



Vocational Education in the European Union : **a draft policy statement**

PREAMBLE

For ETUCE, all education must fulfil the fundamental missions which may be given to the education system; the development and fulfilment of the human individual, with the capacity to take an active part in the life of society, the education of free and responsible citizens, and the capacity to cope with technological change.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The European Union institutions have taken a particular interest in vocational education including a number of important initiatives in recent years : the Memorandum on Vocational Training in the European Community in the 1990's (COM 91-397 final 12/12/91), the Commission's "Guidelines for Community Action in the Field of Education and Training", (Com (93) 183 final 5/5/93), the Delors White Paper on employment in 1993, and the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme for introduction in 1995. In general, the Maastricht Treaty with its separation of education (Article 126) from vocational training (Article 127), and new arrangements for legislative procedure have altered the legal basis for work in this field. The new programme, promulgated under Article 127 (vocational training) of the Maastricht Treaty, raises important questions about the scope of vocational education and its relationship to the rest of education (covered under Article 126 of the Treaty). European initiatives have been accompanied by important initiatives at the national level, linked to reforms of the education and training system and employment policies. The ETUCE comments to date on the LEONARDO programme are summarised in Annex A.
2. Therefore it is timely for ETUCE to review the policy positions which it has taken in the field of vocational education. We have tended to be reactive to documents such as those named above, rather than pro-active. This paper is intended as the basis for a discussion with the ETUC, with a view to developing a common union policy, and promoting it among member organisations, and having it taken into account by the European institutions and national governments.
3. The ETUCE has stated a number of key principles in respect of vocational education in Europe, in its response to the Memorandum (See Annex B). The next section will set out a more detailed view on the following issues:-

- The changed context of vocational education;
- Initial vocational education : transition to adulthood;
- Mobility and transferability;
- Continuing vocational education (lifelong learning);
- The state and the employer;
- The roles of the European Union and the Member States;
- Higher Education aspects of vocational education;
- Teacher education for VET teachers;
- LEONARDO;
- The trade unions and VET.

Themes which underlie all these issues include the right to education including vocational education for all young people, the struggle against unemployment and social exclusion, for equal opportunity and the right to a job with qualifications. These also raise the question of the sources and methods of funding, and in particular the balance between public and private funding. The ETUCE places particular importance on the need for vocational education to promote equal opportunities in society and in employment.

B. UNDERLYING THEMES

The Changed Context of Vocational Education and Training

4. ETUCE has an interest in examining the issue of vocational education and training (VET), building on the ETUCE view of the unity of the education process throughout life, the importance of equality of opportunity in education, and of the role of education in enabling citizens to play their full part in society and the economy, as well as in personal development. Vocational education is a crucial element in meeting the challenges of economic crisis and changes in employment. Vocational education and training must enable young people to achieve a high level of general education and to enter the labour market with recognised qualifications, which will give them access to jobs compatible with their aspirations and qualifications. A system of proper vocational education and training represents a good investment, and it is more worthwhile to invest in qualifications and a qualified workforce than to finance the social and economic costs of unemployment. These objectives are complementary and must be seen to be as important as other phases or sectors of education. The ETUCE strongly asserts that vocational education must have an equal value and status with general or academic education. Vocational education and training will need to be diverse in form and content to meet the wide ranging and rapidly changing needs and aspirations of the student population who are either in part-time or full-time employment or who are seeking, or expecting, to enter employment, as well as to meet broader social needs and aspirations. The VET system must meet the needs of all users or potential users and to recognise that the needs of students are at least as relevant as those of employers. Access for the whole age group to

good quality vocational education and training must be guaranteed, leading to a recognised qualification. In order to meet the needs of the full range of present and potential students, VET must be accessible. Social and institutional barriers to VET must be removed, and the system itself must take the initiative in identifying people's needs, and developing forms of VET to meet those needs. We would assert that people have a right to VET appropriate to their needs at different stages of their lives.

