

## The development of vocational guidance in the USSR

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One of the most important developments now taking place in the world economy is the rapid diffusion of new work tools and technologies and means of compiling and processing information. Significant changes are also occurring in the social sphere, with an increasingly better educated and more highly skilled workforce demanding more interesting jobs and improved working conditions.

As a result, greater attention needs to be paid to the preparation of young people for adult life and a well-considered choice of occupation, and hence to their vocational training. As was stated in the political report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to the 27th Party Congress in February 1986, "It is essential that the Leninist principle of combining education with productive labour should be implemented more fully, that the effectiveness of education should be considerably raised, and that radical improvements should be carried out in the training of young people for independent life and labour and in bringing up politically conscious builders of the new society."<sup>1</sup>

Many modern production methods rely heavily on the personal qualities and possibilities of the worker, demanding of him not only knowledge, efficiency, initiative and independence but also the ability to assess a situation accurately and objectively, make the right decision quickly, and act on it resourcefully. As a result of scientific and technological progress more and more people are now handling and monitoring powerful and expensive technology, with all that this means in terms of increased responsibility for their actions, greater rewards for success, but also the higher cost of mistakes.

The radical changes taking place in production have led to a rapid growth of employment in some sectors and a decrease in others, necessitating the retraining and redeployment of large numbers of workers. In these circumstances, if workers are to adopt a creative attitude to work, find satisfaction in their jobs and work more efficiently, vocational guidance for the young (as well as the not-so-young) and effective assistance in choosing a career, or learning a new trade, are bound to play an increasingly important role.

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## The scope of vocational guidance

In Soviet theory and practice vocational guidance in the broad sense of the term includes careers information, vocational counselling, vocational selection and occupational adaptation.

*Careers information* covers the range of existing occupations, their characteristics, the demand for them in various sectors and regions, working conditions and pay, advancement prospects, etc.

*Vocational counselling* is provided in the form of advice about a person's suitability for a specific occupation based on observance of his or her school work and special tests. It is not compulsory, but is provided free of charge to all who desire it.

*Vocational selection* involves studying the psychological and physiological characteristics of individuals with a view to determining their suitability for a particular occupation. It is carried out with the aid of special apparatus and tests and by comparing the personal qualities of the applicant with pre-established career profiles. Most experts in the USSR are agreed that, for many occupations in which no particular psychological or physiological qualities are required and the necessary skills can be learned and developed at school and on the job, there is no need for vocational selection. At the same time, however, its scope is expanding. It is being used in particular for selecting urban transport workers, miners, tower crane operators, high-rise construction workers, precision assembly workers, etc. There are many instances of people seemingly unsuited for an occupation who have nevertheless succeeded in it through sheer persistence and determination. One of the most inspiring examples for Soviet youth is that of the pilot Aleksei Maresev who, after losing both legs in the war, learned to fly again and was able to return to the job he loved.

*Occupational adaptation* includes measures designed to integrate a person more quickly and easily into the collective in which he is to work, the creation of a good moral and psychological climate and the development of comradesly assistance in the workplace. Work collectives, management and trade union organisations never neglect occupational adaptation, even though other aspects of vocational guidance may be missing.

## The economic and social importance of vocational guidance

Vocational guidance is of great importance for implementing the basic principle of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." In the Soviet Union the second part of this principle – remuneration according to the quantity and quality of work performed – has been given greater theoretical and practical attention than the first. A comprehensive system of norms for the length of time this or that job should take, for servicing equipment and assembly lines, for manning levels and for

output exists in various industries and enterprises. It is by these means that the quantity of work is established. The quality of work is taken into account through the wage and salary scales for manual and non-manual workers, and additional payments and bonuses.

Remuneration according to the quantity and quality of work is of great significance too, however, for the first part of the principle since it means that a worker will strive to make better use of his abilities in order to receive higher pay. But there is also a wider significance: "from each according to his ability" means that each should work where he can make the fullest use of his abilities to his own satisfaction and benefit and for the good of society. Thus this part of the principle also bears upon the attitude to work.

It has occasionally been asserted that, since the absence of unemployment in our country and the availability of all forms of education free of charge create every possibility for a free choice of work according to a person's own desires and abilities, there is no need for vocational guidance. This sort of argument encourages an irresponsible approach to vocational decisions. Many young people choose an occupation haphazardly without giving sufficient thought to job opportunities and requirements, and then change to another, and sometimes more than once. An incorrect choice of occupation is a mistake that can blight a person's whole life. It can be damaging both morally and economically not only for the individual but for society. Hence the need for providing skilled assistance to young people in their choice of career.

