are concerned, has vanished (Hellstern 1986), while the social need for evaluation has increased (Albaek 1995).

According to the above-mentioned scientists, what undergoes a crisis is the positivistic-functionalistic foundation, which scientifically determines how the systems of evaluation will operate. The absolute character of only one logic of evaluation, which is based on and global values-criteria, has been the object of severe criticism from the point of view of the relativity of values (Brockriede 1974). This provides a solution of support regarding the criticism of the proposals-conclusions of an evaluation, either by the projection of other values more important than the value we evaluate (e.g. support and upgrading of the training programs of the periphery, in relation to the value of their efficiency), or by the social definition of the concept of evaluation, that is by its re-orientation according to the social framework, which includes it.

The result of this criticism is the expression of the need to design again the systems of evaluation and to upgrade the concept of evaluation as a process of control from the bottom to the top, as an answer to the continuously increasing problems, which have been recorded so far in the operation of these systems. This means firstly the acceptance of the flexible and socially orientated evaluation, which however will not be a process of shift of the central control but a process of judgment of the problems regarding structures and relations of an organism from the individual's - agent's viewpoint. An evaluation with the prevailing role of inner-and self-evaluation, without absolute and non-judicious criteria-values. Self-evaluation, which will not legitimize intentions for a policy, nor will it be a disguised self-control but it will be able to operate supportively, in order to imprint the social identity of the working people and in this way to operate in the direction of redefining the labor market, with the ultimate purpose of making it friendly to the Greek working man.

C. Methodology - Research

The required task was the recording of requirements towards self-evaluation methods. According to the working plan, we should plan and hold interviews with groups of participants - trainees in CVT programs and interviews with experts. In the last case, it was agreed that experts are considered to be the top executives of agencies, which elaborate CVT programs and possess scientific knowledge of the training issue but also owners or senior administrative executives of private or public agencies, employers who have hired in their business people who have successfully completed CVT. Regarding the selection of five groups of trainees, we decided to refer to three sections of Vocational Training Centers, so that various training specialties were represented. Apart from the above-mentioned restriction, we decided to form groups of trainees according to age and nationality, in order to proceed, if this is deemed necessary, to *analyses of opinions with two variables*. One group of trainees consists only of people - immigrants who attend training programs. The necessity of forming this group is evident. as no native Greeks represent, according to the last studies, 1/7 of the total workforce in Greece. In all cases regarding groups of trainees, the individuals were adults, unemployed with low typical qualifications.

The experts were selected in a similar way. In this case the selection of six people, who are Directors of Training in Centers of Vocational Training, was decided, as well as the selection of four people who are owners of enterprises and had employed people who had just completed their training in the above Centers of Vocational Training.

On a second level, we proceeded to the design of three different questionnaires, which would be our methodological tool for the half-standardized interviews that we wanted to hold. A questionnaire was designed, in order to record the views of participants in CVT measures. The first section of this questionnaire concerns the profile of the trainees. We noted data such as gender, age, marital status, level of education, period of unemployment and previous working experiences. As far as the last variable is concerned, we asked if their previous jobs had any relation to the subject of their studies, or if they learned the job empirically, without having acquired the typical qualifications.

The second section concerns the recording of the interviewees' opinions, regarding the *picture of themselves* in the environment they live, especially in relation to issues of family, relations and work. In case *the picture of themselves* is problematic, we ask to which degree can others help them and who these people can be. The State, the Local Government Organizations, the Manpower Employment Organization, or private offices which assist people in finding a job. Finally, the third section concerns issues in relation to their choice to attend CVT programs. Why did they choose to attend training programs, what was the procedure in order to be accepted in a CVT program and what means they used in order to achieve this, what were their hopes when they started and if they achieved the targets that they had initially set. In case there was a positive response to the above-mentioned questions, the next question would concern the definition of profit from the participation in a training program. The last issue of this section concerned the recording of the suggestions that unemployed people made for the improvement in the function of CVT programs.

The next two questionnaires were designed for the half-standardized interviews with the experts. There were some common issues and some questions that differed one from another, depending on whether the expert is an employer or director of training in a Center of Vocational Training. The common issues were the following:

Interviewee's profile. More specifically, personal data such as sex, age, marital status, level of education, nature of their work, scope of activities of the agency they work in or own.

Picture that the interviewee has of himself, in relation to the subject of his work. What were their previous jobs, how they ended up doing the particular job and how do they feel in their working environment and about their work.

The representation of the concept of self-evaluation. Does it exist in the agency they work in? Which is the ideal procedure regarding self-evaluation for them?

When the interviewee was Director of a Center of Vocational Training, we asked him the following questions:

Organization of the educational targets of a Center of Vocational Training. How the issues regarding training are chosen, how the schedule of lessons is organized, etc.

The trainees' profile. Which are the social characteristics of the people who apply for a CVT program? How are the trainees selected from the total number of candidates?

When the interviewee was the owner of an enterprise (employer), the interview included the following issues:

Procedure regarding the employment of working people. Criteria of employment, typical or non typical qualifications.

Attitude towards the issue of how beneficial is self-evaluation of employees.

D. Results of Interviews

Group of unemployed trainees

Profile. We selected 19 people, who were unemployed trainees in a CVT program. 16 of them are of Greek origin and 3 of them come from the former Soviet Union. The 16 people of Greek origin have all completed secondary education, as well as the 3 immigrants who have respective typical qualifications. 18 of them are women and only one is a man. This is not a coincidence, because this proportion reflects the reality regarding the participation of the two sexes in CVT programs in Greece, as we have confirmed from the interviews of experts. All of them have been unemployed for a long time (over a year), they are registered at the local offices of the Manpower Employment Organization and they have an Unemployment Card. 11 out of 19 are married, 7 are single (6 women and the man) and

one is a widow.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned personal data, we identified five groups of unemployed people, as homogeneous as possible, for the interviews. The first two groups consist of married women aged between 40 and 50 from two different CVT programs, the third of single women aged between 20 and 30 with the participation of the only man, the fourth of women aged between 30 and 40 and the fifth of women aged between 38 and 60 who come from the former Soviet Union. The first four groups comprise four people while the fifth comprises three people.

Analysis of every group

GROUP A

Profile. All four women aged between 40 and 50 are of Greek origin, they have completed secondary education and they are unemployed for over a year. All four of them had been engaged for years in occupations for which they were not suitably trained and they did not possess the typical qualifications. Two of them as secretaries, one as book keeper and the other one as saleswoman.

Self judgment. All four of them feel disappointed with the picture of themselves in the present phase. Two of them are disappointed because they do not possess the typical qualifications for employment mainly knowledge of a foreign language and P/C, while the other two because they think that they are old. The latter suffer the longest period of unemployment. One of them believes that there is no solution, since young women are more competitive than her in the *labor* market. The other three expect help regarding their future mainly from acquaintances that hold political power, while one of these three continues to hope for help from the Manpower Employment Organization, in relation to the funding of her self-employment. At all events, all 4 of them agree that unemployment has a negative influence on family and relations.

CVT measures judgment. All 4 of them consider the financial profit that they gain through the benefit that accompanies the attendance of a CVT program to be the prime target of their participation in the program. Two out of four said that they did not choose to participate in the specific program on the basis of its subject, which was indifferent to them. Besides according to what they have said, when they do not expect anything, they cannot make any suggestions regarding the improvement in the program. The other two showed interest not only in the immediate financial profit but also in working in relation to the subject they were trained for. In addition, they made suggestions regarding improvement, mainly in connection with a better selection of trainers and more homogeneous as far as the selection of trainees is concerned.

GROUP B

Profile. In the second group all women are aged between 40 and 50, they are married with children, they have completed secondary education and they are unemployed for a long

period of time which reaches 12 years. Their previous jobs were unskilled.

Self judgment. Because of the long-lasting unemployment, all of them feel useless. One of them said that she feels lost and another one regarded her as worthless. However, because of the fact that they live in an area inhabited by many immigrants, they believe that the latter suffer a less bad job fate than them, either because the businessmen who hire immigrants and not them receive subsidies, or because foreigners work illegally and as a result of this they are cheap work labor. They all believe that only a politician can provide a solution, while another one said that things will change only if the European Union changes its policy.

Judgment of program. All of them applied for the CVT program mainly because of the benefit that they receive after attendance. Two of them said that they do this every year in order to earn some money, since they cannot find and they do not expect to find a job. Two others said that they are also interested in the knowledge that they acquire from the seminars. The latter made some suggestions regarding improvement, in relation to the fact that many of the trainees should be hired, after they have been evaluated of course by an objective committee, since a mere certificate does not ensure anything.

GROUP C

Profile. From the four women aged between 30 and 40, two of them are single and two are married with children. The time of unemployment varies from 1 to 4 years, while they had previously worked as secretaries, saleswomen and waitresses, without making any use of the typical qualifications that they possessed.

Self judgment. All four of them feel deficient, since the lack of work has an impact on their self-esteem. One of them believes that advertisements regarding job vacancies can offer her some help, while another one considers her family to be the only source of help, because there is the prospect of working in the family business.

Judgment of program. All of the women mentioned that the reason they attended the CVT was to gain the profit that derived from the benefit of attendance. One stated that she would spend that money on her re-training in a subject that would be profitable. Nevertheless, all four of them proceeded to suggestions, regarding improvement of CVT program. Two of them ask for more practice and lessons in the use of P/C. All of them want to have the possibility of choosing the training programs, since they have stated that they registered for the specific program not on their own will but because this was offered to them by a political acquaintance. At the same time they stated that the certificate of attendance should have typical validity and be acknowledged in the *labor* market.

GROUP D

Profile. Three women and one man aged between 20 and 30 comprise the specific group. All of them have been unemployed for one year which is the minimum typical limit, in

order to have the right to attend a CVT program. Only one woman has been trained and has worked in the past in a position related to the subject of her training.

Self judgment. The man and two of the women are disappointed with the present situation. They believe that there is nothing you can do without the help of a political acquaintance, they would never accept however to work as unskilled workers. Only the woman who has worked in the past in a position related to the subject of her training is optimistic about her future.

Judgment of program. All state that they attend the CVT program because of the benefit. The woman, who said she was happy, believes that CVT is an additional qualification in her curriculum vitae. She wants better organization of the program and better trainers.

GROUP E

Profile. Three women aged between 38 and 60 who were born in the former Soviet Union comprise that group. All of them have been unemployed for more than 10 years, since they came to Greece. They have large families to support, while one of them is a widow.

Self judgment. As they have stated, they do not expect anything. Their age and their origin deter them from seeking work. "I don't expect anything for myself; I don't need anything for myself", stated one of them. "I give everything to my children". As a matter of fact, they maintain themselves thanks to the benefits deriving from the attendance of CVT measures. They do not have good relations with employers and their Greek co-citizens, while they believe that the local authorities deceive them. Some employers told one of them that they couldn't give her a job because she was fat.

Judgment of program. The thing they stated was that they wished for an increase in the benefit from the attendance of CVT seminars.

ALL GROUPS

Self judgment. 18 out of 19 trainees have low self-esteem. Its degree ranges in relation to age and time of unemployment, while it reaches its peak in the category of immigrant women. The expressions that prevail are "I am useless and I am lost" while most of them expect help only from a politician or a local authority.

Judgment of program. All of the interviewees stated that the main purpose of attendance is the granting of a financial benefit, while some of them stated that they also attend for the certificate and the knowledge which is provided, mainly the younger ones and those who are unemployed for less time than the others. Suggestions regarding improvement of CVT program that were put forward, concern the organization, the selection of teachers and trainees and the establishment of a link between training programs and finding a job, which can take place if the typical acknowledgment of the certificate of attendance of CVT is achieved in the labor market.