5. Also, the principle of broadly based education meeting individuals' needs in a holistic way, and providing opportunities for progress through employment or through further study up to the highest levels, must apply to vocational education, and it is necessary to defend this position against pressures for narrowly job-specific courses for young people. Vocational education faces a particular challenge, in equipping people throughout their lives for change in the labour market to take account of changed and changing working practices, social and technological change, or even the demands of totally new jobs or industries. Nor can global questions like the growing threat to the environment, be ignored. Computerisation has transformed service industries (word processing, personal computers) and manufacturing (robotics) in recent years to an extent which it would be hard to exaggerate. These changes have already had significant effects on the existing workforce and on new entrants, and there is every likelihood that the process of rapid and unpredictable technological change will continue into the foreseeable future.

Initial Vocational Education : Transition to Adulthood

6. The way in which vocational education is organised and included in the whole education system varies from one country to another in Europe, according to their history and cultures and social systems. Access varies between countries according to age and level of education. In general, routes to technical or vocational education have developed in the upper secondary phase. There is a range of pathways to different levels of qualification, which provide a degree of choice and access in educational systems. In some countries vocational education is organised in the post-secondary and higher education sectors. However, certain common trends can be identified, particularly the growing recognition that a number of general subjects (for example languages) have vocational characteristics. Another trend is the pressure in some countries for vocational education to be introduced earlier in the secondary phase, possibly at the expense of other subjects. For the ETUCE, it is through the combination of subjects and forms of teaching (general, technical and vocational) that the education and vocational education of young people takes place. The ETUCE believes that it is desirable for elements of technical and vocational education to be integrated into general education.
7. There is a widespread recognition among educationalists and teachers (and among some employers who have a broader view) that vocational education is best built on the basis of a good general education, and that vocational education itself should share the characteristics of general education in

developing personal and social qualities and skills. These include for example cultural awareness, including inter-cultural awareness, social and life skills and communication skills as well as numeracy, literacy and strictly employment-related elements. Vocational education should also lead to further educational opportunities. This range of general and vocational education for young people will make possible their transition to adulthood. Given the pace of change mentioned earlier, it is clear that any phase of initial education now will only lay the foundations for lifelong learning to enable the individual to cope with and to anticipate rapid and unpredictable changes in working life, including radical changes to the availability and nature of work itself. The ETUCE believes that vocational education forms an integral part of the education system of a society. We expect that the European Union will help to achieve a dynamic and forward looking coherence between the development of secondary and higher education, vocational education and the development of the world of work, and to promote best practice in these fields.

8. Vocational education and training systems in each country must be based on the concept of public service, which should guide the whole of its social system. The length, organisation and content of vocational education are specific to each country, but it is possible to identify four aspects of VET:-
- Vocational education within the education system;
 - Vocational education and training in partnership between employers and education institutions (for example the "dual system");
 - Initial VET leading to higher qualifications;
 - Continuing VET.

Initial vocational education should last for a period equal to three years, at secondary or higher education level, and it should be available free of charge to young people, within the framework of a public education and training system.

A coherent system of financial support must be developed, to support young people receiving post-school VET. Appropriate means of support for mature students, both in employment and outside, must also be devised. In those developments, there is a need for greater equality of treatment for young people and for adults, and in this the European institutions must play a central and creative part, in promoting best practice. This should include the use of sabbatical leave for vocational updating, career shifts and personal development.

9. Vocational education, in both its initial and continuing phases, has a close relationship with both the labour market and the economy. In the initial phase particularly, vocational education must achieve a careful balance between the personal educational needs of individuals (in respect of both their personal and intellectual development and their vocational education) and wider economic objectives, such as the supply of skilled labour. Also, in preparing young people for working lives which will take them into the middle of the 21st

century, vocational education must prepare them to cope with unpredictable and rapid change which is likely to go to the heart of working life, the nature of work, and the fabric of society. It must also instil in them an expectation that they will need - and be able to obtain - regular vocational education opportunities throughout their lives to enable them to manage these fundamental changes. Individuals and the economy and society of the future will require higher levels of qualification, to at least high school certificate or higher level.