Article 40 of the USSR Constitution states that the right to work and to choose a trade or profession is guaranteed, not only by socialist ownership of the means of production, the planned management of the economy, access to all forms of education and training, etc., but also "by the development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement".

Vocational guidance is primarily of concern to youth. For young people the choice of a career is a matter of vital importance since the decision they make will largely determine their future and the satisfaction they derive from work and will influence their perception of the society in which they live. Young people are mobile, active and energetic. Consequently, the economic and social significance of vocational guidance, and the need to improve it, are particularly great for them.

Vocational guidance in one form or another is provided especially for pupils in the ninth to eleventh grades. With the decline in the birth-rate in the 1970s the number of pupils completing the full ten years of secondary education has dropped slightly, from 3,966,000 in 1980, to 3,297,000 in 1985.<sup>2</sup>

Young people may also decide on an occupation at an earlier age, when entering secondary specialised educational institutions after finishing the so-called "incomplete" (eight-year) period of secondary schooling. In 1985 the number entering secondary specialised educational institutions was 1,513,000. In the same year 1,040,000 young persons with full secondary general or specialised schooling enrolled in higher educational institutions.<sup>3</sup>

The remainder undergo training, after finishing eight or ten years of general education, in the vocational-technical schools – which train skilled workers – or directly in enterprises, establishments or organisations.

At the same time, the age range for which vocational guidance is needed has been increasing in recent years. Owing to technological developments and the intensification of production, a growing number of workers are becoming redundant with each passing year and consequently have to be retrained and redeployed. This means that fresh vocational guidance is required for persons of various ages, including the middle-aged and elderly. They need help in finding a new career or a new job consonant with their practical experience, state of health, habits and inclinations.

Vocational guidance is of vital importance both economically and socially. There is convincing evidence of the influence of the various forms of vocational guidance in reducing turnover among skilled workers (by 15 to 20 per cent according to expert estimates), in increasing labour productivity (by 3 to 10 per cent or more), in reducing the time it takes to become multi-skilled (by roughly 20 to 25 per cent), and also in reducing the number of drop-outs from vocational training establishments. There is also evidence of the positive role played by vocational guidance, and particularly vocational selection, in reducing occupational accidents and diseases among workers, especially those engaged in the assembly, mounting or manufacture of small components, which can cause considerable eyestrain. All this goes to confirm the valuable contribution of vocational guidance to the preservation and improvement of the workers' health and to a better social and psychological climate in the workplace.

## The institutional framework and the current reform

The history of vocational guidance in the USSR dates back to the 1920s. Its development was dictated by the need to speed up economic progress and the mass training of skilled workers. Vocational guidance work was carried out by the educational, health and labour authorities.

In many cities (Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, Kazan, etc.) specialised vocational guidance sub-units were set up primarily to provide careers information to children and their parents. The Central Vocational Counselling and Selection Laboratory of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, established in Moscow in 1930, played an important role in the study and dissemination of innovative work done by vocational guidance institutions. Scientific research was carried out, theoretical and methodological studies and guides were published and work on vocational selection was developed.

At that time, however, the shortage of personnel with the necessary qualifications and the dearth of scientific studies on the subject resulted in serious shortcomings in the work of the vocational guidance services, particularly in vocational selection, and consequently progress began to

falter. After the Second World War it started to pick up again but did not really gather full momentum till the 1960s. Attention to scientific and applied research on vocational guidance questions was noticeably stepped up in the 1970s and 1980s.

Since 1984, following a nation-wide discussion, a reform of the general and vocational schools has been undertaken with a view, *inter alia*, to improving the development of elementary work habits in children and the initial occupational training they receive in the general schools.

In May 1984 the Central Committee of the CPSU and the USSR Council of Ministers adopted a decision concerning the improvement of the education, training and vocational guidance of schoolchildren and the organisation of their socially useful productive work. These goals are to be achieved, among other ways, by adopting measures aimed at radically improving the vocational guidance of pupils in the general schools and their "work education" (i.e. their level of practical, moral and psychological preparedness for adult life), at developing in the rising generation a conscious need to work, and at creating the necessary conditions to bring this about.<sup>4</sup>

With a view to improving the work education and vocational guidance of pupils in the general schools it is deemed essential to ensure their compulsory participation in socially useful productive work in school workshops and in the special training sections of enterprises and organisations, in inter-school production-cum-training centres and workshops, in auxiliary farming, in student production brigades, and in school forestry and other work units.