Experts

Profile - Self judgment - Nature of work. Out of 10 experts that gave interviews, six of them were Directors of Training in Centers of Vocational Training (3 public - 3 privates) and four of them owners of enterprises which engaged individuals who had been trained in CVT programs. 4 from the first 6 ones are men aged between 42 and 69 and two of them women aged between 35 and 45. All four owners of enterprises are men aged between 32 and 60. They all have a degree while three from the Centers of Vocational Training have completed postgraduate studies in social sciences. All of them answered that they were satisfied with their work. A higher degree of satisfaction has been recorded in relation to the four owners of enterprises, who stress the fact that their work is their life, expecting from their employees to think in the same way. Two out of the three Directors of Training in public Centers of Vocational Training are engaged mainly in the planning and the elaboration of the training program, the control of its materialization and the selection of trainees and trainers. The third one is at the same time Director of the entire Center of Vocational Training with the respective capacities. In the three private Centers of Vocational Training the Directors of Training are engaged mainly in the planning and the elaboration of the training program and they play only an auxiliary role as far as the participation in the selection of trainees and trainers is concerned. All the Centers of Vocational Training operate mainly when CVT measures financed by the EU, exist. During periods in which there is lack of EU funding, inter-company activities provide the funding. The public Centers of Vocational Training operate mainly with civil servants who are removed from the public sector. The four employers are owners of two travel agencies, a restaurant and a cultural multi-space center. The travel agencies are situated in the center of Athens and they are of the largest in Greece, as well as the cultural multi-space center, whose main activity is theater. The restaurant is situated in Piraeus and belongs rather to the middle category.

Training - Practice - Employment

The procedure regarding training in Greece is as follows: Public and private agencies set up Centers of Vocational Training, which are accredited by the National Center of Accreditation and are characterized as local - regional or national range, depending on which level they act. Their accreditation takes place in only four fields of subjects from a list of nine subjects. This short list of subjects regarding training was decided by the Ministry of Labor. This list was formed after a survey conducted by a private enterprise and concerned the fields that would be of use to the future labor market. The conclusion of this survey is that pedagogical issues are completely absent from the subjects of training. Every Center of Vocational Training, can address an invitation to all those who are interested, which will be announced to the press and which will restrict the subjects of training, depending on the needs of the area, that have been scientifically recorded. The six directors, however, have stated that this is done theoretically, while in practice they either buy the surveys or they keep the same programs every year, if they see that there is response to these programs. The program of studies, which includes specific lessons that the Ministry of Labor considers that they should be taught everywhere (for example, techniques for finding a job), while the others vary depending on the wishes of the Director

of Training, is adjusted to the subjects of training. In two public Centers of Vocational Training they stated that they even buy the program of studies from private companies because they do not have personnel. Immediately after this, the two procedures regarding selection take place. On the basis of the lesson that is taught, the trainers, who are in the list of those accredited for the specific lessons and subjects by the National Center of Accreditation, are selected. At the same time, the local office of the Manpower Employment Organization (or Center of Promotion to Employment as it has been renamed) collects the applications of the people registered as unemployed, who possess unemployment cards and wish to attend the program, and sends them to the Center of Vocational Training, paying attention so that these are double compared to the number of trainees and that at least 60% of them are women. According to the statements of Directors, this procedure is tampered with, since most of the unemployed apply to the Center of Promotion to Employment after they have been encouraged to do so by a politician - Member of Parliament or local authority, whom they have visited in his political office in search of work - and not because of their own wish to attend the specific subjects.

The committee for the selection of trainees of every Center of Vocational Training comes under political pressure. That is specific individuals are chosen from the short list in terms of personal acquaintances. One of the Directors told us that despite the pressure, she always makes sure that all the widows, the married women with many children and the immigrant women are admitted to each program, because in this way she feels that she serves a social purpose. In the middle of the program and in the end, the trainee completes forms regarding the self-evaluation of the procedure. These forms include standard questions, a LIKERT scale of pre-answers with five possible answers, in relation to structures, organization, relations, purposes and benefit, regarding the specific program. All these years that programs take place, all the Centers of Vocational Training have never collected information from these forms and therefore they never made use of them. At the end of the training program, Centers of Vocational Training contact enterprises, which are related to the subjects of training and they sent all the trainees for practice. Both the enterprises and the trainees are paid for the practice. The procedure regarding practice, however, is not controlled by anybody in the Center of Vocational Training. The employer cannot choose the people who will go to each enterprise, in order to practice. Two out of four stated that they would like to play a part in this choice. After the stage of practice is completed, the employers have the possibility to choose some of the trainees, in order to hire them. Regarding the criteria of employment, their typical qualifications are not as important as some non-typical ones, according to four employers. However a high school degree, knowledge of a foreign language and use of P/C are highly recommended. In addition they have to prove during the interview that they are eager to offer. Besides that, the following essential qualifications have been recorded:

to be nice and kind to the customers

to be able to give more than the other employees and therefore to love their work

to be non experienced at this job.

For two out of four employers the recommendations from others play an important role in

the selection, but not more important than the role of the interview. The other two maintain a negative attitude towards recommendations, because as they have stated, they have been suffered an unpleasant experience in the past.

Attitude towards Self - Evaluation

All the Directors of Training in Centers of Vocational Training state that they know the concept and that there is a self-evaluation procedure in the Center of Vocational Training that they work at. Nevertheless, this procedure, as a matter of fact, exists only in order to exist, without being utilized, since the answered questionnaires have never been opened and they remain piled up in storehouses. According to a woman - expert nobody is really interested in self-evaluation, while another one stated that the approach is shallow, since even we do not know what to ask for self-evaluation. The interesting part, however, of the interviews of the experts from the Centers of Vocational Training, is why there isn't a culture of self - evaluation. One of them told us that there is no appropriate education of self - evaluation and as a result of this we think that typical skills carry all the weight. A woman from the experts stated that the entire system stinks and that the procedure regarding self - evaluation is the last that should change, while another one told us that only when the employee thinks freely and is not oppressed by the need to work can develop a culture of self - evaluation. In any case, as a fourth one stated, when self-evaluation is connected with non typical skills, it provides elements of a more permanent sense of work which must interest the employer the most. The employers, however, have not thought of it in this way. First of all, all four of them could not hide their astonishment, when they heard this word that they had never heard before. Two of them refused to get to the core of the discussion, since they stated that they liked it but they did not know what, because they did not know anything about the subject. The other two had a different perspective on the issue. They believe that the procedure regarding the self - evaluation of the employee is a procedure, from which the employer can draw useful conclusions. It is difficult to be implemented in Greece because the working people will react, since they do not have a culture of self - evaluation, they are egoists and they do not acknowledge their mistakes. In any case, if this is put into practice, it should not be given the character of a public apology but it should also be a process, in which the employer controls the employee at a personal level and which takes place probably every six months.

E. Discussion

The aim of our task was the recording of requirements towards self-evaluation methods, through interviews with both trainees and experts on CVT programs. As we have already mentioned in our introduction, self-evaluation in Greece is still in an embryonic stage. In addition, we have underlined the lack of self-evaluation culture in Greece as well as the absence of relevant recognition and thus legitimation of the concept. In that paper we have discussed the reasons lying behind the limitation of self-evaluation in Greece as well as the variations that the term holds and the vagueness surrounding its definition.

However, we claimed that in contemporary Greece, evaluation is essential due to the occurrence of introducing socio-economic and educational needs and aspirations, which in turn stem from the transformation of the structures of Greek society, mainly resulted from EU policies.

In the present results of survey we can specify the previous arguments relating them to our subject of study. That is, adult persons who hold low typical qualifications and participate in CVT measures and their attitudes towards self-evaluation.

According to the interviews held the following points seem to be relevant:

Self-evaluation methods take place during CVT programs in Centres of Vocational Training. Yet, the marginal character of such methods, results the incomprehension along with the ignorance of them by the trainees. In other words, the trainees answer structured questionnaires without having understood why, or else without having any interest of why they do it.

Furthermore, whereas there is official recognition of the importance of self-evaluation methods by the coordinators of the Centres of Vocational Training there is no actual interest for the development of such methods, which take place twice during the training. For example, self-evaluation questionnaires have never been subject of analysis. This in turn results in failing to re-elaborate the topic. What they claim is that structural deficiencies along with the lack of self-evaluation culture in the planning of Centres of Vocational training is a hindrance to such an endeavour.

Moreover, employers either ignore the existence of self-evaluation or in case they don't they see it as a mechanism through which employees can be controlled. Besides, according to their opinion self-evaluation is a very hard task to pursuit.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the importance of self-evaluation seems to be fully recognised both by trainees and experts. As one of the interviewees pointed out, its efficiency would be enhanced by the association of self-evaluation with non-typical skills. Such a connection would develop self-esteem to the employees and in turn contemplation of their job in terms of permanence; something considered desirable by the employers.

If we want to explain why there is no evaluation culture in Greece, we have to examine the history of the implementation of evaluation. Evaluation was implemented in the field of education in the form of the evaluation of pupils and not so much of the evaluation of educational infrastructure, programs and trainers. The evaluation of pupils took and continues to take the form of control and not of the evaluation of the pupils' critical thought, attitudes and conceptions.

After the end of the Dictatorship (1974), the opposition of the teachers regarding the institution of evaluation from the inspectors was so intense that it led to its abolition. That was because of inspectors' actions many teachers lost their jobs in dictatorship. They were replaced with the institution of the School Adviser during 80's. School Advisers (as well as school principals) have only supportive responsibilities and not evaluating ones in

teacher's task. Nowadays non-evaluation of personnel has shown its negative side. Now, 30 years after the end of the dictatorship, the conditions appear to be mature for the introduction of a system of self-evaluation regarding the work of the teachers and of the evaluation of school units. In 1997 the creation of a strictly organized system of evaluation was decided, which did not take at all into consideration the prevailing conditions at schools. This system was abolished because of the strong protests (strikes, demonstrations, etc.) of the teachers.

The reasons why the efforts of the state regarding the institutionalization of evaluation failed to proceed are not, however, focused only at the political level. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, Greece experienced ferment in education, which took the form mainly of a great opening of the university education to young people, in order to satisfy the educational fetishism of their parents (Tsoukalas 1986). This opening, however, whose dimensions were great mainly in the middle of the 90's, was not accompanied by respective feasibility studies, which are the model for the process of evaluation. This is due to the fact that the above opening was not the result of rational programming. A respective unreasonable development was also noted in the sector of vocational training (Patiniotis-Stavroulakis 1997). In spite of the fact that the structures, which developed in the aforementioned educational categories, were hostile to any form of evaluation for the above reasons, they were compatible with the operation of the Greek labor market but also of the Greek society in general. A specific degree from a university or a technical institution does not constitute usually a prerequisite for practicing a certain profession. In most low specialized jobs, special training is not required (with the exception of some jobs with the need of assurance, electricians, and plumbers). The Greek labor market has relatively limited margin of access and possibility to remain in it, it is saturated with an excessive surplus of workforce and small demand. Its operation is characterized by multi-occupation and side-line occupation which distort the picture of the social identity of working people and reveal the little attention that employers pay to the products of formal education or/and professional training. The above fact is connected with the tendency in the private sector that is noticed to prefer for initial selection and advancement individuals without typical qualifications of higher level. On the contrary in public sector usually graduates of universities and technical institutions cover posts that could be cover by non-graduates. That is because the state tries to reduce the socioeconomic consequences from the graduates' high unemployment rates. All of the above manifest a problematic situation, regarding the institution of evaluation, in the educational and professional sector, which reaches its peak when it comes to how Greeks find a job. According to a research (Papakonstantinou 1996) just 15% of the working Greeks have took their position through transparent procedures (exams-contest). The rest of them took it through any kind of mediations.

Consequently, in this way very briefly the fact that in Greece self-evaluation is at an embryonic state, it has not been institutionalized yet, it is an institution which seeks its legitimization by society, is explained. Therefore we cannot talk about the existence of a 'culture of self-evaluation'.

A second reason is that the individuals who are on the edge of their integration in the labour market insist on seeking employment in the public sector. Therefore self

responsibility is being overshadowed by a the maintenance of hetero-determination society. For this reason, our proposal on self-evaluation is based on the concept of guidance.

However, self-evaluation is a historical necessity for the Greece of the 21st century, an important opportunity. Its importance is unquestionable on the satisfaction and achievement of social, economic and pedagogical needs and goals. The scientific and technological progress the economic growth and the placement in E.U. have brought about radical changes in the appearance and the structures of the Greek society. These have as a result the citizen and his decisions to gain an important value in social organization and to render self-evaluation necessary in all the sub-systems of the Greek society economic, educational, political, cultural.