10. In each country, companies, professional bodies, employers' and workers' organisations play different parts in the initial vocational education of young people, in cooperation with education institutions : short periods in workplaces, introductory programmes, periods of work-based study, the "dual system", apprenticeship or block release are some of the ways in which education and the workplace interrelate. We believe that in every case, vocational education should include a period in the workplace, and an element allowing for the acquisition of a good knowledge of a social and working environment. We also believe that, whatever their organisational structure, education and training systems must give young people an education and training which is both broad and of high quality, and which will enable them to progress to other routes of education and training, with qualifications that are recognised and have the same status whatever the route by which they have been obtained and the same status for vocational qualification as equivalent general education qualifications.
11. Continuous vocational education opportunities will take many forms both in respect of purposes and methodologies : for example, updating existing skills, re-training for career changes or for re-entry to the labour market after a break, as well as a widening range of media including the use of distance learning and new educational technology where it is appropriate. Some of these tasks are ones in which the existing EU programmes now subsumed in the new LEONARDO programmes have been important agents for exchanges of ideas and promotion of best practice. The new programme should learn the lessons of those it replaces. In addition, some employers are recognising the value of general education for their employees, and unions are negotiating deals in which employees are given assistance towards non-work related education projects - this trend should be encouraged. The value of vocational education as an investment must be recognised, and the European Union institutions as well as governments and employers must develop long-term vocational education and planning and counter-cyclical strategies to ensure that highly qualified personnel are available to meet emerging needs and opportunities. Vocational education is a broader concept than the specific work place - based industrial training of employees, but the two systems must be compatible with one another, and be mutually reinforcing. The ETUCE is aware of the importance placed in education and training for entrepreneurship : opinions among ETUCE organisations on the merits of this are mixed, but where such education and training is developed, it should place emphasis on personal and transferable skills which will be of use in a range of educational

and employment contexts.

Mobility and Transferability

12. One of the key issues in the economic and social development of the European Union in the next century will be the increasing mobility of skilled labour, comparable to the dramatic increase in the mobility of technology, information, finance and businesses across national borders, and the continuing development of a Single Market. It will also be an important test for the European Union as it expands its membership and the number of associated states to include a steadily more diverse range of peoples and economic systems. So far, the internationalisation of economic activity has often operated to the detriment of workers, whose interests employers have tended to marginalise in their decisionmaking. The ETUCE asserts that mobility must be perceived as an individual right, not an obligation imposed on workers by employers. Vocational education should empower workers and enable them to enhance their bargaining power and their capacity to find worthwhile work, as well as supporting and promoting those industries which require highly qualified workers. While recognising the value of the two European directives on the mutual recognition of diplomas, we would argue that much more positive action is needed to give reality to the spirit of these directives, both at the European and the national levels. Mobility, including internal and cross-border mobility, will be enhanced by appropriate vocational education - and this must include language, cultural and social and life skill elements to enable workers moving from one country to another to maximise the benefits of mobility, rather than simply pursuing work at the expense of the general quality of their lives. Equally important, the availability of vocational education for all on a lifelong basis, will prevent the development of polarised societies like that in some regions of the USA, divided between those in well paid, worthwhile work, and a growing proportion who are unemployed or underemployed. Regional planning must include the appropriate educational development as well as economic development, to counter these trends. The European Union's social cohesion measures and regional policies will be of great importance in averting these dangers, and vocational education will be a key element in these strategies.
13. VET must aim to promote mobility, transferability and progression, and this is best achieved through the development of broad general education and training programmes. These must inter-relate to enable people to move on from one level to another, up to and including qualifications in higher education. The programmes should also assist people to transfer from one discipline or field of education to another. The VET system must reflect the dramatic changes which are taking place in society, in employment and in technology. Modular programmes must be developed to promote flexibility and choice within VET, with safeguards against the danger of employed-led pressures to concentrate on a narrow range of occupationally specific modules. A modular approach is not appropriate for all educational purposes, particularly for young people who need a good foundation of general learning.

Qualifications awarded must be generally recognised both within employment and within the education and training system; the public authorities must provide an underpinning of this recognition, and guarantees of quality.

