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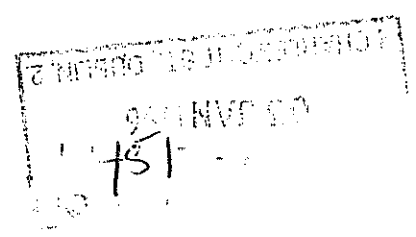
Post-Compulsory Education and Training Policy and Provision in Ireland

Internal Discussion Paper

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October 1992



Section 1 Introduction

1.1 Context for paper

The data and analyses of the connections which exist between poverty and unemployment, or low paid employment, contained in the research work undertaken by the Combat Poverty Agency and by the ESRI in the late 1980's is probably the most important element of this work. These studies indicate that the primary factor which determines the poverty risk of individuals, and their dependents, is their inability to obtain secure and adequately-waged employment (ESRI, 1987, CPA/ICTU, 1990).

The relative success of different segments of the labour force, or prospective labour force participants, in securing employment, and the nature of the employment they secure, is largely determined by the initial and further education and training qualifications they possess. While education and training provision cannot, in the short term at least, have a significant effect on the quantity of employment in the Irish labour market, the distribution of education and training qualifications plays a crucial role in affecting the chances of different labour market participants in finding employment, and in determining the nature of the employment they secure.

Given these realities, it is appropriate that the Combat Poverty Agency is turning its attention to the primary factor which determines the relative chances of different segments of the Irish labour force in accessing and maintaining employment, and thus entering or avoiding poverty.

1.2 Aims and scope of paper

This paper aims to provide an analysis and a critique of the developments in post-compulsory education and training provision which occurred in Ireland in the 1980's and early 1990's. This analysis will examine and evaluate this expansion, in terms of both the economic efficiency and equity arguments which have been mobilised to justify it. It will argue that the bulk of this expansion cannot be justified, either in terms of its economic efficiency or equity objectives. It will further indicate that a fundamental reorganisation of this provision will be required, if the needs of the most disadvantaged groups in the Irish labour market are to be met by such provision, and it will outline some initiatives which will be required to meet these needs.

1.3 Methodology and definitions

This outline and critique of post compulsory education and training provision in Ireland provided in this paper is built upon recent Irish research work and data sources, relating to labour market, education and training issues. While a substantial body of work has been undertaken on such issues in the last decade, many information gaps remain.

The segment of the Irish education and training systems analysed in the paper is the post compulsory education and training provision available in Ireland to the 15-25 age cohort. This definition encompasses the following **full-time** education and training

provision:

Mainstream Senior-Cycle second level education (Leaving Certificate, Senior Certificate provision).

The Vocational Preparation and Training programmes, available within the education system to persons completing the Junior Certificate programme (VPT-1) and to persons completing the Leaving Certificate programme (VPT-2).

The training element of FAS, CERT and TEAGASC provision available to the 15-25 age cohort.

The Third-Level education programmes provided in the State sector by universities, and by technological institutes such as Dublin Institute of Technology, and the Regional Technical Colleges.

The paper does not examine developments in the private sector provision of post second level or third level education. While this expansion has been of some significance, there is simply no good data available at present on the nature and scope of this.

Section 2 Post-Compulsory Education and Training provision in Ireland, a critique

2.1 Introduction

This section will examine and evaluate the expansion in Vocational Education and Training (VET) provision which has developed in Ireland since the early 1980's, and which has been primarily directed towards the 15-25 age cohort. The Irish labour market context within which this expansion occurred in the 1980's and early 1990's is outlined in Appendix 1.

This critique will focus, in turn, on both the economic efficiency and equity rationales which have been offered to justify this expansion.

2.2 Economic efficiency argument for the provision of State supported vocational education and training

A brief summary of the main economic arguments for the provision of vocational education and training is provided below. This draws heavily from Chapter 4, 'The Economics of Training', in the report on 'Industrial Training in Ireland', produced for the Industrial Policy Review Group by Dr Frank Roche and Paul Tansey, in February 1992.

Two main justifications have been developed to justify the argument that the provision of **vocational** education and training fosters economic development. These are:

- * The provision of VET raises productivity, and hence output, exports, and incomes in the economy.
- * Sufficient investment in VET ensures that national economic development is not inhibited by skill-shortages (difficulties in **recruiting** labour with relevant skills) or skill deficiencies in the **workforce**. It also develops the capacity of the workforce in agriculture, industry, and services to adapt to changing product and process technologies. The presence of a pool of highly skilled labour also provides a significant incentive for external investors to locate manufacturing or service facilities in Ireland. Many of these arguments have been used to justify a strategy of 'skill banking' (i.e. the development of a supply of skilled labour which exceeds the immediate or short term needs of the labour market).

National training policy assigns a **subsidiary** role to the **State** in the provision of industrial training. The argument underpinning this is that, in the first instance, individual employers and companies are best placed to identify their own training needs. Market forces will impel these employers to undertake training, if inadequacies in the 'human capital' composition of their workforce are placing them at a competitive disadvantage.

However, if the training investment cannot be 'captured' within the company, employers may be reluctant to invest in the training of their workforce. In this instance 'competitor firms will seek to gain a free ride on those who provide..training by poaching their skilled labour, thus avoiding incurring any training costs themselves' (Roche/Tansey, 1992).

In a context where 'there is a greater investment to poach rather than train, the result can be a **generalised** underprovision of training, thus leading to subsequent skill shortages' (Roche/Tansey, ob cit).

Tansey and Roche identify other factors which may lead to an underprovision of training by companies. These include:

The fact that there very few large enterprises in the Irish population of companies. International research has shown that large firms tend to spend a larger proportion of their total wage bills on training than small firms. Large firms also tend to train a larger proportion of their workforce. The commitment to off the job training for workers and management can be particularly burdensome for small firms, as it deprives them of a significant proportion of their workforces.

The fact that workers in many skilled occupations operate in an international labour market. Changing pay relativities, tax structures, and other factors, can and have led to 'brain drains' occurring in Ireland, whereby these workers leave to obtain the greater career rewards available in other countries.

Another factor which may lead to private sector training underinvestment is the **cyclical** nature of output and employment in some industrial sectors. The Construction industry is an important example. In a boom/slump context, companies are reluctant to undertake long-term training investments.

It is on the basis of the above factors and arguments, that the State's provision of vocational education and training has been justified, in **economic efficiency** terms.

An article on 'educational attainment of the labour force' (OECD, 1989) outlines some mediating factors that occur between education and training systems, and labour market requirements.

It states that 'there is not always a clear correspondence between educational proficiency and vocational aptitude. Educational attainment measures typically do not keep pace with changes in the skills and qualifications required at the workplace'. Further, 'formal educational attainment measures neglect the skills and competencies which are acquired in the course of employment through informal education and training, and other forms of further education and training which do not lead to recognised credentials'.

With these qualifications, 'overall, the evidence accumulated over the past two decades **does** underline the importance of educational attainment as a variable influencing economic performance. However, the evidence is not definitive about the precise nature of the relationship between educational attainment and labour productivity. The relationship seems to depend in part on the real productivity-enhancing value of schooling; but it depends also on education acting in other ways through screening, sorting and socialisation, as a **mechanism for the allocation of labour**'.