F. PROPOSAL

Self-evaluation contrary to external evaluation is done on the initiative of the evaluated person, when he/she feels the need to evaluate his/her competences.

Self-evaluation can be done in two ways: a) either individually, this way the evaluated person chooses the time and the place to evaluate his/her competences, or b) he/she is helped by others so as to be self-evaluated, but only when he/she feels the need to be self-evaluated. In these two occasions we are referring to in succession.

INDIVIDUAL SELF-EVALUATION

In order for someone to be self-evaluated a number of supporting factors are required. First of all, a popularization on the concept of competences is needed to be done as a necessary condition. Everyone should know exactly the meaning of competences and their importance on socioeconomic life. This is required due to the fact that the self-evaluated persons are not experts on the matters of skills and competences, on their application on personal and socioeconomic life and on their abilities. Therefore, in order to have a successful self-evaluation a popularizing text should have been constructed. It is about a text that would explain which is the importance of competences, what is the meaning of self-evaluation and evaluation of competences that someone might have in a specific time. The existence of a popularizing text is very important. At any case, this text should be written in a very clear and analytical way, so as to be understood by every employee as much as possible, regardless his/her educational level. Popularization can be useful not only for the people, who would be individually self-evaluated, but also for the ones, who would be self-evaluated with external help.

A second factor, which would help is the creation of a tool suitable for the ascertainment of self-awareness. A kind of this tool, which was created in Deutsches Jugendinstitut was shown to us, during the Athens workshop by our colleagues from BIAT.

The third supporting factor is a process. It is about the participation to a group discussion. The whole idea is that it would be useful for someone that has already completed this tool for self-awareness to take part in group discussions with people, who are in the same

situation as him/her. It is about people that want to self-evaluate individually their competences and by this way understand them better. The participation in groups is not incompatible to the meaning of self-evaluation, as we will see below.

The application of this helpful to the self-evaluated person, process, presupposes the existence of well organized group discussions. In other words, there should be a central institution, which organizes this kind of group discussions. The existence of this kind of central institution (these kinds of institutions might be syndicates, municipalities, social agencies, agencies for unemployed people etc.), requires as a condition the recognition of the importance of self-evaluation. In some European societies this has already been done. The recognition exists. But in other societies this is a matter. Therefore, in the context of the SELFEVALUATION project, we should think ways to show off not so much the importance of competences but mainly the self-evaluation of their existence, as important factors to the well-being of a person and an economy. We will be occupied with this enormous matter to a next workshop.

These group discussions on the competences that someone might have can take place with or without a leader (with or without guidance). It is common knowledge that group discussions are very useful. It is off course difficult in the beginning when you meet a group of people for the first time to talk about your self. In case someone can do that, all the participants would be benefited.

Returning someone from the group discussion he/she can perform the process of self-evaluation from the beginning. I suppose that the experience of group discussions would enable the self-evaluated person to scrutinize deeper and more specialized his/her competences. If the application proves that it is necessary, one more specialized tool can be used, in this phase. This might be confirmed at the examples of self evaluations, which we will apply to real conditions. There is no reason to forget that our research has an experimental extent. It is highly likely the application in the experimental reality to show us that there is no need to create a new and more specialized tool. In addition to the first tool for the self-awareness of competences might be more than enough. It is expected that the second time when he/she is occupied with it in order to complete it on his/her own, he/she will have a deeper and more sensitive view about self-evaluation.

SELF-EVALUATION WITH EXTERNAL HELP

Let see the second occasion, which is self-evaluation with external help: A second kind of self-evaluation for some people and in some cases might be more convenient. I suppose, it is about people that a) either has already tested the process of self-evaluation, without external help, but wish to repeat the process with external help, or b) or it seems strange to them or even they are afraid of self-evaluating their competences on their own for various reasons. For these people self-evaluation with external help is a very important help.

Process

There is no doubt that self-evaluation with external help must be performed only when the

evaluated person has decided it. This is not off course compulsory, as it is in case of external evaluation, which is decided by the enterprise that someone works to. It is done because the self-evaluated person wants to do that in order to recognize his/her competences. Because of that he/she applies to an expert, who is not so a specialized scientist that uses special tools, but a facilitator that helps in the process of self-evaluation. In self-evaluation with help is not used a standard questionnaire. It is performed in a similar way to individual self-evaluation. The facilitator should be able to popularize the concept of competences, their importance at our work and socioeconomic life. In other words it would be a man that enlightens the self-evaluated person about the importance of his/her competences and the usefulness to evaluate them. It is obvious that there would be interaction between facilitator and the self-evaluated person. Before, it might be better for them to have an organized exchange of views, information and data. This exchange will enable man to use a kind of tool, like the one we referred to in the previous case of individual self-evaluation. That would be the goal of the exchange. By this way man will be able to use a tool for self-awareness.

The difference between these two cases of self-evaluation is that in the second one the popularization of the concept of competences and also how the self-evaluation tool can be applied are done with the external help of a facilitator. In this second occasion the self-evaluated person is not alone to understand a) what are competences, b) how can be ascertained and c) which is the importance of self-evaluation in the whole process of understanding. Someone else helps the self-evaluated person to understand the whole concept of competences, while the self-evaluated person can make use of the self-awareness tool by him/her self. From this point he/she can move on as in the first case. After having completed the tool and has a first conception of his/her self, he/she would be able to decide his/her participation in a group discussion, which might be with or without leader. It will happen what we referred to in the first case.

If the process of self-evaluation is applied like the way I referred to in this brief paper, I believe that it will work for the benefit of people that use it. This will happen because they are the ones that take the initiative of self-evaluation, having felt the need to self-evaluate their competences. They do that without applying to experts.

Our suggestion reflects our belief that the most appropriate expert to understand our competences is finally our selves. In case someone else helps us, he/she should help only as a facilitator of our self-evaluation, not as an external expert that would ascertain "scientifically" our competences, in an "objective" way, by using "objective" tools. In this second case, which is the evaluation by experts, there is plenty room for manipulation and determination oneself by others.

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VII PLENARY SESSION

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POLICIES AND METHODS OF IMPROVEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT AND NEW ENTERPRISES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION. THE GREEK CASE

(ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΕΘΟΔΟΙ ΒΕΛΤΙΩΣΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΩΝ ΣΤΗΡΙΞΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΑΣΧΟΛΗΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΜΑΤΙΚΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΛΛΑΔΑ)

Abstract

Policies and methods of improvement in the Unemployment Supporting Services as well as the Business Environment in the EU and in Greece in particular.

According to a preliminary note, we would like to pay attention to three issues related to new forms of employment and entrepreneurship, as they are mainly encountered and reinforced as horizontal policies in the EU countries. We believe that different forms of this issue are located on the following three levels:

a) Organizational restructuring of new forms and conditions of employment as well as forms of entrepreneurial initiative and its linkage to new technologies.

b) Primary and continuing employment qualification and re-qualification concerning the labour market, as well as alternative initiative of entrepreneurship, self-employment, and employment in social economy.

c) The character of advisory support and up-grading of skills and qualifications of vulnerable groups (young unemployed, social employment, etc.).

The above three levels signify the emerging consolidation of the differences between formal and informal qualifications, as we encounter them in the subject of certification and validation of informal types of qualification which deal with skill upgrading and provided by recognized institutions and CEQ without formal certifications.

We should note that the relevant social partners consociate with the above note as they take into account the new demands of the labour market due to the new forms of employment which emerge out of the restructuring of new conditions of labour. Additionally, we refer to a new qualification system for the new policy of labour advisors in Greece who are in charge of the local centers of employment of O.A.E.D. (Organization of Employment of Labour Force).

The orientation toward positive targets, such as the development of the labour force, personal autarchy and growth, and social inclusion are sought after targets. The validation of success of national policies concerning social care lies with securing a network of services, the social rights of vulnerable social groups, the securing of psychological and social health, and their implementation as active policies for employment. This new type of social policy creates a new framework of cooperation defined through cooperation as a contract involving all the partners who could play a role in implementing such policies. Necessary pre-condition for the success of this policy is its inclusion in the decentralization system foreseen by the new policies of local development.

In addition, we encounter the emergence of issues related to political will and political perception, redistribution of resources, the functional scheduling of the periphery, the relationship of the social space with the labor market one, the participation of NGO in planning, materialization and validation. Furthermore, we highlight the important gaps of the necessary information (research data etc), the absence of institutional links which promote social cohesion causing the weakening and shattering of the planned targets. Beyond the above worries, we feel that there is need to improve rational planning for the materialization of equal opportunities, the respect of human dignity, and the establishment

of adequate conditions that will reduce the social and economic exclusion of individuals and groups.

The (seemingly) broadening of scope of KESYY vis-à-vis the socially exclusive groups and, at last, the recognition of a wider role for the SYY, that will not any more be restricted to 'individual and group' support, is accepted as a positive step. The widening and the approval of the above step contribute to the development of working models, the production of methods and tools, the training and sensitization of a wider public. The widening of scope increases the number of the beneficiaries (families and protected kin members) and leads to the utilization of services not only on behalf of the socially excluded, but also of those in danger of being socially excluded.

It could be especially reinforcing for the cooperation of Centers for Employability (KPA) and labor counselors. This suggestion – necessary to my opinion – gives the chance to restore cooperative relations, during the intermediary time, focused on the local level which brings close together groups' needs with labor policies. It forms programs of horizontal intervention for the people, as well as programs of training for the working force of KPA in an effort to make communal work approach issues of employment. The widening of the demands of the labor market, the profile of the laborers, the registering of the position and beliefs of the employers, the evaluation of demand and supply on a local level, from the KPA point of view, and the widening of individual and social needs, the accommodation and the construction of plans according to the dynamics of socially excluded individuals or groups, the development of politics against exclusion, and the comprehensive intervention onto urban and peripheral spaces (group targets) is possible to provide us with the picture that today is hidden (poverty, black market, urbanization, poor living conditions, lack of social services, housing, etc.); it could also provide us with the answers of how the situation could be improved.

Η παρούσα εισήγηση εστιάζει στις πολιτικές που προσβλέπουν στην ενίσχυση νέων μορφών απασχόλησης και επιχειρηματικότητας, οι οποίες αναπτύσσονται σύμφωνα με τις ευρωπαϊκές θεματικές προτεραιότητες για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας και την άρση των εμποδίων ευπαθών ομάδων για ομαλή πρόσβαση στην αγορά εργασίας. Περαιτέρω διερευνά το πλαίσιο και την αποτελεσματικότητα των παρεμβάσεων με ολοκληρωμένη μορφή και περιεχόμενο προς αυτή την κατεύθυνση καθώς και τις δυνατότητες για ευρύτερη εφαρμογή συγκεκριμένων πρακτικών που αναδεικνύονται μέσα από διευρυμένα εταιρικά σχήματα, τα οποία υλοποιούν κοινά προγράμματα εργασιών για την επίτευξη των παραπάνω στόχων.

Από την παρουσίαση των πολιτικών και της εμπλοκής εξειδικευμένων φορέων, αλλά και οργανισμών κοινωνικής πολιτικής επιχειρείται μια κριτική προσέγγιση σχετικά με την εφαρμοσιμότητα ενιαίων ενεργητικών πολιτικών αντιμετώπισης θεμάτων που άπτονται των Εθνικών Σχεδίων Δράσης για την Απασχόληση 22 και την Επιχειρηματικότητα. Η κριτική αυτή προσέγγιση επικεντρώνεται κυρίως στην αδιαφοροποίητη μεθοδολογία που καλούνται να ακολουθήσουν τα κράτη μέλη και οι πιστοποιημένοι από αυτά φορείς που δρουν στο εσωτερικό τους, κυρίως ως προς α) τις ενέργειες που αναλαμβάνουν για τη

22 Βλ. σχετ. Εθνικά Σχέδια Δράσης για την Απασχόληση (ΕΣΔΑ), 2000 – 2004.