Continuing Vocational Education

14. For many years, vocational education was regarded as a single phase which young people passed through (and completed) before entering employment or as they entered their first job. It was also seen in a number of countries as less prestigious or less valid than academic education, particularly education leading to higher education, so that only the less academic were felt to need vocational education. These ideas are obsolete. Not only is it increasingly recognised that vocational education needs to be a life-long process, and that initial education needs to prepare young people to cope with frequent, unpredictable and often radical change. It is also widely recognised that all young people require an education which equips them for the world of work. Increasingly, educational curricula, at least from the upper secondary phase, are designed with some recognition of the vocational needs of young people. We do not believe that this development is incompatible with a good balanced education, provided it is set in the context of the overall personal and intellectual development of the individual.
15. However, initial vocational education must also take account of the need for continuing education, which we have discussed earlier, and it is essential that governments and public authorities promote the expectation within society as a whole that education, including vocational education, is a life-long process. Governments, educational bodies and employers need to plan on this basis, including the development of programmes and initiatives to meet the diverse needs of adults. The structure of the labour market is changing in many countries, with fewer young people entering it than hitherto, and with consequently greater demands on existing workers. In the sophisticated industrialised societies of Europe, the 21st century must see a shift to what is sometimes called "the learning society". Employers and other social structures must play their part, but it is essential that governments in partnership with the European Union institutions, provide the vision, the stimulus, the coordinating functions and, at least to some extent, the resources to achieve this transformation, including the development of rights to continuing education, and the promotion of forms of sabbatical leave. Vocational education is changing, and it is important that teacher education for vocational teachers develops too, to ensure the relevance of these teachers' professional education and to protect and enhance their professional status.
16. Vocational education and training is too often seen as matters of concern only to those in employment. VET must be available to the unemployed and other economically inactive groups, to meet their needs, combat social exclusion and promote equality of opportunity. Both mainstream programmes and specialist programmes will be needed, for example, to meet the needs of

women, people from ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and the long-term unemployed. Specialist programmes within continuing VET will be particularly important in dealing with social exclusion.

17. There are both advantages and disadvantages to modular forms of provision. For example, while they promote access and enable individuals to assemble programmes precisely to their needs, they may be difficult to build into recognisable qualifications and may enable employers to "pick and choose" between elements of courses which are useful to themselves. The disadvantages must be addressed. However, three useful dimensions to modular provision may be identified:-

- i) "Vertical" - obtaining a qualification by accumulation of modules;
- ii) "Horizontal" - additional skills connected with a qualification that is already recognised;
- iii) "European" - the possibility of gaining a module in another country, in order to complete or improve the qualification.

In any case, young people must be given the chance to make appropriate and coherent choices leading to a well-balanced education. It seems desirable that the development of individual learning programmes for young people should take place within a system which involves teachers and counsellors, to ensure that such programmes are coherent and appropriate to the young peoples' needs and potential. This will require good quality counselling services as well as a coherent and accessible education and training system. There should be a distinction made in the part allocated to modules in education, between initial and continuing VET.

The State and Employers

18. Vocational education is organised in a wide variety of ways across Europe, but we would assert the underlying principle that vocational education is part of public education, in which governments and other public authorities must play a crucial role. This role in the funding and planning of vocational education is essential to ensure equal opportunity and long-term planning. Through public policies, we can establish an institutional framework to meet the needs of young people and promote the development of labour markets through dynamic employment policies and the elimination of unemployment. While many employers are committed to vocational education for their workforce, others are not, or do not have the capacity to support vocational education appropriately, and individual employers are not best placed to conduct long-term national planning. This is particularly true of small and medium sized enterprises, who constitute the majority of employers. Also, vocational education is necessary for a much wider range of the population than employees. In particular, governments must take a leadership role in respect of the vocational education of young people, and in special programmes for unemployed people and re-entrants to the labour market. On the other hand, employers must be involved in appropriate ways in the planning of vocational education, the provision of work experience programmes and practical

elements. Training in enterprises, in the different forms it takes in each country, is an essential element of vocational education and therefore acceptance of young people in the course of their education and training must be a duty for employers. Further, since employers are the direct beneficiaries of good quality VET, their financial support for VET in appropriate ways must be considered. There must be a genuine partnership between governments and public authorities and employers (and it must be recognised that in many areas, public authorities themselves are major employers, who can do much to establish good practice). The trade unions, including teacher unions, also have a key role to play in the planning and delivery of vocational education, as key Social Partners at the national level and European Union.