2.2 Equity argument for the provision of State supported vocational education and training

The equity dimension of VET relates to its function as a mechanism for the allocation of labour. The provision of VET can be justified in equity terms where it enables persons seeking employment, whether these be first time jobseekers, unemployed persons, women entering/reentering the labour force, or returning emigrants, to compete better for available labour market opportunities, in either the Irish or international labour markets. Equity arguments can also be advanced for the provision of VET which enables disadvantaged **workers** enhance their relative position in the workforce.

An examination of international empirical evidence on the relationship between educational qualification levels and **unemployment**, concludes that:

The largest difference in (unemployment) experience is usually found between the least educated and everyone else. Importantly, this pattern persists across countries with different kinds of education and training systems, and with different proportions of persons in the various (education/training) attainment categories. This would imply that **any new education and training interventions are likely to have their largest impact on reducing unemployment if they are targeted on increasing attainment levels of the least educated, rather than on trying to raise attainment levels overall**' (OECD, 1989).

In the Irish context the 'least educated' labour market participants would include early school leavers. But it would go far beyond this group. Large segments of unemployed jobseekers, especially the older long term unemployed, possess low, or no formal educational qualifications. This comment may also apply, at least to some extent, to older women wishing to enter/reenter employment.

The OECD review of international experience suggests that 'employers are becoming more selective with respect to at least some levels of educational attainment when they make their hiring decisions. This may be due merely to employers screening applicants from a more qualified labour pool on the basis of their educational attainment. In that case, **even if *bona fide* skills and qualifications requirements did not change, the least educated would be worse off by virtue of the fact that their place in the hiring queue would be pushed back as more people acquired higher levels of education.**

2.3 The expansion of the Irish VET system in the 1980's, a critique on economic efficiency grounds

The European Social Fund has provided financial support for most of the expansion of post-compulsory Vocational Education and Training provision in Ireland in the 1980's. Appendix 2 provides an outline of current and planned ESF-supported VET provision, in the 1989-1993 Operational Programme.

This Appendix clearly indicates that the bulk of ESF and Irish Government financial support for post-compulsory VET programmes should be assessed, at least primarily, on **economic efficiency** grounds. The programmes provided by the post Second Level and Third Level education sectors (Vocational Preparation and Training, Middle Level Technician, Higher Technical and Business Skills, and Advanced Technical programmes) are predominantly, or entirely, aimed at **young persons who possess at least Leaving Certificate** entry level qualifications. In terms both of participant numbers, and of planned expenditures, these programmes in themselves are of far greater significance than all of the other vocational education and training programmes.

(a) 'Economic' VET programmes have been aimed predominantly at workforce entrants rather than at the workforce as a whole

The first and most important criticism that can be made of such provision is that it is fundamentally misdirected, if it is to be justified primarily on grounds of economic efficiency. The main economic argument for the provision of VET is its assumed **productivity** payoff. However, the vast bulk of this segment of VET is aimed at potential workforce entrants.

The number of second and third level graduates stating that they were **employed in Ireland** a year after graduation, has never exceeded 50,000 in recent years. This number represents less than 5% of the Irish workforce. Even assuming that a far larger number of persons leaving Second and Third Level education would have obtained employment experience at some point in the year since graduating, than are captured in these 'snapshot' surveys, their proportion of the workforce as a whole would **not** increase dramatically. Therefore, this massive expenditure can, at best, improve the productivity of 5-8% of the Irish workforce.

(b) There is a lack of evidence of a significant real increase in the qualifications needed in occupations secured by second and third level graduates

However, even the argument that the potential productivity of 5-8% of the Irish workforce is increased due to this VET input can be challenged.

If Irish employers faced difficulties in securing adequately-qualified recruits for **entry-level occupations**, it would be expected that a problem of **skill-shortages** would manifest itself. In this situation employers would have unfilled vacancies in particular entry-level occupations. To the extent that they sought to solve these difficulties in

labour supply terms, employers could:

Attempt to recruit these workers in an international labour market

Pay a wage premium, to attempt to obtain the scarce labour available.

Therefore, rising entry-level wages, and evidence of unfilled vacancies, would indicate the existence of skill shortages in the Irish labour market.

In 1991, Lansdowne Market Research undertook a national survey of employers in Ireland, relating to skill shortages. This large-scale (representative sample of 1,000 companies) survey covered companies in industry, and services, with the exception of the public sector, and the hotel/catering/tourism sector. Some of the key findings identified by Roger Fox in the report of this survey (FAS, 1991) were:

- * Vacancies amounted to 1.1% of total employment, in the companies surveyed. The author states that 'it would be fair to conclude that these vacancy levels are low, and largely reflect what might be thought to be normal frictional labour turnover'.
- * In selected occupations where it was considered likely that skill shortages would occur, the number of vacancies identified by employers was very small. The highest vacancy rate, for fitters, represented 2% of total employment in this occupation in the companies surveyed. In general, difficult to fill vacancies accounted for 0.41% of total employment in all the companies surveyed.

This study, therefore, provided no evidence of a significant skill-shortages problem, in the Irish labour market.

(c) Emigration

The ESF-supported 'economic' Vocational Education and Training programmes are overwhelmingly directed at young labour market entrants, as is apparent from Appendix 2. It is planned to direct a significant element of this investment, both in terms of the scale of expenditures, and in terms of the scale of numbers of participants, towards Third Level education provision in Ireland in the 1989/93 period.

One further criticism that can be levied at this provision, in an Irish labour market context, is that it takes no account of emigration.

The Irish labour market is probably the most 'open' of any EC member state. The key data from an analysis of the impact of emigration in the 1980's on graduate inflows onto the labour market (FAS, 1990) is reproduced below, in Table 2.1

Table 2.1 Trends in domestic and overseas employment amongst Irish Third Level graduates, 1982-1988
Numbers

Employed Graduates	1982	1984	1986	1988
Ireland	4,665	5,860	6,516	6,944
Overseas	544	1,111	1,912	3,259
Total	5,209	6,971	8,428	10,203

Source: FAS, 1990

This Table indicates that the numbers of graduates who secured employment in both Ireland and international labour markets rose steadily throughout the 1980's. However, of greatest significance has been the sharp rise in the numbers of such graduates obtaining employment outside Ireland.

This increase in graduate emigration resulted both from a tightening domestic labour market (push factors) and the availability in the mid to late 1980's of lucrative employment opportunities in other countries for Irish graduates (pull factors).

In migrating abroad, these graduates may have secured a higher financial return on their third level education qualifications and the personal investment they contributed, in both direct cost and opportunity cost terms, to secure these qualifications. However, the bulk of the real cost of Third Level education is, and has been, borne both by the Irish State and by the EC, in relation to the graduate programmes supported through its ESF contributions.

In economic terms, through 'migrating abroad...graduates are depriving the (Irish) state of a financial return on its investment in their education. Because they are located abroad, they make no contribution to the stream of Irish tax revenues, now or in the future' (FAS, 1990).