σύνδεση επιλεγμένων αντικειμένων κατάρτισης με την απασχόληση 23 και β) τον προσδιορισμό των ομάδων Κοινωνικού Αποκλεισμού, οι οποίες είναι κυρίως οι εν δυνάμει ωφελούμενες από την άσκηση των παραπάνω πολιτικών.

Η επιλογή ολοκληρωμένων παρεμβάσεων για την Απασχόληση

Κατά τη δεκαετία του '90, σε όλα τα Κράτη – Μέλη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, ανεδείχθησαν προβλήματα στην αγορά εργασίας, για την επίλυση των οποίων οι κλασικές μέθοδοι αντιμετώπισης δεν καρποφόρησαν. Τα προβλήματα αυτά είχαν πολλές κοινωνικές και οικονομικές προεκτάσεις και μπορούσαν να αποτελέσουν απειλή για την πορεία της ανάπτυξης των Κρατών – Μελών. Για το λόγο αυτό, σήμερα, η «προώθηση της απασχόλησης» αποτελεί τον κεντρικό άξονα του συνόλου των πολιτικών που εφαρμόζονται σε εθνικό και ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο, ενώ γίνεται προσπάθεια να ενισχυθεί ο κοινωνικός διάλογος σε θέματα που αφορούν τη σύνδεση της εκπαίδευσης με την αγορά εργασίας και την κάλυψη του κενού των δεξιοτήτων που απαιτούνται στις νέες μορφές οργάνωσης της εργασίας. Παράλληλα διασφαλίζεται η ισότητα στις ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης και επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης ή αναβάθμισης των δεξιοτήτων. Ειδικότερα, κεντρικό στόχο στην υλοποίηση των προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης δηλώνεται ότι αποτελεί η ανάπτυξη όχι μόνο των αυστηρά επαγγελματικών προσόντων των συμμετεχόντων αλλά και των ευρύτερων ικανοτήτων τους, με ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην ανάπτυξη της αυτενέργειας και της πρωτοβουλίας τους.

Επιπλέον, ο όρος «απασχόληση» δεν αναφέρεται αποκλειστικά και μόνο στην καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας, αλλά και σε ζητήματα που αφορούν και πολλές άλλες πλευρές του κεφαλαίου «εργασία», όπως τη βελτίωση των συνθηκών και τη διευκόλυνση της πρόσβασης στην αγορά εργασίας. Συνδέεται επίσης όλο και περισσότερο με την επαγγελματική κατάρτιση,²⁴ τη δια βίου μάθηση καθώς και την τόνωση της επιχειρηματικής δραστηριότητας. Η Συνεχιζόμενη Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση φαίνεται να συνιστά μία πρόσφορη πολιτική επιλογή με την οποία επιτυγχάνονται πολλαπλές λειτουργίες. Αποκτά επίσης το χαρακτήρα μιας κρατικής πολιτικής με την οποία επιδιώκεται η διαχείριση προβλημάτων που προκύπτουν εξαιτίας των διαρθρωτικών

23 Εν όψει της έναρξης του 3ου Κ.Π.Σ., αναφέρεται χαρακτηριστικά ότι το νέο “Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα “Απασχόληση και Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση” 2000-2006, είναι η έκφραση της Εθνικής Πολιτικής Απασχόλησης, στο πλαίσιο της αντίστοιχης Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής, στο Περίληψη Σχεδίου Επιχειρησιακού Προγράμματος “Απασχόληση και Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση” 2000-2006, Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων, ΕΚΤ, Οκτώβριος 2000, σ. 4.

24 Σε αντίθεση κυρίως με τις χώρες της Κεντρικής και Βόρειας Ευρώπης, οι συνθήκες που γέννησαν στην Ελλάδα το νέο ιδιαίτερο ρόλο της εκπαίδευσης και ειδικότερα της επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης προέκυψαν εν πολλοίς από εισαγόμενες πολιτικές χωρίς να υπάρχει ιδιαίτερη προεργασία στην έρευνα σχετικά με τη σύζευξη επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης και αγοράς εργασίας. Για μια από τις έρευνες πάνω στην οποία στηρίχθηκαν οι συγκεκριμένες πολιτικές κατάρτισης βλ. Metron Analysis και VFA, Υπουργείο Εργασίας, Ιούλιος, 2001. Η έρευνα προσέγγισε ένα δείγμα 6228 επιχειρήσεων με σκοπό να αναδείξει τις ανάγκες σε θέσεις εργασίας των επιχειρήσεων ώστε να συνδεθούν με εξειδικευμένες μορφές συνεχιζόμενης κατάρτισης ανέργων.

προβλημάτων της ελληνικής κοινωνίας και ειδικότερα του κράτους πρόνοιας.²⁵ Παράλληλα, δίδεται ιδιαίτερη έμφαση στην ανάπτυξη νέων ευέλικτων τρόπων εργασίας που συνδυάζουν την ασφάλεια των εργαζομένων με την ευελιξία των επιχειρήσεων, έτσι ώστε ο συνδυασμός εφαρμογής νέων μορφών απασχόλησης να πραγματοποιείται με έμφαση και σαφή προϋπόθεση την ασφάλεια των εργαζομένων. Επιπλέον ευνοείται ο εκσυγχρονισμός της οργάνωσης της εργασίας και η προσαρμοστικότητα των επιχειρήσεων.²⁶

Ήδη από το 1993 η Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση επιχειρεί να ενσωματώσει στις πολιτικές της τους προβληματισμούς για την καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας, την εφαρμογή προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης²⁷ και την προώθηση της απασχόλησης²⁸ ενώ στη συνέχεια προέβλεψε μία σειρά μέτρων και δεσμεύσεων μεταξύ Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής και των Κρατών-μελών που αφορούν τη διατήρηση των υφιστάμενων θέσεων καθώς και τη παρακολούθηση της κατάστασης της απασχόλησης στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση από το Ευρωπαϊκό Συμβούλιο και την έκδοση συμπερασμάτων-συστάσεων προς τις κυβερνήσεις. Επιπλέον μεριμνά για τη θέσπιση μέτρων σχετικά με τη χρηματοδότηση πιλοτικών σχεδίων προς όφελος της απασχόλησης και τη συγκρότηση Επιτροπής Απασχόλησης για την προώθηση του συντονισμού των εθνικών μέτρων, του διαλόγου μεταξύ των κοινωνικών εταίρων και τη διατύπωση υποδείξεων.

Τόσο στο πλαίσιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής, όσο και του Εθνικού Σχεδίου Δράσης για την Απασχόληση, υπογραμμίζεται η σημασία της ενεργοποίησης σε τοπικό επίπεδο και της ανάληψης ενεργού ρόλου της Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης. Η σημασία που αποδίδει η Ευρωπαϊκή Επιτροπή στην ενεργοποίηση των τοπικών φορέων αντανακλάται σε σχετικές πρωτοβουλίες και προγράμματα, που ανέλαβε ήδη από το 1996.

Για την υλοποίηση σχεδίων ή συντονισμένων ενεργειών Ολοκληρωμένης Παρέμβασης πρωταρχική και απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση αποτελεί η ανάπτυξη της Εταιρικής και συνέργειας.²⁹ Ενδεικτικά μπορούν να επισημανθούν : α) Τα Τοπικά Σύμφωνα Απασχόλησης, τα οποία στηρίζονται στη εθελοντική συνεργασία τοπικών φορέων και έχουν στόχο την ενδογενή τοπική ανάπτυξη, την προώθηση της απασχόλησης σε βιώσιμες και ανταγωνιστικές παραγωγικές δραστηριότητες και στη διαμόρφωση των καταλληλότερων δυνατών συνθηκών για επιχειρηματικές δράσεις που εκτιμάται ότι αυξάνουν την απασχόληση.³⁰ β) τα Τοπικά Σχέδια Δράσης για την Απασχόληση, τα οποία αναπτύχθηκαν από την Τοπική Αυτοδιοίκηση των κρατών μελών, με στόχο τη διερεύνηση και τον πειραματισμό για την εφαρμογή της Ευρωπαϊκής και Εθνικής Στρατηγικής για την

25 Βλ. σχετ. Κ. Δημουλάς : *Κράτος Πρόνοιας και Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση. Η περίπτωση της Ελλάδας* (1980-2000), Αθήνα, σ. 12.

5 Βλ. σχετ. Συνθήκη του Άμστερνταμ, στα θέματα προσαρμογής του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού και των επιχειρήσεων στις διαρκώς μεταβαλλόμενες συνθήκες οργάνωσης της εργασίας.

27 Η ανάγνωση των στατιστικών δεδομένων μας δείχνει ότι καθώς αυξάνει η ανεργία και ιδιαίτερα η μακροχρόνια ανεργία των νέων, οι οποίοι δεν στοιχειοθετούν δικαίωμα λήψης επιδομάτων ανεργίας, αυξάνει ο ρόλος της επαγγελματικής κατάρτισης στην αναπαραγωγή και ενσωμάτωση της εργασίας και ενισχύεται η βαρύτητα της Συνεχιζόμενης Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης. Βλ. σχετ. Κ. Δημουλάς : *ό.π.*, σ. 99.

28 Βλ. Λευκή Βίβλος για την Ανάπτυξη, την Ανταγωνιστικότητα και την Απασχόληση.

29 Υπουργείο Εργασίας : *Ειδική Υπηρεσία Συντονισμού & Παρακολούθησης Δράσεων ΕΚΤ, Εγκύκλιος για τις ολοκληρωμένες παρεμβάσεις και συνέργεια*, 2002.

30 Στην Ελλάδα λειτούργησαν πιλοτικά Τοπικά Σύμφωνα Απασχόλησης στις περιοχές: Δράμα, Κοζάνη και Φλώρινα, Ημαθία, Μαγνησία, Βοιωτία, Αχαΐα, Δυτική Αθήνα και Πειραιά.

Απασχόληση σε τοπικό επίπεδο, μέσα από ενεργητικές συμμετοχικές διαδικασίες, και τον προσδιορισμό του ρόλου των τοπικών αρχών σε αυτή.³¹ Επιπλέον, η Κοινοτική Πρωτοβουλία EQUAL, **32** που προκηρύχθηκε το 2001, αποτελεί έναν ακόμα πειραματισμό για την άρση των διακρίσεων και ανισοτήτων, προκειμένου ειδικές πληθυσμιακές ομάδες να ενταχθούν στην αγορά εργασίας. Βασίζεται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Στρατηγική για την Απασχόληση και επιδιώκει να συνδράμει τις εθνικές και ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές στο τομέα της απασχόλησης.

Οι προσεγγίσεις αυτές δοκιμάζονται ως προς τη δυναμική για ευρύτερη ανάπτυξη σε Ευρωπαϊκό επίπεδο και ως προς μια νέα ρεαλιστική δυνατότητα για θετική επιρροή στις ευρωπαϊκές πολιτικές και πρακτικές. Επιδιώκει επίσης να εντοπίσει και να αναδείξει τις κοινές δράσεις των Έργων συγκεκριμένων Αναπτυξιακών Συμπράξεων στους τομείς της Απασχολησιμότητας, Ανάπτυξης Επιχειρηματικού πνεύματος, Προσαρμοστικότητας, Ίσων Ευκαιριών για Γυναίκες και Άνδρες και Αιτούντων Άσυλο,³³ Ο σκοπός αυτός αποτελεί αφενός το πρώτο βήμα της διαδικασίας εντοπισμού των καλών πρακτικών και των δυνατοτήτων ευρύτερης εφαρμογής και αφετέρου συμβάλλει στην ενίσχυση της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής για την Απασχόληση και στον Προγραμματισμό των Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων ενισχύοντας τους τρόπους σύνδεσης και ανατροφοδότησης των Εθνικών Θεματικών Δικτύων με τα αντίστοιχα Ευρωπαϊκά..