19. Therefore the policy, planning and executive bodies of the VET system, nationally and at European level, must develop on a tripartite basis (ie. employers, employees and VET providers). Furthermore, teacher representation on these bodies should be guaranteed and the bodies themselves must be democratically accountable at the appropriate level. In particular, teachers must have a major role in the development of the VET curriculum, nationally and locally. A clearer definition of the role and responsibilities of employers in respect of VET must be developed, particularly their need to invest more in VET. Training agreements should be reached by means of collective bargaining between unions and employers at the workplace level. While in some countries of Europe, VET is already recognised as an investment, this is not generally accepted. There is a need to achieve a more general and uniform policy on employers' investment in VET, while recognising and affirming the leadership role of the public sector in planning VET. Education policy and employment policy must be coordinated at the national level.

The Roles of the European Union and the Member States

20. The Maastricht Treaty as we have seen, distinguishes between education (Article 126) and vocational training (127); however, as the preceding comments on underlying themes indicate, the distinction between the two in national education and training systems is becoming less and less clear. On one hand, mainstream secondary and tertiary education programmes are including vocational elements or adjusting traditional curricular to have a focus more oriented to the world of work; on the other hand, many employers are recognising the value of general education as the basis for vocational education, and are encouraging the inclusion of, for example, language, numeracy and inter-personal skills in vocational programmes. In any case, ETUCE cannot accept that any educational activity can be driven exclusively or even mainly by the "economic imperative" : social and personal development are considerations which must also be taken into account.
21. The ETUCE can generally endorse most of the aims of Articles 126 and 127.

The sharing of information, promotion of exchanges, mobility, institutional cooperation, are all welcome, and should enable vocational education to be more firmly based in best practice. However the ETUCE will demand that the concept of the public service, absent from the present text of Maastricht, should be taken into account in any future revision. The ETUCE remains cautious about distance learning (article 126), which is appropriate for certain students under the right conditions, but is not a replacement for the direct teacher-student contact which many people need. The possible development of distance learning, and particularly its effects on teachers' jobs, must be the subject of agreements within the collective bargaining framework. The Treaty rightly emphasises the primary responsibility of the Member States for education and training, but it would be disappointing if national systems were not able to learn from best practice in Europe; in any case, mobility and exchanges will promote the compatibility of national systems, while respecting their integrity and national characteristics. The ETUCE asserts the role of the trade union movement and teachers' unions in particular, to work as Social Partners for the improvement of vocational education in Europe, in order to improve opportunities and the quality of vocational education for all Europe's citizens. An important element in this will be the promotion of the European Dimension, including mobility, mutual recognition of qualifications and enhancement of language skills. The VET system must promote forward-looking programmes which will meet future employment needs, rather than reflecting historical or traditional educational and working patterns. This will mean moving away from any short-term demand-led provisions to a planned, supply-led approach and it is to be hoped that the LEONARDO and SOCRATES programmes will adopt this principle. In this, national and European planning bodies have an important role to play, which would include a research and development function.

Higher Education Aspects

22. Higher education has always been a major provider of vocational qualifications, for example, in fields such as the law, medicine and teaching. With the expansion and diversification of higher education in recent years, this role has increased, until a wide range of professional and other occupations now have their qualifications wholly or partly provided in higher education. At the higher education level as at other levels, it is important that specific knowledge and skills are built on a good general education; and that the resulting qualifications allow for mobility and transferability to a range of occupations and further routes of study. There is in many cases a need for partnership between universities and other higher education institutions and employers, but the public sector ethos underlying higher education courses and qualifications should be maintained. The public sector must retain its leadership of the planning and organisation of VET, to ensure the global coherence of the system and to protect the public service approach. Higher education institutions have an important role in the provision of high-level vocational education, and this role will increase, as both individual levels of

qualification and socio-economic demands for a better-education population increase.