Experience confirms the view of vocational guidance as a socio-economic question in terms of its *raison d'être*, content and the criteria by which its effectiveness is judged; as a medical, biological, psychological and pedagogical question in terms of the educational and training methods used; and as an interdepartmental question in terms of the way it is organised.

This last aspect is of fundamental importance. Just as no single science, be it political economy or labour economics, sociology or psychology, can claim to analyse and solve vocational guidance problems by itself, so no single body, be it governmental, industrial or social, can monopolise the administration of vocational guidance. Otherwise the systemic character of its organisation would be destroyed.

Under the reform of the general education and vocational schools now under way, responsibility for vocational guidance throughout the country is entrusted to the USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs, which possesses a far-flung network of local organs. This choice is both natural and sound. The labour organs have at their disposal data on the requirements of the national economy for skilled workers, they have a vast experience of fruitful collaboration with enterprises, organisations, institutions and training establishments in the area of labour administration, they run the placement services, they participate in the organisation of vocational guidance activities, and so on. Acting as co-ordination centres within the system of vocational guidance management, they are called upon to exert a more active influence

on the actual processes of manpower training, allocation and utilisation and also, of course, the improvement of labour efficiency, and to enhance the role of labour in the development of production and the individual.

The school reform has linked vocational guidance more closely to the work, moral and economic education of the pupils, their participation in socially useful productive work and the initial vocational training they receive while still at school; it has given a new impetus to vocational guidance work in the schools and vocational training establishments and has increased the role and responsibilities of teaching staff in the preparation and conduct of vocational counselling in connection with choosing a vocational training establishment and finding a job.

### Schools and enterprises

The foundations for vocational guidance are laid in the general education school. It is here that the knowledge, convictions, habits, aptitudes and interests of the future citizens and workers are formed and developed. Vocational guidance should in fact start in the earliest grades of the school. The aim should be to ensure continuity in education and vocational guidance, following the model worked out for each region with the help of academics and leading enterprises.

What the school must do is thoroughly study the pupil's personality and his psychological and physiological characteristics and actively develop his occupational interests, aptitudes and intentions. Experience shows that such a study of the pupil's personality enhances the soundness and effectiveness of vocational guidance.

With the expansion of vocational guidance the role of the teacher, and especially the class teacher, is taking on a larger dimension; the teacher is gradually becoming the principal figure in the vocational guidance system. All teachers, not just class teachers, are expected to give young people assistance in choosing a career and advice on ways of pursuing it. Quite often teachers of individual subjects, bearing in mind the curriculum and the pupils' age, organise talks with workers from local enterprises and vocational guidance centres on trades and occupations, including those for which there are no openings locally. One member of the teaching staff is appointed to organise and direct their vocational guidance activities and is paid extra according to the amount of additional work involved. Labour education and vocational guidance methodologists in the education departments of the rural and urban local authorities are responsible for co-ordinating the teaching staff's activities with the guide-lines laid down by the national education bodies.

The official documents setting out the details of the school reform emphasise that the preparation of pupils for choosing a career must include the performance of socially useful productive work. Such work must be done in accordance with the statutory norms (not more than the legal maximum of two hours a day for pupils aged 14-16 and six hours for those aged 16-18), on

an independent and competitive basis (with the provision of individual and collective material and moral incentives), and in conditions resembling as closely as possible the real work situation.

To organise this work all general education schools are linked with local enterprises and organisations in a variety of branches, in both industry and the services, and inter-school production-cum-training centres are formed. The local enterprises play an important role here. They are required to work with the schools in providing vocational guidance for the pupils and, first and foremost, in developing their interest in the types of jobs offered, and to set up a vocational guidance section for that purpose. Each should assist the schools in setting up and organising the work of their vocational guidance training and methods section, organise tours of the enterprise for pupils, give explanatory talks to pupils and parents on matters related to the choice of a career and placement, and carry out activities to familiarise teachers and pupils with the work processes, technology, economics and organisation of production in the enterprise.<sup>5</sup>

Senior pupils are given training in a wide range of the more common occupations that are at the same time socially useful and in demand. The duration of the training depends, as a rule, on the amount of time allocated by the school to vocational training. Vocational guidance has a large part to play in forming the training groups.