Στην κατεύθυνση αυτή οι συμμετέχουσες Αναπτυξιακές Συμπράξεις παρουσιάζουν την πρόοδο των εργασιών και τα αποτελέσματα των έργων τους στο πλαίσιο ενός νέου δικτυωμένου περιβάλλοντος δράσεων με κοινό χαρακτήρα και σκοπό. Επιπλέον, η δημιουργία των Κοινών Προγραμμάτων Εργασίας³⁴ αποτελεί ένα σημαντικό βήμα για τον προσδιορισμό και την ανάδειξη των καλών πρακτικών, αλλά, περαιτέρω και για την ευρύτερη εφαρμογή των τελευταίων μέσω της προστιθέμενης αξίας που δημιουργεί η δικτυωμένη συνεργασία των φορέων των Α.Σ και η ένταξή τους στα Ευρωπαϊκά Θεματικά Δίκτυα

Παρουσιάζονται επίσης επεξεργασμένες στρατηγικές για τη Δικτύωση Δομών Απασχόλησης και Συμβουλευτικής υποστήριξης ανέργων σε τοπικό ή και περιφερειακό επίπεδο, οι οποίες μπορούν να βελτιώσουν την ποιότητα των ενοποιημένων υπηρεσιών και την παροχή ευκαιριών απασχόλησης σε άτομα από διαφορετικές ομάδες στόχου. Στην κατεύθυνση αυτή εντοπίζεται και η διαμόρφωση ενός ενιαίου πλαισίου ποιοτικών προδιαγραφών, κριτηρίων και διεργασιών λειτουργίας των δομών παροχής υπηρεσιών απασχόλησης και συμβουλευτικής υποστήριξης με έμφαση στην ενίσχυση της αποτελεσματικότητάς τους και τη μετεξέλιξή τους σε δομές με συντονισμένες ενέργειες ολοκληρωμένης παρέμβασης. ³⁵ Πρόκειται για τη διαμόρφωση ενός πλαισίου

31 Στο πλαίσιο της συγκεκριμένης πρωτοβουλίας της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, στην Ελλάδα αναπτύχθηκαν πιλοτικά Τοπικά Σχέδια Δράσης για την Απασχόληση στους Δήμους: Αγρινίου, Αμαρουσίου, Ηγουμενίτσας, Κάτω Νευροκοπίου, Ορεστιάδας, Χαλκίδας και Καλλιθέας Ρόδου

32 Βλ. Equal, Οδηγός Σχεδιασμού, 2001

33 Βλ. ό.π, τα Σχέδια Δράσης των Αναπτυξιακών Συμπράξεων, οι οποίες έχουν εκδηλώσει την πρόθεσή τους να συμμετάσχουν στο Εθνικό Θεματικό Δίκτυο «Δικτύωση και Συντονισμός υπαρχουσών και νέων δομών και μετεξέλιξή τους σε one-stop-shops».

34 Βλ. Υπουργείο Εργασίας, Equal, Σύνταξη Κοινού Προγράμματος Εργασιών (ΚΠΕ), 2003

35 Βλ. Α.Σ : E-Quality, Υπουργείο Εργασίας – Κοινοτική Πρωτοβουλία Equal

συστηματικής και βιώσιμης συνεργασίας μεταξύ των δομών , των συλλογικών οργανώσεων, των εργοδοτών και των ομάδων στόχου με έμφαση στη σύνδεση με δημόσιους φορείς και κυρίως με τα Κέντρα Προώθησης Απασχόλησης (ΚΠΑ) του ΟΑΕΔ και τα Γραφεία Προώθησης Ανέργων στην αγορά εργασίας των Κέντρων Επαγγελματικής Κατάρτισης (ΚΕΚ). Να σημειωθεί ότι από το 1999 ιδρύονται και τίθενται σε λειτουργία τα *Κέντρα Προώθησης Απασχόλησης* (ΚΠΑ) ως νέες δομές του ΟΑΕΔ, στο πλαίσιο των οποίων για πρώτη φορά επιχειρείται ένα πιο συστηματικό έργο σύνδεσης των ανέργων με την αγορά εργασίας, στη βάση μιας πιο εξατομικευμένης προσέγγισης. Προς το παρόν λειτουργούσε περιορισμένος αριθμός Κέντρων μόνο στην περιοχή της Αττικής ενώ προβλέπεται η σταδιακή επέκτασή τους σε όλη την Ελλάδα

Προφίλ εργασιακού συμβούλου

Σε μια παράλληλη κατεύθυνση σκοπός μιας νέας πρωτοβουλίας στην οποία συνεργούν τα υπουργεία Εργασίας και Παιδείας είναι ο ενιαίος σχεδιασμός των συστημάτων διασύνδεσης εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης με τις νέες ανάγκες οι οποίες προκύπτουν στην αγορά εργασίας. Υπό την ομπρέλα ενός κοινού συστήματος διασύνδεσης, επιδιώκεται ο συντονισμός των ενεργειών έτσι ώστε να ικανοποιούνται οι προσωπικές και κοινωνικές ανάγκες των ατόμων σε γνώσεις και δεξιότητες, καθώς και η κάλυψη της αγοράς εργασίας με εξειδικευμένα επαγγελματικά στελέχη, οι ειδικότητες των οποίων φαίνεται να προκύπτουν και από τις αναμορφωμένες εκπαιδευτικές ανάγκες που αποτυπώνονται στα προγράμματα σπουδών των τμημάτων της κοινωνικής επιστήμης.

Στην εμπλοκή των δύο Υπουργείων οι δράσεις είναι διακριτές καθώς το Υπουργείο Παιδείας διαμορφώνει πολιτικές που αφορούν τη δευτεροβάθμια επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση και την αρχική επαγγελματική κατάρτιση ενώ το Υπουργείο Εργασίας και Κοινωνικών Ασφαλίσεων πολιτικές που αφορούν τη Συνεχιζόμενη Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση. Παράλληλα, ο κοινός στόχος που διαφαίνεται από τη συνεργασία των δύο Υπουργείων είναι η διασύνδεση της επαγγελματικής εκπαίδευσης και κατάρτισης με την απασχόληση.

Τα υποσυστήματα μέσω των οποίων υλοποιούνται οι βασικοί και επιμέρους στόχοι αφορούν την έρευνα των αναγκών της αγοράς εργασίας, την επαγγελματική εκπαίδευση, την αρχική και τη συνεχιζόμενη επαγγελματική κατάρτιση. Ιδιαίτερα για το νησιώτικο χώρο και για τα μικρότερα νησιά στο θεσμικό πλαίσιο προβλέφθηκε η δυνατότητα χρησιμοποίησης και μη πιστοποιημένων δομών, όπως σχολικές αίθουσες για τη διενέργεια των προγραμμάτων κατάρτισης σ' αυτές.

Περαιτέρω και με συντονισμένες ενέργειες ολοκληρωμένων παρεμβάσεων για την απασχόληση διερευνούνται τρόποι πιστοποίησης επαγγελματικών προσόντων, ο επαγγελματικός προσανατολισμός και η συμβουλευτική σε θέματα εργασιακής ένταξης καθώς και ενέργειες προώθησης στην αγορά εργασίας.

Στις παραπάνω ενέργειες ιδιαίτερο ενδιαφέρον παρουσιάζουν οι προοπτικές που διανοίγονται για την άσκηση νέων επαγγελμάτων στον κοινωνικό τομέα και σε συγκεκριμένους τομείς, μέσα από τους οποίους προκύπτουν νέες μορφές απασχόλησης και επαγγέλματα, ενώ προς διερεύνηση είναι η οικονομική τους κατοχύρωση, η κοινωνική τους καταξίωση, αλλά και οι τρόποι πιστοποίησής τους.

Ένα από τα νέα επαγγέλματα που συνδέεται με τη λειτουργία, την οργάνωση και στελέχωση όλων των δομών που προσφέρουν υπηρεσίες συμβουλευτικής και προώθησης

στην απασχόληση είναι αυτό του Εργασιακού Συμβούλου για το προφίλ του οποίου καθώς και τις διαθέσιμες μεθόδους, τεχνικές και εργαλεία που αξιοποιούνται περιλαμβάνονται :

A. Τυποποίηση του προφίλ του Συμβούλου

- Ορισμός – Διάκριση με άλλες ειδικότητες
- Τυπικά και ουσιαστικά προσόντα – δεξιότητες
- Επαγγελματικές αξίες – δεοντολογία
- Λειτουργίες που ασκεί και πεδίο παρέμβασης
- Πλαίσιο – όροι άσκησης του έργου του συμβούλου απασχόλησης

B. Ανάγκες Επιμόρφωσης σχετικά με

- Εξειδικευμένες Ομάδες Στόχοι
- Εργαλεία Συμβουλευτικής
- Λειτουργία της αγοράς εργασίας ή τομείς της αγοράς εργασίας
- Λειτουργίες του συμβούλου 36

Κεντρικό μήνυμα είναι, πως η καταπολέμηση της ανεργίας είναι ένα εξαιρετικά πολύπλοκο ζήτημα για το οποίο απαιτείται η συντονισμένη δράση όλων των διοικητικών επιπέδων, καθώς και των κοινωνικών εταίρων. Ο ρόλος της Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης είναι πολύ σημαντικός, γιατί αυτή γνωρίζει καλύτερα τις τοπικές ιδιαιτερότητες και μπορεί με ευελιξία να εμψυχώσει και να συντονίσει την αναπτυξιακή προσπάθεια σε κάθε περιοχή. Επιπλέον, ανταγωνιστικές συνθήκες επικρατούν σήμερα στις οικονομίες και στις αγορές εργασίας και περιορίζουν σημαντικά τις ευκαιρίες απασχόλησης για άτομα που εμφανίζουν κάποια σωματική, ψυχική, ή και κοινωνική μειονεκτικότητα. Επιπλέον η κατάσταση στην ελληνική αγορά εργασίας που χαρακτηρίζεται από υψηλή ανεργία και αυξανόμενο μακροπρόθεσμο αποκλεισμό από την αγορά εργασίας, δημιουργεί πρόσθετες δυσκολίες ένταξης στην απασχόληση των ευπαθών κοινωνικών ομάδων. Με τη νέα πραγματικότητα που δημιουργείται λόγω της αύξησης του μεταναστευτικού ρεύματος προς την Ελλάδα αυξάνονται ολοένα και περισσότερα τα προβλήματα κοινωνικοοικονομικής ενσωμάτωσης και επαγγελματικής ένταξης που αντιμετωπίζουν οι Μετανάστες, οι Παλιννοστούντες και οι Πολιτικοί Πρόσφυγες. Από την άλλη πλευρά οι ανάγκες της αγοράς εργασίας μεταβάλλονται με γρήγορους ρυθμούς, καθώς η εισαγωγή νέων τεχνολογιών δημιουργεί νέες προκλήσεις και ίσως νέες διακρίσεις και ανισότητες.

Χαρακτηριστική είναι η αποσπασματικότητα, ο κατακερματισμός και η έλλειψη συντονισμού των εφαρμοζόμενων πολιτικών, ενώ προτείνεται η αντικατάστασή τους από ολοκληρωμένες προσεγγίσεις με σαφή καθορισμό στρατηγικής και συγκεκριμένων προτεραιοτήτων, οι οποίες αποτελούν αναπόσπαστο μέρος της συνολικής πολιτικής απασχόλησης της χώρας, λαμβάνοντας ιδιαίτερα υπόψη τις ανάγκες της αγοράς εργασίας και της οικονομίας, ειδικότερα της τοπικής ανάπτυξης.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό οι δράσεις που απευθύνονται προς τις ευπαθείς ομάδες απαιτείται να αναδεικνύουν ένα χαρακτήρα που να βασίζεται στην αρχή της πιλοτικής εφαρμογής και προώθησης νέων τρόπων καταπολέμησης των διακρίσεων και της ανισότητας στην απασχόληση καθώς και την ενσωμάτωση των καινοτόμων προσεγγίσεων στον κεντρικό κορμό των εθνικών πολιτικών για την απασχόληση.