Not only does the Irish Government not benefit from such revenues, but the Irish economy is deprived of the productivity benefits that accrue from the work performances of these graduates. These benefits, instead, are directly captured by the companies employing them abroad, and, at a macro level, by the economies in which their employer companies are located.

Current medium term economic forecasts envisage a rising level of emigration in the latter part of the 1990's, as economic conditions improve in the UK, US, and the major EC countries. In such a context it is extremely likely that many of the entrants to ESF-supported Third Level programmes in the early 1990's will seek, and obtain, employment abroad, on or soon after graduating. In this case, as in the mid-1980's, the economic benefits from the State's and the ESF's provision for these emigrant graduates, will be obtained by companies and economies outside Ireland.

(d) Conclusion, economic efficiency argument for expansion of VET in Ireland

The above evidence casts considerable doubts on the effectiveness of the expansion in post-compulsory education and training provision in Ireland since the early 1980's, in terms of its economic efficiency. It is not this author's thesis that none of this provision can be justified in these terms. Rather, the contention is that this investment has been relatively ineffective because:

It has been targeted predominantly at potential workforce entrants, rather than at the workforce as a whole

It has been developed with little analysis or understanding of the volume of entry level occupations in the Irish labour market and of the changing skill requirements in these occupations. No coherent labour market demand analysis underpins most of this provision. The only provider which has undertaken such labour market analysis has been FAS, and its programmes for school leavers and unemployed young people are targeted, in the main, at relatively less advantaged cohorts of such leavers. The VPT, and Third-Level provision is of longer duration and more expensive, in general, than FAS provision. Yet, no explicit labour market demand justification is available for this provision.

There is a strong possibility, judging from emigration trends in the 1980's, that much of the Irish Government and ESF's human capital investment in graduate level programmes will not be retained within the Irish economy and labour market, when the expected economic upturn occurs in the UK, US, and Continental Europe economies.

2.4 The expansion of the Irish VET system in the 1980's, a critique on equity grounds

If this expansion of post-compulsory Vocational Education and Training has been relatively ineffective in economic terms, has it been more successful, in terms of its labour market equity effect? It will be contended that it has not, and that the result of this expansion has been to increase inequities in the Irish labour market. The prime measures of the equity effectiveness of Vocational Education and Training provision, in a context in which the number of available jobs is far less than the number of jobseekers, and where employers use jobseeker qualifications as a primary screening device in recruitment, are:

The extent, in terms of its scale and nature, to which this provision is targeted towards the most disadvantaged labour market groups.

The extent to which this provision enables disadvantaged labour market groups compete better for available employment. In this context, the worth, in labour market terms, of the exit qualifications delivered by Vocational Education and Training programmes to disadvantaged labour market participants is of major importance.

(a) Target groups for post-compulsory Vocational Education and Training provision

State and ESF-supported post compulsory Vocational Education and Training provision is not well-targeted, in equity terms. The vast majority of such provision is aimed at young labour market entrants, in the 15-25 age category. Yet, a large majority of unemployed people in Ireland are aged over 25, as are an even greater majority of long term unemployed people.

The long term unemployed, and especially the older long term unemployed, are by far the most disadvantaged group of jobseekers in the Irish labour market. Older long term unemployed people tend to possess few, or no, formal educational qualifications. In addition, the option of emigrating to seek employment is not a realistic one for most of them, given social and family commitments, and given the likelihood that they would face severe difficulties in accessing employment, even in external labour markets which were more buoyant, in general terms. Employers, whether in Ireland or abroad, are very reluctant to hire older long term unemployed jobseekers. This reluctance is understandable in a labour market context where they have access to a ready supply of well educated young people, who will be prepared to take up jobs at entry wage levels which would be far below those required by older unemployed people, with family commitments.

The Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, and the FAS Alternance programme, are the only vocational **education or training** programmes available to older long term unemployed people. These do not compare in volume, either to the scale of the older long term unemployed population towards whom they are directed, or to the far greater scale of provision which is available to young labour market entrants. While virtually all young labour market entrants can hope to undertake at least one post-compulsory Vocational Education/Training programme, the combined capacity of VTOS and of Alternance is sufficient to offer such opportunities to only a small proportion of the older long term unemployed.

The other group of disadvantaged potential labour market participant who are poorly catered for in State-provided Vocational Education and Training provision are **women aged over 25 who wish to enter or re-enter the workforce**. These are not catered for at all in 'mainstream' post-compulsory vocational education programmes. The FAS-provided 'Return to Work for Women' course is the only mainstream **vocational training** programme which is accessible to these women. The requirement that persons seeking access to other mainstream vocational training programmes be signing on the **Live Register** effectively ~~debars~~, for example, lone mothers seeking to return to work who receive the Lone Parents Allowance.

The only disadvantaged labour market group which is well-catered for, in volume terms, by post-compulsory VET provision, are early school leavers. Through the 'Social Guarantee', most persons completing second level education with few or no qualifications are offered a training place on the Youthreach programme.

The majority of State and ESF supported VET provision, however, in terms of programme expenditure and participant numbers, is geared towards young persons possessing at least Leaving Certificate entry qualifications. These are the most **advantaged** categories of jobseeker in the Irish labour market.

(b) The extent to which post-compulsory VET reduces labour market inequities, through 'adding-value' to the entry qualifications of programme participants

The fact that Leaving Certificate holders constitute the majority of participants on State/ESF supported VET provision is a strong indication, in itself, that such provision widens labour market inequalities.

However, it is this author's view that the differential **nature** of the VET programmes accessed by Leaving Certificate participants, compared to those available to more disadvantaged labour market groups, compounds these inequities.

A recent ESRI study (ESRI, 1991) provides some evidence to support this view. It should be noted that this study is based on a longitudinal follow up survey of 1982 second level school leavers, in 1987, five years after they entered the labour market. The major expansion in State/ESF funded VET which occurred in the education sector in the latter part of the 1980's (the VPT programme, the expansion of Third-Level programmes), and which has been almost entirely directed towards entrants possessing at least Leaving Certificate qualifications, lies outside the scope of the study. In addition, it does not examine or evaluate the nature and adequacy of VET provision for persons aged over 25. With these qualifications, some key study results are presented below:

In examining the extent to which the 1982 school leavers had participated in further education/training programmes, by May 1983, almost a year after leaving school, the ESRI researchers found that 'there is..a very pronounced relationship between original education level and total education/training participation. Participation increases consistently from 15% (of the 'no qualifications' leavers) to over 35% (of the Intermediate Certificate leavers) and again to over 60% (of Leaving Certificate leavers)'. They thus concluded that the higher the initial level of education (of the survey population), the greater the subsequent probability was of them receiving further education and training.

This picture of the relative participation of this cohort of school leavers with different qualification levels in post-compulsory VET did not change substantially in the subsequent four years. In reviewing the evidence of the subsequent VET inputs obtained by different qualification cohorts in 1987, five years after graduation, the authors state that:

'It appears...as if people in general either take additional courses within the first or second year of leaving school or not at all, although at the highest level there is a **strong tendency to 'accumulate' courses**. In relative terms, the most poorly qualified are more likely than others to delay taking up courses. Continuity in, or persistence with the 'habit of education' from the school to the post-school environment appears to depend highly on initial success'.