The Professional Education and Status of VET Teachers

23. The professional training of VET teachers needs to take account of the diversity of national VET systems, and of the backgrounds of people entering VET as teachers. Both because of this diversity, and because of the rapid pace of change in VET, teachers will need continuing professional education in-service, and this must be recognised in the initial phase of professional education. Teachers in VET, like all other teachers, will need a mix of vocational/academic qualifications, pedagogic training and appropriate technical or practical experience. Teachers should also be familiar with the labour market and with the needs of young people and other student groups they teach. Teachers engaged in vocational education must retain their links with the world of work in order to protect the relevance and currency of their skills and experience.
24. It is important to seek a general increase in the status of VET teachers in Europe, acknowledging the diversity of systems and the wide variety in the qualifications and experience of practitioners which exist in individual countries. Important criteria are the age range of students, the purposes of training and the location of training. In companies participating in the "dual system", VET is provided by instructors whose role is oriented towards job-specific work. These instructors also should be aware of the need to prepare young people more generally for their role in society and should therefore have appropriate pedagogic skills. In-service professional education and development is a fundamental right for teachers; ETUCE and national teachers' unions must press Governments to fund and develop appropriate programmes. Opportunities for secondments to other fields of employment, to update teachers' knowledge and experience and for exchanges to gain experience of other countries' VET systems should be made available in co-operation with employers.
25. The ETUCE published in November 1994, an important report on Teacher Education in Europe, which asserted the need for teachers in vocational education to have the same status and equivalent professional education to teachers in other sectors. It also proposed that a European teacher education institute or network should be set up, to support and enhance the role and status of teachers. Such an institute or network would be of particular value to the teachers in vocational education, given the diversity of VET systems in Europe and the challenges to vocational teachers' status in some countries.

LEONARDO

26. The ETUCE has welcomed the proposed LEONARDO DA VINCI programme, subject to certain concerns. In particular, it needs to build on and extend the opportunities afforded by the four programmes which it will supersede. There is scope for rationalisation of the administration of the single new programme,

and in improving transparency both within it and with the new SOCRATES programme, but "rationalisation" must not be a pretext for cutting the levels of provision which makes available to individual students and teachers - rather, savings on bureaucracy should be redeployed to increase availability of the programmes. We shall carefully monitor the performance of LEONARDO in this regard. The ETUCE and other organisations had argued for a longer transition period between the existing schemes and LEONARDO, and we believe that particular care and close monitoring will be needed to ensure that the transition process goes smoothly, and that the lessons of the pre-existing schemes are learned. Another concern is the involvement of the teachers' unions as Social Partners in the oversight of the programme : we attach great importance to participation in the consultative committees which has been proposed, and would strongly urge that these committees are set up.

27. We believe that common approaches will need to be developed on crucial issues like:-

- equality of opportunity for women in education, employment and careers;
- meeting the needs of ethnic minorities and fighting racism in education and employment;
- assistance for the unemployed with the skills enter or to re-enter the labour market;
- lifelong learning, where necessary making links between the LEONARDO and SOCRATES programmes.

Given that resources available will always be limited compared to the demands on them, the maximum use must be made of the multiplier effect, providing programmes particularly for key personnel who can then disseminate their knowledge and experience in appropriate ways. Improvement of the quality of member states' systems (LEONARDO strand 1) and support for innovation (strand 2) are of great importance for the future of vocational education in Europe. Our comments on LEONARDO also apply in general terms to SOCRATES, particularly in respect of the need for the involvement of Social Partners. The ETUCE have a very fruitful ongoing dialogue with the Commission, and it is hoped to build on this useful relationship.

