

Summaries

Unemployed youth: a lost generation?

K. ten Have en G. Jehoel-Gijsbers

Not only the number of unemployed young people but also the increasing duration of their unemployment is an important social concern. Many ask themselves whether this situation may lead to a situation in which the unemployed young people turn away from work and even from society as a whole.

Research, conducted among unemployed and employed youths in the Netherlands shows no ground for this fear. Unemployed, on the average, adhere to the same values as employed. Also the duration of the unemployment period shows no relation with adherence to values. This means for instance that long term unemployed youths consider work as important and reject racial discrimination as much as employed. Unemployed prove also to be extremely willing to accept jobs with farreaching inconveniences. On the other hand the research shows that unemployed are far less satisfied with their life than employed.

It is concluded that young unemployed are by no means turning away from work and society. In this sense they are not a lost generation. But the research also shows that the probability of getting a job deteriorates sharply as the duration of unemployment increases. Long term unemployed are the last in line to get a job when the employment situation improves. Without (government) policy this group of long-term unemployed will become a lost generation indeed.

Government policy aiming only at economic growth falls short in dealing with this problem. A labour-market policy preventing people of becoming long term unemployed and policy to improve the position of the already long-term unemployed, for instance by means of wage subsidies, is urgently needed.

Interfaces and linkages. The relation between education and work in the eighties

J.J. van Hoof

In the eighties the contribution of education to economic development is once again a central issue. In this article two approaches to the problem of adapting the educational/training system to the demands of the economy are opposed. According to the first approach attention should be focused on school-based vocational education and planning systems should be devised to adjust its output both in numbers and in terms of qualifications to future labour market needs. Representatives of industry (including the trade-unions) should participate in establishing the goals of vocational programs. Recent policy proposals of the Dutch government, aiming at the creation of this kind of 'interface' throughout the system of vocational education, do not take into account sufficiently the limits attached to this approach (which follow from uncertainty about future developments in manpower demands and job requirements) and may end in time-consuming and highly inflexible planning procedures.

The second approach recognizes the impossibility of forecasting manpower demands and job requirements with sufficient precision and detail so as to be useful for educational planning. Instead, it tries to enhance the flexibility of the educational/training system as a whole. Special attention is being paid to government sponsored forms of youth and adult training, which exist beside the school-based system of vocational education (called the 'inter-mediate system of training') and to the privately organized training activities of firms and industries. They can be adapted better and faster to the ever changing needs of the employment system. A central policy question therefore is to devise a proper division of roles between these three parts of the

educational/training system and to find ways of integrating their specific contributions. Following this approach, in the last part of the paper the recent growth of the 'intermediate system of training' in the Netherlands is discussed. It is concluded that it shows signs of further expansion in both directions. It might therefore come to play a strategic role both for the training of manpower and for the distribution of labour market chances. At present, however, considerable barriers for an integrated policy towards this part of the educational/training system still exist.

Ten year ban on labour immigration and the development of migrant employment in Belgium

A. Martens

Since 1974 successive Belgian governments have declared and applied a ban on the immigration of non EEC workers.

Nevertheless in the same period the governments allowed more than 100 000 work permits to be issued to foreigners. The work permit figures give rise to some questions about, firstly the effectiveness of the governmental immigration ban and secondly the scientific significance of the work permit statistics in measuring the effectiveness of the ban.

A more thorough analysis of the figures suggests that the work permit statistics only give a very partial view of the development of the employment of immigrants in Belgium. To analyse more precisely this phenomenon and to base an employment policy on scientific statistical information more detailed information is needed about the nature of the employment of immigrants in all sectors.

Technology and the structure of employment

H. Vrolijk

This article summarizes some of the results of a research project on the implications of technology on employment in different parts of the chemical and building materials industries. It describes the conceptual framework applied to analyze on a sectoral level the relationship between economic changes, technological developments and the

labor market. In the process industry this relationship has an other character than in the so called discrete manufacturing. Also the distinction between mass and batch production proved to be important.

In order to analyze the changes in the composition of employment, the labor process is divided in four spheres of production: manufacture (the actual transformation), preparatory activities (like design and work scheduling), production supporting (like maintenance and quality control) and overall coordination. Although, until now, the technical changes have mainly taken place in the transformation process, their manpower implications can also be found in the other spheres of production. Here relatively more jobs and higher skills are necessary, whereas in manufacture less jobs and, in general, lower skills are needed. However, this may be temporary situation, as computerized integration will also affect the preparatory and supporting functions.

New technologies and women's employment

M. Weggelaar en W. Trommel

Since 1981 with the Working Group 'Arbeidsvraagstukken en Welzijn' (Employment Issues and Welfare) of the State University Leiden three research projects have been carried out on the subject 'New Technologies and Women's Employment'.

In this article the authors give an overview of the main findings of these projects. This to emphasize the importance of research on employment issues especially regarding to women.

They stress the vulnerable position women workers hold on the labourmarket in the Netherlands and outline the negative effects the introduction of new technologies holds for women.

Furthermore they discuss what other possible research trajects can be explored in the complex field of the relation 'New Technologies and Women's Employment'. This in order to open up new research designs that can bring about further suggestions for policy and strategies of change.

Productivity-policy and wage-policy in the fifties

H. Kijne

Unlike other industrialised European countries, large scale introduction of 'scientific management' didn't take place in the Netherlands until after World War II.

During the fifties, a government supported and Marshall-financed program to increase industrial productivity led to the systematic study of and propaganda for American management methods. During the same period a severe policy of wage-reduction was maintained by the government.

As an instrument of industrial productivity policy it allowed companies to pay higher wages only if time-study – performed by professionals and with results agreed on by trade unions experts – formed the basis of the incentive. Partly due to this combination of a productivity-policy introducing scientific management and a wage policy stimulating time study, Holland has seen the development of a specific kind of scientific management. As the labour market forced the industrial employers to pay the highest wages possible, in order not to loose their skilled workers, time study was not always taken seriously. Moreover, scientific management started where it should have ended, with time study and incentive wages, whereas the necessary condition for work study, the creation of standard working conditions, was often neglected. The argument that Holland has known, for some time, a 'Taylorism' that has been turned upside down, is illustrated by examples from the Dutch metal-industry, and by interviews with former trade union officials.

Workers' participation reconsidered

D. van de Kamp en A. Woltmeijer

In November 1985 the COB-SER published its final report on the experiments with workers'

participation. For the CNV this publication led to a reconsideration of the CNV's position with regard to workers' participation and co-determination.

In this article the results of the experiments are discussed, not only compared with the CNV-policy at the beginning of the experiments, but also compared with the CNV-ideology on industrial democracy. The major conclusion of this policy-statement is that experiments of the kind that have taken place should not be promoted in the future. Instead more attention should be paid to the functioning of the works' council (OR).

Job improvement in the Netherlands

C.J. Vos

Autumn 1985 it was ten years ago that a government programme on job improvement was launched.

During ten years there have been about twenty different subsidy schemes, mostly covering different aspects of working conditions. There have been general schemes, special schemes for certain branches of industry or for certain specific working conditions.

In this article the results of ten years job improvement are presented. About 15 000 projects have been subsidized improving the jobs of over 165 000 workers.

In 1982 a budget-cut led to a reconsideration of the programme. Since then special attention is paid to the development of new solutions concerning the quality of working life. Future initiatives in this area will focus on technological innovation stimulating advanced solutions for problems of job-quality.