The ESRI study authors identified some key characteristics in the post compulsory Irish education and training systems. These are listed below:

A hierarchical or progressive system exists within the post-second level and third level education systems. Thus, 'successful certification, or completion of one level of study, is necessary to go on to another'.

The declining significance, in numerical terms, of the traditional apprenticeship system.

The 'lack of publicly validated and portable certifications/qualifications for the non-apprenticeship AnCO/FAS training programmes.

The fact that qualifications 'cannot generally be acquired on a part-time, cumulative credit, basis,...nor is 'return' or 'second chance' education a feature of the system.

It should be noted that since this ESRI study has been published, FAS have entered into a certification arrangement with the City and Guilds of London Institute, whereby joint FAS/CGLI certification will be provided for all FAS skill-training programmes. However, the issue identified by the ESRI study remains valid, as there is still no structural link between the FAS/CGLI certification system, and the entry certificates demanded for access into post-Second Level or Third Level programmes.

This lack will not necessarily be remedied by the recently-established National Council for Vocational Awards. The NCVA has been given the brief of providing certification for VPT programmes, especially post-leaving certificate ones. However, the mandate of the NCVA does **not** extend to **vocational training provision**, whether provided by FAS, CERT, or Teagasc.

The ESRI study identifies, in this regard, a crucial equity issue for VET provision directed towards school leavers. It notes that 'the probability of getting further (portable) qualifications from a post-school course depended crucially on the level of one's initial certification; **the lower the initial level the lower the probability of such further certification**'. The main reason for this variation is not because of a disproportionate failure rate among the initially poorly educated **but rather the absence of marketable or portable qualifications for a high proportion of the latter's courses**' (i.e. courses, such as Youthreach predominantly aimed at early school leavers).

A schematic representation of the VET qualifications structure, by programme type, and dominant client category, is provided in Appendix 3. This Appendix shows that the programmes accessed by persons with higher entry-level qualifications tend, in general, to deliver qualifications which are of greater value, both in competing for jobs in the labour market, and in providing 'passports' to higher levels of education and training. Conversely, the provision directed towards less advantaged labour market actors tends to deliver lower level qualifications, or no qualifications. These qualifications do not carry great worth, in labour market terms, and they are of limited usefulness in accessing higher level education and training programmes.

The above evidence, then, leads to the conclusion that, both in terms of the targeting of VET provision, in its nature and quality, and in the worth of the exit certificates it provides, the expansion of post-compulsory VET in the 1980's and early 1990's has **widened** rather than narrowed labour market inequalities.

The only VET provider agency that has attempted to address provision of any significant scale towards more disadvantaged labour market actors has been FAS. However, it has adopted a strategy of segmenting its provision, and there are insufficient links developed between its equity and economic programmes.

The provision supplied by the education system (with the exception of Youthreach and the VTOS programme) has not been structured to cater for disadvantaged labour market groups. The lack of integration of the education and training VET qualification structures means that the possibility of progressing through the post-compulsory VET system to higher qualification levels is not open to disadvantaged labour market participants, if they do not possess the relevant 'base-level' entry education qualification—a good Leaving Certificate.

Section 3 Policy Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 Towards increasing the economic efficiency and equity of post-compulsory VET provision in Ireland

(a) Economic efficiency objective

It is the author's view that the population for that element of post-compulsory VET which has a wholly or predominantly economic efficiency rationale should be the Irish workforce. While there is some evidence that workforce entrants may be overqualified for the jobs they secure in Ireland (see the earlier discussion on 'qualifications inflation'), there is also evidence that the qualifications structure of the Irish workforce as a whole is rather low, at least compared to other EC countries. No good trend data is available on the scale and nature of Irish employers expenditure on the education and training of their workforces. However, Roger Fox's analysis of employers' training investments does not reveal an especially high level of such activity, either in terms of the volume of training provided, or of its quality. Indeed, one of the possible results of increased State-provided VET for workforce entrants may have been to reduce the incentive for employers to finance and provide the training for their workers which they would otherwise have been compelled to do.

The State and the ESF should become involved in the financing and/or provision of VET for the Irish workforce to the extent that skill-shortages among workforce entrants, and skill-deficiencies in the workforce, impede national economic growth.

Francis Green and David Ashton, (*Work, Employment and Society*, June 1992) argue that 'the objective of training policy should be..to raise the level and broaden the range of skills actually used in the economy'. They state that 'the skills that employers 'need' are determined by their strategic choices, given their financial and technological environment, and given the existing supply of skills'. For them, 'the education and training policy of the State..determines the base levels from which employers operate'. To establish the high skill context in the workforce which would provide a necessary condition (though, on its own, not a sufficient one) for economic growth, the following actions would be required of the State, in Green and Ashton's view:

Upgrade the minimum levels of competence among those entering the labour market

In tandem with this, develop training policies directed at the workforce. To be successful, such training policies should be combined with an industrial policy aimed at 'creating winners' in the world market place. Winners operating in high value added markets would provide the more highly skilled jobs.

The economic efficiency-based VET programmes that would be devised to implement these objectives would be very different to the 'economic' VET programmes currently provided in Ireland.

- * They would be explicitly linked to State economic development policies. Such policies should indicate the sectors of agriculture, industry, and public/private services, which would be targeted as the engine of Irish economic development. In the Irish context, companies in such sectors would operate, or should be capable of operating, in a competitive, internationally-trading environment.
- * The 'economic efficiency' component of State VET provision would aim to ensure that the potential productivity of the workforce, and workers entering employment in these industries, is maximised.
- * The balance of provision would be geared at workers, rather than at workforce entrants. The focusing of economic VET provision and investment towards workers would have the added advantage of being more likely to be captured within the Irish economy than that directed towards workforce entrants, especially graduates, who have a high propensity to emigrate.
- * It would probably be much more limited, in volume terms, than current provision. However, it is likely to be more resource intensive, and would probably involve a higher per capita trainee cost.
- * The most important performance criterion to be applied to this provision would not be 'placement'. Rather, it would be the extent to which a net national economic return was obtained from State investments in education and training, in terms of the improved productivity and output performances of these industries.
- * To implement and monitor such State-provided, or supported, VET provision, it would be necessary to gather and analyse, on a continuing basis, high-quality and accurate information on the volume and nature of skill-use and skill-deficiencies of the workers in these industries, and of the skill-shortages experienced within these industries.
- * The development and operation of such a VET programme would require the cooperation of social partners in companies in these industries. It should also involve a financial commitment by such employers, as the benefits of such provision will flow, both to the companies involved, and also to the national economy.

(b) Equity objective:

The bulk of VET provision, directed towards labour market entrants and unemployed people, can only be justified in equity terms.