Διερευνούνται επίσης νέες μορφές απασχόλησης για τους παλιννοστούντες και τους οικονομικούς μετανάστες δίδοντας έμφαση στα ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικά που φέρουν μαζί

από τη χώρα προέλευσής τους. Προκειμένου να επιτευχθεί ο στόχος αυτός κρίνεται ως σημαντικό να αναβαθμισθούν τα προσόντα, οι δεξιότητες και η απασχολησιμότητα των ατόμων από τις ομάδες αυτές που σήμερα βρίσκονται εκτός αγοράς εργασίας. Τα προσόντα επίσης αυτών που ήδη εργάζονται, ειδικά σε εκτεθειμένους και ευπαθείς τομείς, πρέπει επίσης να ανανεώνονται και να ενισχύονται. Επιπλέον η ικανότητα για ανάπτυξη επιχειρηματικού πνεύματος πρέπει να διευρυνθεί και να εξασφαλισθεί η ίση συμμετοχή ανδρών και γυναικών στην αγορά εργασίας.

Τέλος, αναλύονται συγκεκριμένες στρατηγικές για την καταπολέμηση των διακρίσεων λόγω φυλετικής, ή εθνικής καταγωγής, θρησκείας ή πεποιθήσεων.

Επιπλέον διερευνάται η εισαγωγή νέων επαγγελματιών στο χώρο της κοινωνικής οικονομίας, της κοινωνικής υγείας και πρόνοιας καθώς και σε φορείς της Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης διερευνώντας τις κοινωνικές καινοτομίες στο χώρο της εργασίας που ενισχύουν την κοινωνική συνοχή, κυρίως σε επίπεδο Περιφέρειας. Κατά τον ίδιο τρόπο εξετάζονται τα διαρθρωτικά προβλήματα άσκησης κοινωνικής πολιτικής και οι δομές οργάνωσης της εργασίας σε κοινωνικές επιχειρήσεις. Τα θέματα αυτά εξετάζονται στο πλαίσιο της Ευρωπαϊκής Πολιτικής για την Απασχόληση και τη μεταρρύθμιση του Ευρωπαϊκού Κοινωνικού Μοντέλου που προβλέπει το σταδιακό περιορισμό των επιδομάτων ανεργίας και την εισαγωγή ενεργητικών πολιτικών για την ενίσχυση της απασχόλησης.

Μεταξύ των ενεργητικών πολιτικών απασχόλησης, η Συνεχιζόμενη Επαγγελματική Κατάρτιση ανέργων και εργαζομένων φαίνεται πως είναι η επικρατούσα πολιτική στη χώρα μας, καθώς απευθύνεται σε μεγαλύτερο αριθμό ατόμων απ' ό,τι το σύνολο των υπόλοιπων ενεργητικών πολιτικών απασχόλησης και απορροφά μεγαλύτερα ποσά χρηματικών πόρων τόσο συνολικά, όσο και κατά άτομο.

Στην κατεύθυνση αυτή βρίσκονται οι μεταρρυθμιστικές πολιτικές στο χώρο της Υγείας και Πρόνοιας καθώς και οι νέες προοπτικές που διανοίγονται στο χώρο της κοινωνικής οικονομίας, κυρίως με τον νέο ενεργό ρόλο της Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης και τη δημιουργία νέων θέσεων εργασίας σε επαγγέλματα με κοινωνικό χαρακτήρα, ενισχύοντας την απασχόληση σε τοπικό επίπεδο. Με τις μεταρρυθμίσεις αυτές οι φορείς Τοπικής Αυτοδιοίκησης σε συνεργασία με κοινωνικούς εταίρους, μη κυβερνητικούς φορείς και δημόσιους οργανισμούς αναλαμβάνουν την κύρια ευθύνη στην παροχή κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών και διαχειρίζονται σε μια νέα βάση τα ζητήματα της κοινωνικής πρόνοιας. Τέλος, εξετάζονται οι προοπτικές νέων, τοπικού χαρακτήρα επιχειρηματικών δραστηριοτήτων και πρωτοβουλιών που επιχειρούν οι ΟΤΑ σε συμπράξεις με τοπικούς κοινωνικούς και παραγωγικούς φορείς.

Εργασιακή ένταξη και κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση

Στο σημείο αυτό η εισήγηση εκτείνεται σε δυο άξονες, οι οποίοι συγκλίνουν στην πορεία και συνθέτουν μια ενιαία πρόταση. Ο πρώτος άξονας στέκεται κριτικά σε θέματα που προκύπτουν από τις νέες πολιτικές και το σχεδιασμό για την εργασιακή ένταξη και την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση καθώς και σε θέματα που αφορούν την πρόνοια και την κοινωνική φροντίδα, ενώ ο δεύτερος τη σύνθεση και ένταξη των κοινωνικών υπηρεσιών για μη

ευνοημένες ομάδες πληθυσμού με την απασχόληση. 37

Η κοινωνική ένταξη είναι μια σύνθετη έννοια, η οποία είναι δύσκολο να οριστεί και πολλώ μάλλον να μετρηθεί επακριβώς. 38 Η σχέση της με οικονομικά μεγέθη, όπως η κατανομή εισοδήματος, ή ακόμη και με το χαμηλό εισόδημα, όπως συμβατικά ορίζεται η φτώχεια, δεν χαρακτηρίζεται απλή ούτε αναλογική. Σύμφωνα με την πολιτική της κοινωνικής ενσωμάτωσης υπάρχουν προβλήματα ένταξης που δεν συνοδεύονται από χαμηλό εισόδημα και προβλήματα χαμηλού εισοδήματος που δεν συνεπάγονται προβλήματα ένταξης.

Πάντως, σε κάθε περίπτωση αν και η ίδια η σχέση του χαμηλού εισοδήματος με την απασχόληση παρουσιάζεται, σύμφωνα με την πολιτική για την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση, σε ένα βαθμό ως ιδιαίτερα σύνθετη λίγοι μπορούν να διαφωνήσουν περί του αυτονόητου, ότι η αναθέμανση της αγοράς εργασίας οδηγεί σε αποφασιστική μείωση του κινδύνου της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού.

Επιπλέον, στο αναθεωρημένο Σύνταγμα του 2001 εισήχθη διάταξη που κατοχυρώνει ρητώς και στο ανώτατο δυνατό θεσμικό επίπεδο το κοινωνικό κράτος. Η συνταγματική αυτή αναφορά (άρθρο 25 & 1) καθιερώνει και τυπικά στην ελληνική έννομη τάξη την αρχή της κοινωνικής προστασίας. Επίσης στα άρθρα 116 & 2 και 21 & 6 προβλέπεται ο εναρμονισμός τόσο σε προηγούμενες νομολογίες του Συμβουλίου της Επικρατείας όσο και στο κανονιστικό πλαίσιο που ισχύει σε άλλες χώρες της Ε.Ε για θέματα που αφορούν διακρίσεις απέναντι σε συγκεκριμένες κοινωνικές ομάδες.

Παρά ταύτα ισχυρή παρουσιάζεται και η λειτουργία της κοινωνικής ασφάλισης ως προς την εφαρμογή οργανωτικών μορφών εξυπηρέτησης συγκεκριμένων στόχων κοινωνικής προστασίας.³⁹ Να διευκρινισθεί επίσης η διαφαινόμενη διάκριση ανάμεσα στη φτώχεια και τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό υπογραμμίζοντας ότι ο κοινωνικός αποκλεισμός δεν συνδέεται μόνο με την ανεπάρκεια του εισοδήματος, αλλά καθώς υπερβαίνει τις εισοδηματικές σχέσεις εκδηλώνεται σε τομείς όπως η εργασία, η στέγαση, η εκπαίδευση, η υγεία και η πρόσβαση στις υπηρεσίες. Επιπλέον, η έννοια του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού συνδέεται με την έλλειψη ατομικών και κοινωνικών δικαιωμάτων που θεωρούνται θεμελιώδη, την έλλειψη συμμετοχής στην παραγωγή και την απόλαυση κοινωνικών και δημόσιων αγαθών, την έλλειψη συμμετοχής στα κοινά, αλλά και στην άσκηση εξουσίας. Παράλληλα, με τη διασφάλιση της καλύτερης πρόσβασης στις υπηρεσίες της εκπαίδευσης, της καταπολέμησης των άμεσων και έμμεσων διακρίσεων που αντιμετωπίζουν οι μη προνομιούχες ομάδες, αλλά και με την εκπόνηση μέτρων, (π.χ δικτύων που ενισχύουν την

37 Η διαδικασία του Λουξεμβούργου, όπως έχει μείνει γνωστή η έκτακτη σύνοδος κορυφής για την απασχόληση που πραγματοποιήθηκε το 1997, έθεσε τους όρους εφαρμογής της Ευρωπαϊκής Στρατηγικής για την Απασχόληση. Συγκεκριμένα, προσδιόρισε το ρόλο της Ευρωπαϊκής Επιτροπής, του Συμβουλίου και των Κρατών-μελών, τους κύκλους εφαρμογής της Ε.Σ.Α., καθώς και τις κατευθυντήριες γραμμές και τη δομή των Εθνικών Σχεδίων Δράσης για την Απασχόληση (Ε.Σ.Δ.Α.). Το Εθνικό Σχέδιο Δράσης για την Απασχόληση, καθώς και το Εθνικό Σχέδιο Δράσης για την Κοινωνική Ενσωμάτωση (Ε.Σ.Δ.Ε.Ν.) καταρτίζονται σε εθνικό επίπεδο. Ίσες ευκαιρίες σημαίνει ισότητα στην πρόσβαση στην εργασία και ίση μεταχείριση για άνδρες και γυναίκες. Δηλαδή ίδιες ευκαιρίες κατάρτισης και υποστήριξης προκειμένου να συμμετέχουν στην αγορά εργασίας με τις ίδιες προϋποθέσεις Ο πυλώνας «ίσες ευκαιρίες» στοχεύει, κωδικοποιημένα, στα ακόλουθα: Αντιμετώπιση ανισοτήτων μεταξύ των δύο φύλων, συνδυασμός επαγγελματικής και οικογενειακής ζωής, διευκόλυνση της επιστροφής στην εργασία, Προώθηση ενσωμάτωσης των ατόμων με ιδιαιτερότητες στην επαγγελματική ζωή

38 Βλ. σχετ. Εθνικό Σχέδιο Δράσης για την Κοινωνική Ενσωμάτωση (ΕΣΔΕΝ) 2002 και 2003

39 Βλ. Γ. Αμίτσης : Αρχές οργάνωσης και λειτουργίας του συστήματος κοινωνικής πρόνοιας, Παπαζήση, Αθήνα, 2001, σελ. 36 επ

κοινωνική συνοχή ή δικτύων για την κοινωνική προσφορά και αλληλεγγύη), ακόμη και νομοθετικών ρυθμίσεων για την επίλυση των προβλημάτων (όπως π.χ το Νομοσχέδιο για την κοινωνική ενσωμάτωση)⁴⁰ επιχειρείται στην ουσία η διευκόλυνση προς το βασικό στόχο, που είναι η ένταξη στην αγορά εργασίας.

Να σημειωθεί εδώ, ότι η νέα πολιτική προσέγγισης σε εξατομικευμένο επίπεδο δεν μπορεί να εξαντληθεί στα ατομικά σχέδια δράσης για κάθε χρήστη. Θα πρέπει να εμπλουτίζεται και να συνδέεται με το κοινωνικά και εργασιακά δομημένο περιβάλλον μέσα στο οποίο θα ενταχθεί ή θα επανενταχθεί το άτομο ώστε να βιώσει τους κοινωνικούς όρους επικύρωσης των αποτελεσμάτων της εμπύχωσης ή της ενδυνάμωσης του εαυτού.

Σε αντίθετη περίπτωση υπάρχει ο κίνδυνος να δημιουργηθεί μια αρνητική αυτοεικόνα, μέσα από ένα έλλειμμα προσαρμογής σε εργασιακά περιβάλλοντα, όπου παρατηρείται επίταση του άγχους και των επιδόσεων. Επιχειρώντας λοιπόν μια αξιολόγηση όλων των Σχεδίων Δράσης των ΚΕΣΥΥ⁴¹ διαπιστώνει κανείς τις κάτωθι υπηρεσίες, οι οποίες, άλλες με έμμεσο και άλλες με άμεσο τρόπο, ενισχύουν τις διαδικασίες ένταξης στην αγορά εργασίας, ατόμων από ευπαθείς ομάδες.