Teacher Unions

28. The ETUCE is conscious of the need to continue the discussion on the future of vocational education and training and the role of teachers, in the light of the continually changing nature of this sector. Teachers' unions and trade unions must work to protect and extend access to VET, and to oppose the trend developing among many employers, to pursue narrower and more job-specific training. They must work together to ensure that the important role of VET in building social and economic cohesion, and combatting disadvantage and discrimination, is carried forward. The ETUCE will work at the European level, and advise its national affiliates, in order to pursue these goals.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ETUCE is the representative body of teachers in Europe, with a unique authority and expertise. It must use this position to promote positive policies on VET with other trade union bodies, and particularly the ETUC. The ETUCE must also promote these policies with the European Parliament, the European Council and the Council of Ministers, and other Ministerial Councils (Labour, Economics) with a role to play in VET.
2. The ETUCE says that VET must be recognised as having a social and

personal value which is as important as economic criteria, and must also take account of social, moral and environmental contexts.

3. The ETUCE strongly asserts that vocational education and its teachers must have the same status as general or academic education and its teachers.
4. The ETUCE will promote the equivalence of vocational education with general or academic education, and the need for opportunities for transfer or progression. These opportunities can make appropriate use of modular programmes.
5. The ETUCE will defend the right to VET for all young people, while they are in the education system, implicit in which is the opportunity for all young people to obtain a certificated and recognised vocational qualification, which itself will make possible entry to other education and training, either at once or at later stages of their careers.
6. The ETUCE affirms the role of vocational education in the promotion of its educational policies, as a means of extending the range of the education system, broadening access to qualifications, and as part of the struggle for equal opportunity and against racism and social exclusion.
7. ETUCE will encourage cooperation between schools and society, particularly the world of work, respecting the principles and objectives of a public education service.
8. ETUCE will press for policies of greater access to VET throughout life, on the basis of entitlement, equal opportunities and the promotion of social cohesion, to be incorporated into national education policies.
9. While recognising the principle of subsidiarity, ETUCE will press European institutions to encourage and support national policies towards a greater involvement of teachers and their representative organisations in the planning and delivery of the VET curriculum, and the promotion of best practice, on the basis of Social Partnership.
10. ETUCE and the national teachers' unions will press governments to fund and develop appropriate in-service programmes of professional education and to commit themselves to the principle of continuing professional development for all teachers, including those in VET.
11. ETUCE and its affiliates will use their influence with European institutions, in particular the relevant Councils of Ministers, in respect of national level action, to argue for the raising of teachers' status, especially through improvements to their salaries and conditions of service.
12. ETUCE will press for the new LEONARDO programme to adhere to the

principles set out in this statement, particularly in respect of participation in decisionmaking and implementation by teachers' representatives, and the need for adequate public funding.

13. The ETUCE will press for the promotion of the European Dimension in VET, including particularly language and other skills to facilitate mobility.
14. The ETUCE will give high priority, with its partners in ETUC, to the question of unemployment, and the need to establish rights of access for unemployed people to VET, to make possible their entry or re-entry to the labour market.
15. ETUCE and its member unions will develop more effective exchanges of information and experience, including a better dissemination of information on VET policies. Development of the existing cooperation with CEDEFOP should assist in this process.
16. ETUCE will encourage and assist member unions and other unions through the structure of ETUC to reach agreements on VET with employers, during the course of collective bargaining.
17. The ETUCE will develop the concept of the institute or network for teacher education contained in the report "Teacher Education in Europe", and make provision to ensure that teachers of VET are involved in this process.
18. Without pre-judging the outcome of present discussions within ETUCE on constitution and structures, it is proposed that an appropriate mechanism is used (a working group or committee) to facilitate information exchange between affiliated unions with members in VET, and to offer advice to the Executive Board. Such a mechanism should be set up after consideration at the 1995 General Assembly : It is specifically proposed that a programme of activities including regional seminars and a Colloquium on vocational education and training in Europe should be included in the 1995/6 and 1996/7 Action Programmes, and funding sought from the European Commission or CEDEFOP.
19. These policies are intended to enable the members of ETUCE affiliated unions engaged in VET, to benefit from the European-wide experience of ETUCE, and to participate in policy formation at the European and the national levels.