An explicitly equity-based VET policy for these client groups would have the following key objectives

- * To enable the **most disadvantaged** categories of unemployed people, first time jobseekers, women entering/re-entering the labour market, returned emigrants, **compete better for available employment in the Irish labour market, and/or to secure further education/training qualifications that would improve their employment chances.**
- * To enable the **most disadvantaged** categories of unemployed people, first time jobseekers, women entering/re-entering the labour market, returned emigrants, gain access to 'alternative' work opportunities, whether these lead to paid or voluntary employment (e.g. Social Employment Scheme provision, opportunities in the voluntary/community sectors). Indeed, there is a strong case to be made for directing **all** State employment programmes towards this group, including employment subsidy schemes.
- * To enable the **most disadvantaged** categories of unemployed people, first time jobseekers, women entering/re-entering the labour market, returned emigrants, acquire or develop skills/qualifications that would be of benefit to them in their personal lives. Such provision would not require any labour market focus or justification. This would accord with their rights, as citizens, to participate actively in Irish society.

If these objectives were implemented, post-compulsory VET provision would differ from that currently prevailing in the following respects:

- * A large majority of participants on programmes directed towards unemployed people, and labour market entrants, would come from the most disadvantaged labour market categories. The relative share of disadvantaged groups on programmes would depend on the numbers in a disadvantaged category, and on the severity of their labour market disadvantage. Producing evidence of proper programme targeting towards disadvantaged labour market clients would become a funding and monitoring condition for programmes.
- * Programmes aimed at enhancing the competitive position, in terms of employment, of disadvantaged participants, would gauge their success in net placement terms. The extent to which participants succeeded in progressing to higher levels of education and training would also be an important performance measure for such VET provision.
- * The entry requirements, and relationships between different levels of VET, would be structured to enable, rather than inhibit, access to such provision by disadvantaged labour market actors, with poor/no initial formal education/training qualifications. The development of links between all levels of vocational education and vocational training qualification structures, would thus become a policy priority.

- * Such equity-based VET provision would be developed, in terms of its curriculum and nature of delivery with reference to the needs of unemployed **adults**, rather than unemployed young people. The disadvantaged groups towards whom such provision would be directed would be closely involved in formulating its content and mode of delivery. They would be the **subjects** rather than the **objects** of such provision. This would require the development of quite different competencies among the trainers/educators who would deliver such provision. Their role would change from being one of teacher/trainer, to one of learning facilitator.

- * The Irish Government would seek to influence ESF funding criteria to ensure that equity objectives took priority for its VET supports for unemployed people, and labour market entrants. It would also seek to ensure that the monitoring/evaluation mechanisms applied to provision enabled, rather than inhibited, the direction of appropriate provision to the most disadvantaged actors in the **Irish** labour market. However, its provision of 'equity-based' VET would not be determined solely or primarily by the availability of such ESF supports.

Appendix 1-The Irish labour market in the 1980's.

A1.1 Introduction

This paper cannot provide an adequate analysis of the current, or historical, functioning of the Irish labour market because much of the information needed to do this is not available. The most crucial information gap relates to the nature and composition of vacancies, and on the recruitment criteria and strategies used by employers in Ireland to fill these vacancies. Incredibly, despite the huge expansion of vocational education and training provision which has occurred in Ireland, no comprehensive data on these issues has been gathered by any agency in Ireland.

While such an analysis, therefore, cannot be provided, the author would wish to emphasise the point that the links between education/training and employment need to be understood in a dynamic context. The nature of employment/unemployment outcomes for both the Irish labour market as a whole, and for individual jobseekers, is a function of the **ongoing interaction between labour demand and supply in Ireland**. Employer recruitment requirements, and recruitment practices for individual vacancies, therefore, are not fixed. Rather their criteria and practices are governed by the nature of the labour market demand/supply balance. To put it in simple terms, employers will seek and obtain higher qualified recruits for vacancies in a context of labour oversupply, than they do and would in a situation where they face severe competition for available recruits.

A2.2 Demographic and labour market trends in Ireland in the 1980's

(a) Employment 1981-90

The numbers of persons at work in Ireland in the 1980's has not changed especially dramatically. In 1981, there were 1.151 million persons in the Irish workforce. This number declined to 1.081 million by April 1986, and rose slowly to a level of 1.126 million by April 1990. These figures indicate that there were 25,000 fewer persons at work in Ireland in 1990, compared to 1981. They also show that the relatively modest reduction in the **overall employment** level throughout the 1980's was not the primary factor causing the huge increases in **unemployment** which occurred in this decade. The **rise in unemployment**, then, has been due more to labour supply than to labour demand factors.

Of greater relative significance in the total numbers at work, have been changes in the composition of the workforce in the 1980's. The Table below provides a summary indication of changes in the age/sex composition of the workforce, in the 1981-1990 period.

Table A1.1 Numbers at work in Ireland 1981 and 1990

By Age and Sex

Numbers in Thousands

Age Group	Male		Female	
	1981	1990	1981	1990
15-24	174.5	128.6	141.7	108.0
25-44	367.9	385.4	122.0	189.5
45-64	233.2	214.5	60.9	67.3
65 or over	39.9	26.1	10.7	6.7
Total	815.5	754.6	335.3	371.5
Total at Work	1981	1,150,800		
	1990	1,126,100		

Sources 1981 Census of Population, 1990 Labour Force Survey

This Table indicates that the number of female workers rose during this decade, whereas the number of males at work fell. The largest relative rise in employment was recorded by females aged between 25 and 44. In the 15-24 age category, the numbers of both male and female workers fell.

(b) Unemployment-Stock

Two measures of the levels of unemployment are available in Ireland. These are the Live Register figures, which detail the numbers of people who claim Unemployment Assistance and Unemployment Benefit. The other measure is the Labour Force Survey figures. While these are not totally comparable, they provide a useful illustration of trends in the stock of unemployment in Ireland.

Table A1.2 Numbers unemployed in Ireland 1981, 1986, 1991

By Age, Live Register Data

Not Seasonally Adjusted

Age	Oct. 1981	Oct. 1986	Oct. 1991
Under 25	35,369	70,711	72,341
25 and over	92,987	160,449	183,267
Total	128,356	231,160	255,608

This Table indicates that the numbers on the Live Register almost doubled in the 1981-1991 period. The greatest increase in the Live Register stock was recorded by the over 25 agegroup, and the numbers of over 25's on the Live Register rose continuously throughout the period. While the numbers of under 25's on the Live Register in 1986 was almost double that in 1981, the November 1991 figure for under 25's was not much greater than the October 1986 figure.

Labour Force Survey data

Table A1.3 Numbers unemployed in Ireland 1981, 1986, 1991

By Age, Labour Force Survey Data

Age	Apr. 1981	Apr. 1986	Apr. 1991
Under 25			71,500
25 and over			136,900
Total			208,400

(c) Labour Market Entrants

Second-Level School Leavers

Persons leaving Second Level, post Second Level, or Third Level education or training programmes in any year constitute only part of the annual labour market inflow in Ireland. Good data is not available, however, on the numbers and composition of other labour market inflows, notably that of returning emigrants, and of women re-entering the labour force. Inflows from these sources are more dynamically related to the state of labour demand, than are inflows onto the labour market from Second and Third Level education and training.