In most cases pupils receive a skill certificate on completing their training. For some of the more specialised occupations school-leavers go on to further training in secondary vocational-technical schools and in enterprises. Consideration is now being given to expanding the list of such occupations to include those created by scientific and technological development (e.g. electronic data processing). The training equipment of the vocational-technical and general schools is being improved to that end and special training workshops, sections and individual training workstations are being set up in enterprises. Organisations and enterprises developing and producing the latest technology and equipment are actively involved in this work. This helps to increase young people's interest in the new achievements of modern technology (electronics, computers, etc.) and to stimulate in them a desire for knowledge and a creative attitude to work.

The structure of the production-cum-training process is being reorganised to cope with new requirements. Owing to the growing importance of computers in the development of production and of society as a whole, a new subject was introduced this year in the general school curriculum, namely "The principles of computer science and technology". In 1987 a new course will be introduced on "The principles of production – choice of career", designed to familiarise pupils in the eighth and ninth grades with the structure and evolution of the national economy, the training facilities available, and the basic considerations involved in choosing a career.

Career intentions and plans are, of course, formed in the light of the interests, wishes, objectives and enthusiasms that motivate a person's

behaviour and lead him to make a conscious choice, and they are realised through the decisions he makes and the steps he takes to acquire the appropriate specialised knowledge. Hence the task of forming career intentions should be tackled early through vocational guidance, starting in the lower grades.

More elaborate vocational guidance is required for pupils in the middle grades. The period from the fifth to seventh grades is very important since it is during these years that pupils learn to work independently, form interests and develop abilities for various types of activity. This is confirmed by the experience of academics in Novosibirsk who, with the aid of vocational guidance methods, have organised a series of competitions over the years to select future physicists and mathematicians and then develop their abilities. Such preliminary work is also carried out for other careers, such as teaching, draughtsmanship and medicine.

### **New forms of work education**

In conjunction with vocational guidance and vocational training new forms of work education for schoolchildren are being developed. One of the most important and widespread of these is the student production brigade, particularly for agricultural work. Such brigades work during the summer holidays for one or two months. They are made up of pupils in the eighth and ninth grades and work under the direction of a schoolteacher for four hours a day; the rest of the time is devoted to games, sports, private study, etc. Most operate on the basis of contracts drawn up between the school and the farm. The pupils receive payment for their work.

Such activities are well organised in many parts of the Moscow province, and in a number of areas the majority of school-leavers often choose to stay and work on the farms. Also of interest is the establishment and operation of experimental "self-accounting" school enterprises along the lines of the Moscow Chaika Factory where pupils not only acquire the habits of independent work at first hand and develop their business sense but also become direct participants in the wider public production system and gain a thorough knowledge of a trade and their own abilities.<sup>6</sup>

Important vocational guidance work is also being carried out in inter-school production-cum-training centres set up in the regions by various enterprises. In 1985 there were 2,811 such centres in the USSR, 1,782 in towns and 1,029 in rural areas.<sup>7</sup> The largest and most typical enterprises in a region set up and equip their own experimental sections where young people are given training in the most important trades. They can work in a number of sections and thus become familiar with various trades at first hand without being under any obligation to pursue a particular career. In most production-cum-training centres certain workers are specially designated to give vocational guidance.

In recent years the ministries, departments, production associations, enterprises and other economic organisations have been playing an increas-



ing role in the vocational guidance of young people. Over the past decade a number of industries (instrument-making, agricultural machinery, radio, automobile, etc.) have been stepping up their efforts to introduce all the elements of scientific vocational guidance, including vocational counselling and selection. Hundreds of vocational guidance classrooms and laboratories have been set up in large enterprises. For example, there are 210 vocational guidance classrooms in undertakings belonging to the USSR Ministry of Non-ferrous Metalworking, 192 in the ferrous metal industry, 120 in light industry, more than 100 in the electrical engineering industry, and so on.<sup>8</sup> The Moscow Electric Lamp Factory, the Kama Automobile Works, the Kommutator Factory in Riga, the "V. P. Chkalov" Aviation Works in Tashkent and many others attach great importance to such activities.