Οι οριζόντιες αυτές υπηρεσίες, έτσι όπως προκύπτουν από την ανάλυση των σχεδίων, προσφέρονται στους τομείς :

- της κοινωνικής – νομικής συμβουλευτικής υποστήριξης (ατομικής ή ομαδικής)
- της συμβουλευτικής οικογένειας και ατόμου για κοινωνική ένταξη – ή επανένταξη
- προώθησης – στήριξης στην απασχόληση
- επαγγελματικής συμβουλευτικής και επαγγελματικού προσανατολισμού
- πληροφόρησης – ευαισθητοποίησης- ενημέρωσης
- κοινωνικοπαιδαγωγικής και ψυχοκοινωνικής στήριξης
- υποστήριξης για τη φύλαξη παιδιών

Το περιεχόμενο των παραπάνω υπηρεσιών προσδιορίζεται ως προς τις ανάγκες της ομάδας στόχος.

Ενδεικτικά αναφέρουμε ότι αναπόσπαστο στοιχείο στη διαδικασία ενδυνάμωσης είναι η επαγγελματική συμβουλευτική και ο εργασιακός προσανατολισμός, η διεξαγωγή συλλογικών δραστηριοτήτων δημιουργικής απασχόλησης και η συλλογική λήψη αποφάσεων.

Η κοινωνική και εργασιακή προετοιμασία συνδυάζεται με την άρση των διακρίσεων και την ενδυνάμωση των ατόμων που απειλούνται με αποκλεισμό από την αγορά εργασίας. Η ολοκλήρωση αυτού του κύκλου των ενεργειών μπορεί να βοηθήσει τα άτομα να ενταχθούν σε ενεργητικές πολιτικές απασχόλησης (προκατάρτιση, κατάρτιση, απόκτηση εργασιακής εμπειρίας, απώτερο στόχο την κάλυψη Νέων θέσεων εργασίας, ή τη δημιουργία επιχειρήσεων ως Νέοι Ελεύθεροι Επαγγελματίες).

Στο σημείο αυτό να σημειωθεί η επίδιωξη δυο μορφών δεξιοτήτων για άτομα ευπαθών ομάδων.

A) Κοινωνικές δεξιότητες, όπως η αυτοπεποίθηση, η συνεργατικότητα, δεξιότητες

40 Βλ. Εθνικό Σχέδιο Δράσης για την Κοινωνική Ενσωμάτωση (Ε.ΣΔ.Ε.Ν.), 2003

41 Βλ. Υπουργείο Εργασίας : Σχέδιο Δράσης για την πιστοποίηση των Κέντρων Συνοδευτικών Υποστηρικτικών Υπηρεσιών, 2002

συλλογικής εργασίας, αλλά απ' ό,τι φαίνεται και η διακινδύνευση για την ανάληψη πρωτοβουλιών, κάτι το οποίο μπορεί κανείς να το δει από μια κριτική ματιά. Β) Επαγγελματικές δεξιότητες που ενισχύουν το επαγγελματικό προφίλ του ατόμου μέσα από συμπληρωματική εκπαίδευση για την ανάληψη επαγγελματικού ρόλου.

Έτσι, η σύγχρονη έννοια της κοινωνικής φροντίδας περιλαμβάνει δέσμες ενεργειών, οι οποίες παράλληλα με την ενδυνάμωση και εμπύχωση του ατόμου και την ενεργοποίηση και ευαισθητοποίηση του κοινωνικού ιστού συμβάλλει και στην κοινωνική καθώς και την εργασιακή ενσωμάτωση. Για παράδειγμα, η πραγματιστική έννοια της ενδυνάμωσης ως διαδικασίας αυτοδύναμης και επικοινωνιακής παρουσίας του ατόμου εκτιμούμε ότι ολοκληρώνεται με την ενεργό συμμετοχή στα κοινωνικά πράγματα και στον εργασιακό χώρο.

Κατά τον ίδιο τρόπο η εμπύχωση, ως ανάπτυξη δημιουργικής έκφρασης και ανάδειξης δεξιοτήτων κρίνεται στη συνεργατική ικανότητα του ατόμου, τη λειτουργία του μέσα σε ένα περιβάλλον συλλογικότητας, όπου δοκιμάζεται ο συμμετοχικός ρόλος στην ενεργητική παρουσία της ομάδας στην κοινωνία. Οι υπηρεσίες αυτές εντάσσονται σε έναν ολοκληρωμένο σχεδιασμό παρεχόμενης ειδικής εκπαίδευσης και ενεργειών ένταξης στην αγορά εργασίας για όλες τις καταγεγραμμένες ευπαθείς ομάδες, ή ομάδες κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, δηλαδή για :

- Άτομα με αναπηρίες
- Μετανάστες, Παλιννοστούντες, Πρόσφυγες
- Αποφυλακισμένους, Φυλακισμένους, Αηλίκους Παραβάτες
- Αρχηγούς μονογενεϊκών οικογενειών
- Άτομα απομακρυσμένων ορεινών και νησιωτικών περιοχών (γεωγραφικός αποκλεισμός)
- Άτομα με γλωσσικές, θρησκευτικές ή πολιτικές ιδιαιτερότητες, πρώην χρήστες ναρκωτικών ουσιών
- Άτομα με Ψυχικές Ασθένειες που διαβιούν εκτός ιδρυμάτων.

Οι υπηρεσίες που παρέχονται για τις παραπάνω ομάδες σύμφωνα με τα Σχέδια Δράσης των ΚΕΣΥΥ εντάσσονται αλλά και αντιστοιχούν σε ένα ενιαίο σύστημα διαχείρισης και παρακολούθησης των Κέντρων που εκπονείται από τις Διαχειριστικές Αρχές και εφαρμόζεται τουλάχιστον στο πεδίο εκείνο, όπου η Συμβουλευτική υποστήριξη συνδέεται με ενέργειες προώθησης στην Απασχόληση.

Στο πλαίσιο αυτό θα επικεντρωθούμε σε εκείνες τις υπηρεσίες που παρέχονται από τα Κέντρα Υποστηρικτικών Υπηρεσιών, τα οποία σε συνεργασία με Εκπαιδευτικούς Οργανισμούς και Κέντρα Προώθησης στην Απασχόληση εκπονούν σχέδια δράσης για την ενίσχυση της Απασχολησιμότητας 42ευπαθών ομάδων. Οι υπηρεσίες προώθησης και στήριξης της Απασχόλησης από τα Κέντρα ΣΥΥ οργανώνονται κατά τέτοιο τρόπο, ώστε

42 Με τον όρο Απασχολησιμότητα νοούνται οι ενέργειες εκείνες που αναπτύσσουν τις κατάλληλες δεξιότητες του ατόμου και κατά συνέπεια αυξάνουν τις δυνατότητες του να διεκδικήσει με πιθανότητες επιτυχίας μία θέση στην αγορά εργασίας. Ο πύλωνας «Απασχολησιμότητα» στοχεύει, κωδικοποιημένα στην αντιμετώπιση της ανεργίας των νέων και την πρόληψη της μακροχρόνιας ανεργίας καθώς και στη μετάβαση από τις παθητικές στις ενεργητικές πολιτικές

να προσιδιάζουν προς τα χαρακτηριστικά και τις ομάδες του Κοινωνικού Αποκλεισμού. Αναλύοντας το σύνολο των σχεδίων της Α΄ περιόδου πιστοποίησης των ΚΕΣΥΥ (1998-1999) το Υπουργείο Εργασίας μέσω του ΕΚΕΠΙΣ, αλλά και των Σχεδίων Δράσης των υποψηφίων προς πιστοποίηση κέντρων με την έναρξη του 3^{ου} ΚΠΣ διαπιστώνει κανείς σε οριζόντια κλίμακα για όλες τις ομάδες κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού συγκεκριμένες υπηρεσίες που παρέχονται.

Ο προσανατολισμός για θετικούς στόχους, όπως η ανάπτυξη του ανθρώπινου δυναμικού, η ατομική αυτάρκεια, η ολοκλήρωση και η κοινωνική ένταξη είναι επιδιωκόμενοι στόχοι και προκλήσεις για τη σύγχρονη κοινωνία. Παράλληλα η αξιολόγηση της αποτελεσματικότητας των εθνικών πολιτικών για την κοινωνική φροντίδα έγκειται στη διασφάλιση ενός δικτύου παρεχόμενων υπηρεσιών, από τα κοινωνικά δικαιώματα για λιγότερο ευνοημένες ομάδες, την αποκατάσταση της ψυχικής και κοινωνικής υγείας και την εφαρμογή τους έως τις ενεργητικές πολιτικές για την απασχόληση.

Αυτή η κοινωνική πολιτική νέου τύπου δημιουργεί ένα νέο πλαίσιο για συνεργασία, που ορίζεται μέσα από διαπραγματεύσεις, ως ένα συμβόλαιο που εμπλέκονται όλοι εκείνοι οι φορείς που μπορούν να διαδραματίσουν κάποιο ρόλο στην εφαρμογή αυτής της πολιτικής. Απαραίτητη προϋπόθεση για την αποτελεσματικότητα της πολιτικής αυτής είναι η ένταξη της στο σύστημα αποκέντρωσης που προβλέπουν οι νέες πολιτικές τοπικής ανάπτυξης.

Η καταπολέμηση της φτώχειας και του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού αποτελούν μια πρόκληση για την κοινωνική πολιτική σήμερα. Με τον διαρκώς διογκούμενο ανταγωνισμό και την ανεργία η Ελληνική κοινωνία συζητά, αλλά και εφαρμόζει με ρυθμούς αργούς και με δομές συχνά γραφειοκρατικές νέα δίκτυα κοινωνικής προστασίας. Αυτά αναμένεται να αποτελέσουν ένα ισχυρό αντίβαρο απέναντι στις συνέπειες από την κρίση στην αγορά εργασίας, τον περιορισμό της δημόσιας χρηματοδότησης για την κοινωνική πρόνοια, την αλλαγή των οικογενειακών δομών και την αύξηση του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού.

Μπροστά στο νέο αυτό τοπίο κάποιοι καινοτόμοι τρόποι συνδυασμένης και ολοκληρωμένης αντιμετώπισης της απασχόλησης και της πρόνοιας είναι δυνατόν να βοηθήσουν τις ευάλωτες κοινωνικές ομάδες. Με τη μεταρρύθμιση του Κοινωνικού Μοντέλου επιδιώχθηκε η αύξηση της απασχόλησης και η ενθάρρυνση για νέες μορφές εργασίας, ο σταδιακός περιορισμός της επιδοματικής πολιτικής και η ενεργητική πολιτική για την απασχόληση, καθώς και η ενθάρρυνση της κοινωνικής οικονομίας και των κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων που είναι άρρηκτα συνδεδεμένες με την κοινωνική και επαγγελματική ολοκλήρωση. Βέβαια, το καθεστώς της κοινωνικής οικονομίας δοκιμάζεται σύμφωνα με τα υφιστάμενα μοντέλα κρατικής πολιτικής.

Όπως βλέπουμε από τα παραπάνω, παρατηρείται μετατόπιση του στόχου, από την ένταξη στην αγορά εργασίας στην πρόληψη του αποκλεισμού από την αγορά εργασίας. Διαδικασιοποιείται λοιπόν το πρόβλημα της φιλοδοξίας ώστε να οδηγηθεί σε μια πιο ρεαλιστική προσέγγιση αφενός και αφετέρου προϋποθέτει την αξιοποίηση, την ενίσχυση και τη βελτίωση των προσόντων που ήδη φέρει το άτομο που απειλείται ή βιώνει τον κοινωνικό αποκλεισμό. Επομένως, η αναγνώριση του κοινωνικο-πολιτισμικού κεφαλαίου που φέρουν τα άτομα που ανήκουν σε διαφορετικές από την κυρίαρχη κοινωνικές ομάδες αλλά και οι αντικειμενικές ανάγκες και ελλείμματα (φτώχεια, ανεπαρκείς συνθήκες διαβίωσης, μερική πρόσβαση στα εκπαιδευτικά και κοινωνικά αγαθά, μερική ανάπτυξη του συστήματος κοινωνικής φροντίδας κ.λ.π) χρειάζεται να θεωρηθούν ως βασικά πεδία παρέμβασης, να διαχέονται στις δράσεις που θα υλοποιηθούν (μεθοδολογία) και να εκφράζονται με την παράλληλη κινητοποίηση του θεσμικού χώρου με σκοπό την

προετοιμασία του να υποδεχτεί μεγαλύτερο αριθμό πολιτών.