In Table A1.4, below, information is provided on the numbers of labour market entrants from Second Level education, at various points throughout the 1980's, as captured in the School Leaver Survey data series.

Table A1.4 Numbers of labour market entrants from Second Level Education, by Labour Market status, in May 1980, 1986, 1991

	Year of Survey*		
	1980	1986	1991
Labour Market Status			
Employed	43,300	28,200	24,600
Unemployed/First Time Jobseeker	4,800	14,100	11,600
In Labour Force	48,100	42,300	36,200
Student	12,900	17,900	24,100
Emigrated	1,400	2,600	5,400
Unavailable for work	1,600	1,000	1,300
Total	64,000	63,800	67,000

Source: Economic Status of School Leavers 1979, 1985, 1990

*Note: The above table presents information on the labour market status of school leavers in the May/June of the year after they left school.

The main points to note from the above Table are the following:

The number of students leaving second level education remained at a relatively stable level in these years, and rose slightly in 1990.

There has been a sharp and continuing reduction in the numbers of second level leavers entering employment throughout the decade.

There has been a corresponding increase in the numbers of second level leavers continuing in further and higher education.

The far larger numbers of 1991 school leavers who emigrated, compared to the 1980 or 1986 cohorts.

The much larger numbers of young unemployed school leavers in 1986 or 1991, compared to 1980.

Table A1.5 provides further information on the state of the youth labour market for school leavers. It indicates the numbers of school leavers who secured employment in Ireland, at various levels of qualification, in 1980, 1986 and 1991.

Table A1.5 School Leavers in employment, one year after leaving School, 1980, 1986, 1991, by exit qualification level

Exit Qualification Level	1980	1986	1991
No qualifications	3,300	1,300	1,300
Group/Inter Cert.	16,100	7,400	5,800
Leaving Cert.	23,200	16,700	15,600
Total at work	42,600	25,400	22,700

The main point to be noted from the above Table is the reduction in the numbers of school leavers, at every qualification level, who secured employment in the Irish labour market in the year after leaving school. The large increase in the numbers of school leavers postponing entry into the labour market and pursuing higher second level, and third level qualifications has contributed largely to this. A further point of particular note is the fact that the decline in the numbers of school leavers securing employment has been of greatest significance, in absolute terms, for the Inter/Group cohort. In plainer terms, there are fewer and fewer jobs available for persons entering the Irish labour market with no qualifications, or with Group/Inter Certificate level qualifications.

By recasting the School Leaver Survey data, it is possible to obtain a picture of the qualification levels of school leavers who secured various types of employment in these years. This data is provided in Table A1.6, below.

Table A1.6 Qualifications of school leaver entrants into different occupational categories, 1980, 1986, 1991

Qualification Level	Occupational Category		
	1980	1986	1991
Managerial/Professional Occupations			
	%	%	%
No Qualifications	1.2	1.2	0.0
Group/Inter Cert.	13.9	3.7	4.7
Leaving Cert.	84.9	95.1	95.3
Numbers	3,826	2,213	1,719
Clerical Occupations			
No Qualifications	1.1	0.5	1.5
Group/Inter Cert.	16.8	5.8	11.2
Leaving Cert.	82.1	93.7	87.3
Numbers	15,619	6,220	5,469
Service Occupations			
No Qualifications	11.4	5.0	5.0
Group/Inter Cert.	50.8	34.2	23.5
Leaving Cert.	37.8	60.8	71.6
Numbers	7,485	6,266	6,255

Agricultural Occupations

No Qualifications	18.0	14.7	21.6
Group/Inter Cert.	52.6	59.9	40.6
Leaving Cert.	29.4	25.5	37.8
Numbers	1,500	1,500	1,072

Skilled/Semiskilled Occupations

No Qualifications	13.0	10.8	7.2
Group/Inter Cert.	59.8	41.5	40.2
Leaving Cert.	27.2	47.7	52.7
Numbers	12,271	9,137	7,525

Other Manual Occupations

No Qualifications	21.7	27.9	20.5
Group/Inter Cert.	51.8	25.7	25.9
Leaving Cert.	26.5	46.4	53.5
Numbers	1,399	432	671

Source: As above. Data has been recomputed. Figures should be treated as approximate, due to rounding errors.

The main points to be drawn from the above Table are:

The decline in the overall numbers of school leavers securing employment in the period.

The extremely steep decline in the numbers of school leavers entering what were, in 1979, large-volume occupational categories (Clerical occupations, skilled and semiskilled manual occupations).

The decline in the numbers of school leavers entering 'higher level' occupational categories.

The relative stability of the numbers of school leavers entering into Service occupations

The change in the qualifications structure of entrants into Service and Skilled/Semiskilled manual occupations. Whereas Leaving Certificate entrants constituted a minority of such entrants in 1979, they comprised the majority in both categories by 1991. In 1991, these were the largest-volume occupational categories for school leavers.

It should be noted that the above Table does **not** provide a full picture of the dynamics of the youth employment market. It does not take account of the fact that an increasing number of school leavers in these years did not enter the labour market, but continued on into higher education. Nor does it provide a picture of the number and type of vacancies secured by **graduate** and other labour market entrants in these years.

With all of this, it **does** provide an indication of the increasing pressures in these years in the youth employment market. Jobs in specific occupational categories which were available to leavers in 1979 with no or Group/Intermediate Certificate qualifications, were being increasingly taken up by Leaving Certificate entrants. This does not provide definitive proof that a 'qualifications inflation' factor was operating in the youth employment market in these years, as the nature of the skill requirements of these entry-level occupations may have changed. However, it is extremely unlikely that the skill changes in these categories would have been of a sufficient magnitude to warrant the drastic shifts in the entry composition recorded above, especially in relation to Service and Skilled/Semiskilled manual occupations.

Graduates from Third Level programmes

However, leavers from the second level education system do not comprise the only inflow into the Irish labour market. Table 2.7 below provides some information on the labour market status of persons entering the labour market after completing Third level education, in these years. It should be noted that this utilises a different data source. It is not possible simply to add the school leaver survey total to the graduate total to derive an overall inflow from the second level and third level systems in any given year, as the First Destination reports contain information only on persons **completing** Third Level education, and therefore exclude dropouts. With this caveat, the data is presented below.

Table A1.7 Graduate entrants into the labour market 1982, 1986, 1990, by Labour Market status

	1982 %	1986 %	1990 %
Labour Market Status			
In Employment-Ireland	43.8	44.3	43.6
Unemployed	10.9	6.4	6.0
Work Experience Schemes	1.2	3.7	1.9
In Irish Labour Force	55.9	54.4	51.5
Emigrated	5.0	13.0	13.1
Pursuing Further Studies/Training	38.2	30.9	33.9
Not Available for work	0.9	1.7	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of respondents	8,559	11,888	15,076
Numbers of Third Level Graduate Award recipients	9,669	13,793	18,220

Sources: First Destination of Award Recipients in Higher Education reports 1982, 1986, 1990.