The Dneprovsky "V. I. Lenin" Engineering Works has acquired valuable experience in this field. For many years now it has been operating a vocational guidance laboratory staffed by specialists and equipped with a full range of testing apparatus. Guidance is provided in all areas. As a result more than half of the pupils leaving schools under the patronage of this enterprise begin their working life in it. The turnover rate of young people in the enterprise is four times lower than in the industry as a whole. The enterprise has high growth rates of labour productivity and other indicators of production efficiency.<sup>9</sup>

Vocational guidance classrooms and laboratories have been opened in all major automobile industry enterprises. In many of them vocational selection is being practised on an increasingly wide scale and in some it has become part of the system of scientific work organisation. Occupational adaptation work is carried on in the enterprises in order to make young workers feel at home in their jobs and to obtain feedback on how effective the previous vocational guidance work has been. The results depend to a considerable extent on what organisational, economic and educational measures have been adopted to develop the young people's initial interest in a trade and to help them to master it and fit easily into the work collective.

A major role here is played by the "tutors" and brigade members. The tutor is an experienced skilled worker who looks after the newcomer in order to help him master the trade and increase his occupational skills. At present there are more than a million tutors in industry alone.

In recent years there has been a shift in all branches of the economy towards collective, brigade forms of work organisation and remuneration. By 1985 the proportion of workers organised in brigades was 72 per cent as against 43 per cent in 1980.<sup>10</sup> Brigades are formed on a voluntary basis and have many variants: specialised, composite, multi-skilled, self-financing, etc. Nowadays a new worker generally joins a brigade and has to adapt to the demands both of his own work and to team-work. He thus has ample opportunities for gradually mastering related trades and jobs, expanding his vocational skills and diversifying the types of work he can do.

Experience has confirmed that the standard of vocational guidance work is higher in enterprises where specialised guidance laboratories have been set up. These are also used for the purposes of vocational selection. The laboratories organise visits to the enterprise and talks for pupils attending schools attached to it, as well as meetings with representatives of the various trades in the enterprise and competitions to test the pupils' career knowledge; they develop vocational guidance materials, hold seminars for teachers, workers and parents on vocational guidance for children, prepare brief career profiles and provide vocational counselling for pupils. They also provide methodological assistance in the setting up of vocational guidance classrooms in the schools collaborating with them and in the production-cum-training centres. Many vocational guidance laboratories provide literature on vocational guidance work and information on the products being manufactured and the technology used, on working conditions, pay and welfare, on the possibilities for further training in the enterprise, on future requirements for various skills, and on institutions where training is provided in the trades needed by the enterprise.

## Other organisational aspects of vocational guidance

The organisation of vocational guidance work in enterprises is supervised directly by various ministerial departments, most frequently by the Work Organisation and Remuneration Department or the Personnel Department. Scientific and methodological guidance is provided by the scientific research organisations of the appropriate industrial branches.

An important job performed by the ministries and their organisations is the preparation of career profiles. These provide qualitative descriptions of individual occupations and a quantitative assessment of what is required of the individual worker. From this standpoint the career profile may be said to be a technical, technological and economic statement of what society demands of the worker in terms of attitudes, state of health, and level of knowledge and skills. In other words, it defines the qualities a person must have to pursue a given career successfully and become a master in his trade. Career profiles form the basis for vocational counselling and selection.

The secondary vocational-technical schools and higher and secondary specialised educational institutions constitute an important link in the vocational guidance system. Vocational-technical schools participate along with the local enterprises in the vocational guidance of schoolchildren and some of them carry out vocational selection to make up training groups for a number of the more specialised occupations; during the process of training and education occupational adaptation work is also carried out among the pupils.

As part of their basic vocational guidance activities the vocational-technical schools and higher and secondary specialised educational institutions organise open days for pupils and parents, meetings for those with a technological bent, factory visits, etc. Subsequently school vocational coun-

sellors give the selection committees lists of pupils who wish to study in a given educational establishment. Additional work is then done with these boys and girls and they are sent personal invitations to various vocational guidance activities and events.

Cultural institutions (libraries, cinemas, cultural centres, clubs, museums, etc.) also participate in vocational guidance work. Their basic task in this field is to provide careers information. Libraries organise permanent exhibitions of literature on careers, surveys of literature on the working class, and readers' conferences. A wide range of vocational guidance work is carried out at the All-Union Exhibition of the Achievements of the National Economy in Moscow.