Επιπλέον έρχονται στην επιφάνεια ζητήματα που σχετίζονται με την πολιτική βούληση και αντίληψη, την αναδιανομή των πόρων, το λειτουργικό – περιφερειακό σχεδιασμό, τη σχέση του κοινωνικού χώρου με αυτόν της αγοράς εργασίας, τη συμμετοχή μη αναγνωρισμένων κοινωνικών εταίρων (Μ.Κ.Ο) στο σχεδιασμό, την υλοποίηση και την αξιολόγηση. Αναδεικνύονται επίσης τα σημαντικά κενά των αναγκαίων δεδομένων (στοιχεία-έρευνα κλπ), η απουσία των θεσμικών διασυνδέσεων που προωθούν την κοινωνική συνοχή με αποτέλεσμα να κατακερματίζουν και να αποδυναμώνουν τους στόχους. Υπάρχει όμως και προβληματισμός για ορθολογικότερο σχεδιασμό για την πραγμάτωση των ίσων ευκαιριών, το σεβασμό της ανθρώπινης αξιοπρέπειας, τη δημιουργία συνθηκών που μειώνουν τον κοινωνικό και οικονομικό αποκλεισμό για άτομα και ομάδες.

Θεωρούμε θετική τη διεύρυνση των δράσεων που (φαίνεται ότι) θα αναλάβουν τα ΚΕΣΥΥ σε σχέση με τις κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένες ομάδες και επιτέλους την αποδοχή ενός ευρύτερου ρόλου για τις ΣΥΥ που δεν εξαντλείται στην «ατομική και ομαδική στήριξη». Η διεύρυνση και η αποδοχή αυτή συμβάλλει στην ανάπτυξη μοντέλων εργασίας, στην παραγωγή μεθόδων και εργαλείων, στην εκπαίδευση και ευαισθητοποίηση μεγαλύτερου μέρους του πληθυσμού, τόσο στο επίπεδο των άμεσα επωφελούμενων (οικογένειες και προστατευόμενα μέλη) και οδηγεί στην αξιοποίηση των προσφερόμενων υπηρεσιών όχι μόνο εκ μέρους των κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένων αλλά και αυτών που κινδυνεύουν να βρεθούν σε συνθήκες κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού.

Μπορεί να είναι ιδιαίτερα ενισχυτική για τη θεσμοθέτηση της συνεργασίας ΚΠΑ και ΚΕΣΥΥ. Η πρόταση αυτή - απαραίτητη συνιστώσα κατά την άποψή μου – δίνει την ευκαιρία στο μεταβατικό διάστημα να αποκατασταθούν σχέσεις συνεργασίας εστιασμένες σε τοπικό επίπεδο που φέρνει κοντά τις ανάγκες των ομάδων με τις πολιτικές απασχόλησης. Διαμορφώνει προγράμματα οριζόντιας παρέμβασης για τους πληθυσμούς, αλλά και εκπαίδευσης για το ανθρώπινο δυναμικό του θεσμού των ΚΠΑ σε μια προσέγγιση κοινοτικής εργασίας για τα θέματα της απασχόλησης. Η διερεύνηση των αναγκών της αγοράς εργασίας, το προφίλ των εργαζομένων, η καταγραφή των δυνατοτήτων για εργασία, η αποτύπωση των θέσεων και στάσεων των εργοδοτών, η αξιολόγηση της προσφοράς και ζήτησης σε τοπικό επίπεδο, από τη μεριά των ΚΠΑ και η διερεύνηση των ατομικών και κοινωνικών αναγκών, η προσαρμογή και η δημιουργία έργων με βάση τις δυναμικές των κοινωνικά αποκλεισμένων ή απειλούμενων με αποκλεισμό ατόμων και ομάδων, η δημιουργία πολιτικών πρόληψης του αποκλεισμού και η ολοκληρωμένη παρέμβαση στους αστικούς και περιφερειακούς χώρους (γεωγραφικό κριτήριο) και στους κοινωνικούς χώρους (ομάδες στόχοι) είναι δυνατόν να μας δώσει την εικόνα που σήμερα βρίσκεται κρυμμένη (φτώχεια, μαύρη εργασία, αστυφιλία, συνθήκες διαβίωσης, ελλείμματα κοινωνικών παροχών, κατοίκηση, κλπ) αλλά και τις απαντήσεις πως η κατάσταση μπορεί να βελτιωθεί.

Το πρόγραμμα απόκτησης επαγγελματικής εμπειρίας, η επιδότηση θέσεων εργασίας, η επιδότηση της αυτοαπασχόλησης είναι μέτρα που χρειάζεται πιθανά να αξιολογηθούν, ενώ η λειτουργία κοινωνικών επιχειρήσεων, είναι πολιτική που θα πρέπει να εκτιμηθεί και να εισαχθεί ως μέτρο για τις κοινωνικά ευάλωτες ομάδες. Θα πρέπει επίσης να προβλεφθεί η δυνατότητα «κάθετης» διασύνδεσης των δράσεων και των μέτρων των αξόνων του επιχειρησιακού προγράμματος έτσι ώστε να επιτευχθεί η συμπληρωματικότητα μεταξύ τους και να ενισχυθεί η συνεκτική δομή του προγράμματος.

Επειδή δεν υπάρχει ασφαλές κριτήριο (έγκυρο, αξιόπιστο και αποδεκτό από την

επιστημονική κοινότητα) διαβάθμισης του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού, είναι πολύ πιθανόν άτομα που δεν ανήκουν στις κοινωνικά ευπαθείς ομάδες που αναγνωρίζει το Σχέδιο του ΕΠ Απασχόληση κλπ. (Βλ. κατάσταση φτώχειας στην Ελλάδα. Σε τέτοιες ομάδες μπορεί για παράδειγμα να ανήκουν μακροχρόνια άνεργοι, άνεργοι νέοι, γυναίκες) είτε να υποφέρουν ήδη από τις συνέπειες του φαινομένου, ιδίως τις υποκειμενικές, είτε να κινδυνεύουν να τις υποστούν. Για τους λόγους αυτούς, θα πρέπει κατά τη γνώμη μου να δοθεί η δυνατότητα και σε άλλες ομάδες ή άτομα να επωφεληθούν από την παροχή ΣΥΥ (κυρίως όσον αφορά διαδικασίες εμπύχωσης, κινητοποίησης, ενδυνάμωσης, στήριξης) αυτών που προβλέπονται από το Σχέδιο. Στον τομέα αυτό τα ΚΕΣΥΥ έχουν αποκτήσει σημαντική εμπειρία και τεχνογνωσία, οι οποίες είναι δυνατόν να αξιοποιηθούν όχι αποκλειστικά για την εξατομικευμένη ένταξη στην απασχόληση, αλλά και για τη διαμόρφωση πολιτικών απασχόλησης. Στην κατεύθυνση αυτή προτείνουμε τη θεσμική κατοχύρωση της συνεργασίας των ΚΠΑ με τα ΚΕΣΥΥ για τη διάγνωση των αναγκών των ανέργων γενικά και των κοινωνικά ευπαθών ομάδων ειδικά, ώστε να αποκτήσει ουσιαστικά περιεχόμενο όλη η πολιτική για τις ευπαθείς ομάδες.

Η προτεινόμενη συνεργασία ΚΠΑ και ΚΕΣΥΥ στοχεύει στην καταπολέμηση του κοινωνικού αποκλεισμού και στην πρόληψη της ανεργίας μέσω της αξιοποίησης όλων των διαθέσιμων πόρων. Η κατοχύρωση της συνεργασίας των δυο τομέων, κρατικού και κοινωνικού, μπορεί επίσης να συμβάλλει στην άντληση μέγιστου οφέλους στη διάρκεια της αρχικής φάσης υλοποίησης του νέου ΕΠ, η οποία θα έχει – αναγκαστικά κατά την άποψή μας, όπως μπορεί να συζητηθεί – χαρακτηριστικά μεταβατικής περιόδου.

Μπορεί επίσης να σκιαγραφηθεί το προτεινόμενο πλαίσιο της συνεργασίας. Βασίζεται στην αντίληψη ότι το ΚΠΑ αναλαμβάνει κύριο συντονιστικό ρόλο σε επίπεδο περιφέρειας, ενώ τα ΚΕΣΥΥ λειτουργούν ως μίαντες σύνδεσης με την τοπική αγορά εργασίας και υποστήριξης των πολιτικών απασχόλησης με υπηρεσίες που ενισχύουν και διερευνούν την κοινωνική και πολιτισμική διάσταση και ανάγκη της τοπικής αγοράς εργασίας.

CLOSING REMARKS

Prof. Chris JECCHINIS

What I want to point-out is that the Conference surpassed by far, my personal expectations, and as Mr. Andreasen agreed those of the European Commission, because it did not have any of the minor weaknesses of the last European conference. There was here an adequate connection of the required cooperation between the interested parties involved in new forms of work organization and the University sector, which can provide not only education and training, but also the required suitable research.

It was a happy revelation for me to discover that the University sector slowly but steadily marches on in the right direction. It has not arrived yet at where it is supposed to be, but I am almost certain that it will get there. Here I wish to insert a comment in the argument concerning the potential contribution of the private universities. If by private we mean private initiative, non profit making institutions, I am in favour of them, but if we are talking of profit making ones, I do have some serious reservation.

On the other hand, I believe that universities and colleges, and especially those which sent participants to our Conference, are in a position to contribute more effectively to the promotion of the so-called new forms of work organization. It should be mentioned also that when we talk about new forms of work organization, we talk really about some old forms of work organization. What we have now, (in the 21st Century) are new challenges with the radical changes that have taken place because of globalisation and rapid technological advances. It would have been more correct to say, "different forms of work organisation" that can meet the "new challenges" which have been related. This is an area where we could have a better understanding with the trade unions, which are still interested in solving problems for their members at the workplace. That is the reason for my statement when I said that I was looking forward to Kevin O'Kelly's contribution concerning negotiated collective agreements that include new forms of work organisation, which can also become a function of work councils.

I was also interested in the statement of Prof. Tsipouri and Mr. Gavroglou – who have been working with a group of colleagues from various countries- that new forms of work organisation is not a panacea, and there are still a number of problems which have to be solved before we proceed further. At this point I wish to congratulate Prof. Michael Kassotakis and Prof. Christina Nova-Kaltsouni, and all the other members of the scientific and organisation committees for all the excellent work they did in organising this conference. The quality of the various contributions were outstanding (both the foreign and the Greek).

I hope that there will be a continuation of the effort here in Greece and at the European Commission. In other words, what is going to happen next? What will happen to all the work we have done here? I am almost certain that the Commission's financial support will be forthcoming, for the publication and distribution of the Conference's proceedings in English and Greek. I hope also that Prof. Kassotakis will make certain to promote some of the new ideas concerning various forms of work organisation, in at least half of the new member states of the E.U., including Cyprus and Malta, and continue to include new forms of work organisation in the post-graduate course on HR Management and Development.

I will continue also to play my part despite the fact of becoming 80 years old, and having suffered a stroke in Canada last summer, where I spent two months in hospital. I'll continue to fight on and on, 'till the last moments of my life

Finally, I wish to thank all of you who came to participate in this conference, and especially my former students who haven't forgotten me. The secretariat and the interpreters for all their hard work and to wish all of you the best success in your life and careers.

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