Note: The percentages provided in the above Table are based on data supplied by **respondents** to the follow up surveys conducted of graduates from Third Level programmes in these years. It does not include any information on non-respondent graduates. The numbers of Third-Level award recipients have also been supplied, to indicate the relationship between respondent numbers and the graduate population numbers in these years.

It should also be noted that the above Table provides summary data on all Third-Level award recipients, whether these be sub-degree, degree, or postgraduate degree level awards.

Some of the main points to note from this Table are indicated below:

There has been a substantial growth in the numbers of Third Level award recipients entering the Irish and international labour markets over the period. The numbers of such award holders grew from less than 10,000 in 1982, to over 18,000 in 1990.

Less than half of the graduate respondents in any of these years were in employment in Ireland, one year after graduation. However, because of the strong growth in the numbers of graduates in this period, the absolute number of respondents stating that they had secured such employment in Ireland has grown strongly throughout the period.

There has been a strong growth, in terms both of the numbers and proportions of graduates emigrating to secure employment overseas throughout the period.

The rates of graduate unemployment indicated in the above figures are relatively low, at least when compared to the overall rate of unemployment recorded in these years in the Irish labour market.

Appendix A2 The Irish Labour Market in the 1990's, Context for post-compulsory Vocational Education and Training

A2.1 Labour Force trends 1990-1995

Table A2.1, below, provides a projection of the numbers and age-composition of the Irish labour force in 1995. The 1990 figures with which this projection is compared are taken from the 1990 Labour Force survey.

Table A2.1 Labour Force by age 1990, 1995

Age	Numbers in Thousands			
	1990 Actual	1995 Estimate	Change 1990-1995	
			No.'s	%
15-24	294.2	286.0	-8.2	-2.7
25-34	358.1	351.0	-7.1	-2.0
35-44	297.3	311.0	13.7	4.6
45-54	203.2	238.1	34.9	17.2
55-64	117.8	118.4	0.6	0.5
65+	34.2	28.2	-6.0	-17.5
Total	1,304.9	1,332.7	27.9	2.1

Source: 1990 Labour Force Survey data

1995 data have been calculated on the basis of the 5 year CHANGE in the labour force composition for 1991-1996 estimated in Table 14 of the CSO publication 'Population and Labour force projections 1991-2021'. The 1990 LFS figures have been used instead of the CSO 1991 labour force estimates. The CSO projection used assumes a net annual migration outflow of -25,000 in the period.

The 1995 projections are constructed on the assumption that the net migration total for this five year period will be -125,000, or an annual average of -25,000. The central forecast contained in the ESRI's Medium Term Review, 1991-1996, published in June 1991, anticipates a lower level of net emigration than this. The annual level of net emigration of -25,000 is only reached in 1995 in the ESRI forecast, from a level of just -5,000 in 1991. Therefore, the CSO data upon which the above Table has been structured should be viewed with some caution, especially in relation to the change estimates for the 15-24 labour force segment, the age cohort most affected by

emigration.

It should be remembered that the figures presented above are **labour force** estimates. Thus, they refer **both** to persons in employment, and to persons who are unemployed, or seeking their first job. The labour force participation rate assumptions for different age/sex/marital status groups contained within the forecast are crucially contingent on the nature and volume of vacancies which may arise in the period. This comment applies with particular force to older females. Older women are most likely to 'withdraw' from the labour market when employment opportunities are scarce, and re-emerge to seek employment, when opportunities are relatively more plentiful. Most such women do **not** tend to be counted on the Live Register.

With all these caveats, the above Table indicates some interesting developments in the age-composition of the labour force in the period. It shows that, although the labour force numbers as a whole will remain relatively static, the older age segments of the labour force, especially the 45-54 age cohort, will show a significant increase, in both numerical and proportionate terms, in the period. In other words, the Irish labour force in this period will, increasingly, assume a 'middle-aged' character.

It should be noted that the ESRI estimates of the size of the **total** labour force, provided in Table , below, are more accurate than this CSO-derived data. This CSO-derived data, then, is of interest mainly in relation to the changing age-composition of the labour force which it reflects, rather than in terms of its accuracy as a predictor of overall labour force totals.

A2.2 Employment and Unemployment 1991-1993

Table A2.2 Employment and unemployment 1991-1993
Numbers in Thousands

	1991	1992	1993
Employed			
Agriculture	155	153	150
Industry	318	320	328
Services (Market and non-market)	648	652	658
Total Employed	1,121	1,125	1,136
Unemployed* (including first time jobseekers)	210	243	250
Total Labour Force	1,331	1,368	1,386

Source: ESRI Quarterly Economic Commentary,

Note: The definition of unemployment used in this Table is the Labour Force Survey one. This provides a better indication of the real level of unemployment in Ireland than the Live Register.

The above Table provides an indication of likely short term trends in employment and unemployment in Ireland, in the 1991-93 period. The labour force totals differ from those derived from the CSO data in Table , above.

The most significant feature of Table , above, is the indication that, in the short term at least, the level of unemployment will continue to grow in Ireland, despite modest increases in employment. This employment increase will not be sufficient to absorb the increased supply of labour market entrants. The fact that the migration option is relatively unattractive in the short-term (due to relatively high levels of unemployment and other factors in the UK economy, the main migration outlet for Irish people) also influences this trend.

A2.3 Implications for post-compulsory Vocational Education and Training

The main implications for VET which flow from these short to medium term labour force projections are:

The short to medium term context for this VET provision will be a high-unemployment one. The ESRI employment/unemployment projections show no sign of an abatement in the current very high levels of unemployment. Rather, unemployment levels are expected to worsen in the short term.

A relatively modest level of employment growth is expected to occur in this period. It seems clear, from past trends, both in Ireland and internationally, that unemployed people will succeed in obtaining only a fraction of the jobs that will flow from this employment growth. Long term unemployed people, and especially the older long term unemployed, are the segment of the unemployed population that is least likely to secure employment in this period.

The primary result of boosting the qualifications profile of labour market entrants is likely to one of 'qualifications inflation', in this labour market context. This is unlikely to lead to any significant short-to-medium term in the quantity of employment, or of vacancies, in the Irish labour market.

The aging of the Irish labour force, and of the workforce, provides some indicative evidence that training/retraining programmes directed at the workforce would be particularly needed.

UNPUBLISHED DATA OBTAINED FROM PHILIP J'CONNELL, ESCI

Appendix A3

Post-Compulsory ESF-supported VET Provision, 1989/1993,
Qualifications structure

Third Level Education programmes-1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market
Leaving Cert. Entrants	75,703	Cert/Diploma/ Postgraduate degree	High for High sub-degree quals.	