The mass media disseminate information to young people and the population as a whole about the economy's need for workers in various occupations in a given region; they publicise those occupations in which there are shortages, describing what they require of the worker, the working conditions and the career prospects; and they carry reports on training for various occupations in the enterprises and educational establishments. Various forms of presentation are used, including photo reports, questions-and-answers, interviews and talks, speeches by schoolchildren and trainees attending vocational-technical schools, young workers and vocational guidance specialists, biographies of outstanding workers, features on careers, calls for volunteers to work on special projects, and information about skill competitions, recent vocational guidance literature, etc.

### Vocational guidance centres

In a number of regions, cities and Republics, territorial vocational guidance centres have been set up in recent years. Let us look at two examples: one a district centre and the other a Republican centre. In the Moskovsky District of Leningrad a vocational guidance centre was opened in 1972. Today it has eight branches, plus another in which all the educational and vocational institutions of the district are represented, a methodological section for teachers and a section for psychological and vocational counselling. The centre co-ordinates and directs all the vocational guidance work in the district, organises and conducts vocational training for teachers, provides them with methodological materials and literature, offers individual vocational counselling for pupils and their parents, disseminates interesting experience acquired by schools, and supervises the work done by the latter's vocational guidance departments.

Together with the vocational guidance laboratory of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Vocational Training and the Teachers' Further Training Institute, the centre works out and introduces methods of organising the vocational guidance work of form masters.

In the Uzbek SSR the Republic's State Committee for Labour established its own vocational counselling and selection centre for young people in

Tashkent in 1979. It employs representatives of 15 professions, including psychologists, physiologists, sociologists, teachers, economists and journalists, and carries out work in the following main areas: career descriptions, vocational counselling, vocational selection, occupational adaptation, organisational and methodological work, supply of technical equipment, and training and advanced training of vocational guidance staff. The centre has a data bank containing the bulk of the career descriptions produced in the country and also some from abroad – more than 1,800 in all. Its staff provide systematic individual vocational counselling. Materials are developed and issued to assist individual vocational counselling in the inter-school production-cum-training centres. Comprehensive adaptation programmes for young workers are drawn up and introduced.

Careers information is put out via the press, radio and television. Each year the centre produces and broadcasts ten to 15 television and radio programmes.

Vocational guidance personnel receive training and further training in the centre under individual plans and programmes, and seminars are organised for particular industries or groups of industries. Since 1982 monthly courses have been held to upgrade the skills of vocational guidance personnel in the ministries, departments, enterprises and organisations of the Republic.

### The role of the family

The family plays a major role in a young person's choice of career. Schools, enterprises, vocational training establishments, vocational guidance centres and the mass media are therefore redoubling their efforts to inform parents about educational and vocational guidance matters. This helps the parents to develop the children's work habits within the family and increase their knowledge of work in general, to evaluate their occupational aptitudes and physical abilities and to arrive, jointly with the children, at sound decisions about their future careers and the training they need.

In the Secondary School Number 11 in Riga the head of the vocational guidance unit and the form masters work actively with the parents to ensure that the family becomes the chief ally of the teaching staff in both the education and the vocational guidance of the pupils. Parents are invited to attend talks about careers organised for the pupils, they direct hobby groups, and they assist in the organisation and conduct of evenings devoted to special subjects, competitions, meetings with skilled workers from various trades, etc.

### The tasks ahead

As we have seen, the forms of vocational guidance work for young people in the USSR are many and varied. However, the range and quality of this work still fall short of modern requirements.

The USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs, as co-ordinator of such work, together with the Ministry of Education, the State Vocational Training Committee, the Ministry of Higher Education and other ministries and departments, are planning to develop all-aspects of their vocational guidance work during the present five-year period (1986-90) in order to clear up the main problems and ensure the establishment of a nation-wide system of vocational guidance.

The major tasks to be tackled include developing and improving the organisational structure of the vocational guidance system; improving co-operation between general, vocational and higher educational institutions in the field of vocational guidance; ensuring intersectoral co-ordination; establishing a centre for standard setting, methodology and the preparation of career descriptions; and co-ordinating scientific research. Additional efforts will be needed in connection with the supply of vocational guidance materials and equipment, the development and production of testing apparatus, the training and retraining of staff, the publication of information and reference materials, careers publicity, the improvement of job advertising, and the study and dissemination of vocational guidance experience.