Vocational Preparation and Training Programme-1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Predominantly Leaving Cert Entrants	108,227	Varied	Mixed	Varied

FAS Apprenticeship Training Programme-1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Predominantly Leaving Cert Entrants	14,990	Trade Quals	Low	Medium/High

FAS 'Mainstream' Specific Skills Training Programme

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Predominantly Leaving Cert Entrants	37,880	FAS/ CGLI	Low	Varied

FAS Enterprise Training programme

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Mixed, no formal entry quals required	6,908	None	Nil	N/A

FAS/Dept of Ed. Youthreach Programme, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Early school leavers, young LTU	17,400	None	Limited	Low

FAS Skills Foundation Programme

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Young poorly qualified school leavers, unemp.	8,300	None	Limited	Low

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Older LTU	4,700	None	Nil	Low

FAS Alternance Training Programme, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Older LTU	5,500	None	Nil	Low

FAS Skill Training Programme for LTU, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
LTU	800	FAS/CGLI	Low	Varied

FAS Skill Training programme for Youthreach/Skills Foundation graduates, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Persons completing Skills Foundation/ Youthreach	12,100	FAS/CGLI	Low	Varied

FAS Non-Traditional Training programme for Women, 1989/93

Client Category	Numbers	Exit Qual.	Transf of Qual	Labour Market worth
Women seeking to enter/reenter employment	1,200	None	feeder to Skill Training/ App. Progs	N/A

Table A3.1 Non Workforce Participants on ESF-supported Vocational Education and Training Programmes, 1989-1993

'ECONOMIC' Programmes, predominantly aimed at relatively advantaged young potential labour force entrants

(a) Middle Level Technician Programme

Provider	Regional Technical College/Colleges of Technology	
Participant Numbers 1989/93	47,445	
Average Annual Intake	11,861	
Total Expenditure 1989/93 million is provided by ESF	£172 million-of which £112 million or £43 million per annum, on average	
Average Expenditure per participant	£2,466	
Participant Entry Profile	Leaving Certificate level entrants Participants all under 25 years of age	
Duration of programme for participants	?	

(b) Higher Technical and Business Skills

Provider	Regional Technical Colleges/Colleges of Technology	
Participant Numbers 1989/93	21,470	
Average Annual Intake	6,175	
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£129.6 million, of which £84.2 million ESF, or £32.4 million on average	
Average expenditure per participant	£6,036	
Participant Entry Profile	Leaving Certificate level entrants. Participants all under 25 years of age	
Duration of Programme for participants	3 year full-time diploma courses/one year 'add-on' courses.	

(c) Advanced Technical Skills Courses

Provider	Universities
Participant Numbers 1989/93	6,788
Average Annual Intake	1,697
Total Expenditure 1989/93 million is ESF	£37.6 million, of which £24.4 million is ESF
Average Expenditure per participant	£5,539
Participant entry profile over 25	University Graduates, 80%+ aged over 25
Duration of programme for participants	One year full time

(d) Specific Skills Training

Provider	FAS
Participant Numbers 1989/93	37,880
Average Annual Intake	9,470
Total Expenditure 1989/93 million is ESF	£96.4 million, of which £62.6 million is ESF
Average Expenditure per participant	£2,544
Participant entry profile education .	At least 90% unemployed. At least 6 months out of full-time education. No explicit age information, but the vast majority are aged under 25
Duration of programme for participants	16-20 weeks

(e) Apprenticeship Training

Provider FAS

Participant Numbers 1989/93	14,900
Average Annual Intake	3,725
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£78.6 million, including £51.1 million ESF
Average Expenditure per participant	£5,289
Participant entry profile	Persons aged 15-19 with basic standard of education. Leaving Certificate entrants now constitute majority of apprenticeship entrants
Duration of programme for participants	Off the job/On the job combination. Duration under review. Standards/based rather than time served.

(f) Vocational Preparation and Training Programme

Provider Second level educational institutions. Vocational and Community/Comprehensive schools dominate.

Participant Numbers 1989/93	108,227
Average Annual Intake	27,056
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£216 million, including £140 million from ESF
Average Expenditure per participant	£1,995
Participant entry profile	The majority of VPT entrants are now Leaving Certificate holders.
Duration of programme for participants	1 to 2 years.

Summary of Economic programmes aimed at relatively advantaged young potential labour force entrants

Participant numbers 1989/93	236,710. It should be noted that this total takes no account of the likelihood that persons may move from one to another of these programmes, rather than enter the labour market after completing one of them.
Average annual intake	59,177
Total expenditure 1989/93	£730.2 million, of which £474 million is ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£3,083
Participant entry profile	The vast majority of participants on these programmes will be aged under 25, and will have at least Leaving Certificate entry level qualifications.
Programme characteristics	In general, will be of relatively long duration. Will provide exit certification which will 'add value' to participants in competing for labour market opportunities, in Ireland or abroad.

'SOCIAL' Programmes, predominantly aimed at disadvantaged early school leavers, long term unemployed young people, and LTU

(a) Vocational Training Opportunity Scheme

Provider	Vocational Education Committees
Participant numbers 1989/93	4,700
Annual Average intake	1,175
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£24.8 million, of which £16.1 million ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£5,276
Participant entry profile	Persons aged over 21 who have low educational attainments, and who have been unemployed for at least 12 months (N.B. No ESF Live Register criterion)
Duration of programme for participants	?

(b) Non Traditional Training for Women

Provider	FAS
Participant numbers 1989/93	1.200
Annual Average intake	300
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£4.7 Million, of which £3 million ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£3,916
Participant entry profile	Women seeking to enter/reenter workforce. Intended as feeder programme for Apprenticeship/Specific Skills training (Any transfer guarantees?)
Duration of programme for participants	5 weeks

(c) Youthreach

Provider	Department of Education/FAS
Participant numbers 1989/93	17,400
Annual Average intake	4,350
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£110.4 Million, of which £71.8 million ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£6,344
Participant entry profile	Young early school leavers lacking any formal educational qualifications, who have failed to secure employment.
Duration of programme for participants	Up to 2 years. Foundation and progression year. Youthreach results show high dropout rate before year 2 element.

(d) Skills Foundation

Provider	FAS
Participant numbers 1989/93	8,300
Annual Average intake	2,075
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£28.1 Million, of which £18.3 million ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£3,380
Participant entry profile	Young school leavers with basic educational qualifications who have difficulty finding employment.
Duration of programme for participants	?

(e) Specific Skills Training for disadvantaged YOUNG people

Provider	FAS
Participant numbers 1989/93	12,100
Annual Average intake	3,075
Total Expenditure 1989/93	£31 Million, of which £20.2 million ESF
Average expenditure per participant	£2,561
Participant entry profile	Young unemployed people, and persons who have completed Youthreach and Skills Foundation training.
Duration of programme for participants	?

Summary of 'SOCIAL' programmes, primarily aimed at disadvantaged early school leavers, young unemployed.

Participant numbers 1989/93	43,700
Average annual intake	10,925
Total expenditure 1989/93	£199 million, of which £128.6 ESF

Programme characteristics: Mixture of relatively long duration (Youthreach, Skills Foundation), and short duration (non traditional training for women, skill training). No good certification as stand-alone programmes. No clear mechanisms developed for enabling these become 'passports' to entry onto higher-level specific skill training/education programmes. Likely that they will be of very limited labour market worth. Virtually no provision under these headings for the long term unemployed aged over 25 years, by far the largest 'disadvantaged' labour market segment in Ireland.