With a view to finalising the organisational structure by 1990 it is planned in various regions to set up numerous new vocational guidance centres. In accordance with a government order adopted in July 1986, 39 such centres are to be established between 1986 and 1988 under the direct control of the USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs. Two will be set up at the Republican level (Lithuanian SSR and Estonian SSR), 29 at the provincial or city level (Kazan, Gorky, Sverdlovsk, Lvov, Grodno, Samarkand, etc.), four at the city district and four at the rural district level (Kagul in the Moldavian SSR, Tolgor in the Kazakh SSR, etc.).

The size of the staff manning the new centres will range from seven to 30 persons, as is the case in the existing ones; only a few centres – in Moscow, Leningrad, Tashkent – have substantially larger staffs. Both in the existing and in the new centres, as can be seen from the above enumeration, the vocational guidance system will be developed at all levels from rural district to Republic. We shall draw extensively on both our own and foreign experience in setting up these new centres and determining their organisational structure, functions and working methods.

Apart from providing vocational guidance and counselling directly to young people, the centres give methodological advice to the vocational guidance services and sections in the enterprises, schools and other educational establishments.

Joint vocational guidance and placement centres are also being set up. Such centres have already been operating for a number of years in Tiraspol, Bendery, Beltsy and some other cities in the Moldavian SSR.

One of the most important tasks is the training and further training of vocational guidance staff. Pedagogical institutes already have special courses for work instructors and vocational guidance staff. The Institute of Advanced

Training of the USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs and the Republican vocational guidance centres have organised further training courses for staff working in this field.

Expanding the production and improving the quality of vocational testing apparatus is another important task. An exhibition and conference on this question held by the USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs in 1985 showed that much of the existing apparatus is obsolete. Together with the Ministry of the Instrument-making Industry it has worked out targets for the development and mass production of new types of such apparatus.

Much remains to be done to improve and co-ordinate the production of literature, teaching aids, booklets, cinema and video films, and so on. The Molodaya Gvardia publishing house is now bringing out a six-volume encyclopaedia entitled *The world of careers*. A five-volume encyclopaedia on careers, first launched in Uzbekistan in 1983, is now being published in Byelorussia. During the present five-year period it is planned to publish vocational guidance literature not only in Russian but also in the languages of the national Republics.

The expansion of vocational guidance work requires comprehensive research. Studies of various aspects of vocational guidance are carried out by staff of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the USSR Academy of Pedagogic Sciences, scientific institutes belonging to the education system and a number of other scientific institutions. While the scientific and methodological foundations of vocational guidance have been laid, there are still some weak points; at times there has been insufficient co-ordination between the different sciences, and some recommendations and proposed methods have proved to be impractical. Similarly, the descriptions and classifications of occupations need to be improved.

Exchanges of experience and co-operation in the field of vocational guidance have been initiated among the member States of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The USSR State Committee for Labour and Social Affairs held a meeting in Moscow in November 1985 on the pressing methodological and organisational problems of vocational guidance, which was attended by delegates from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and the USSR. It was decided then to hold similar meetings once every two years, with a jointly agreed agenda reflecting common problems of the socialist countries and the possibilities for developing the vocational guidance system.

It would clearly be useful if this exchange of experience could be extended to include other countries and if the ILO were to take account of the lessons that emerged both in its publications and in the future work of its competent technical branches.

Notes

<sup>1</sup> M. S. Gorbachev: *Political report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress* (Moscow, Novosti Press Agency, 1986), p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1985 g.* (Moscow, Statistika, 1986), p. 240.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 241 and 243.

<sup>4</sup> *O reforme obsheobrazovatelnoy i professionalnoy shkoly*. Sbornik dokumentov i materialov (Moscow, Profizdat, 1984), p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> *Shkola i proizvodstvo* (Moscow), 1985, No. 1, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Similar experiments are also being carried out with some success in Cuba and the German Democratic Republic.

<sup>7</sup> *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1985 g.*, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

<sup>8</sup> *Shkola i proizvodstvo*, 1985, No. 3, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Narodnoe obrazovanie* (Moscow), 1985, No. 11, p. 18.

<sup>10</sup> *SSSR v tsifrakh v 1985 g.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-181.

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## Ethanol, employment and development: Lessons from Brazil

by A. Pereira

Biomass alcohol – ethanol – has received world-wide attention as a substitute for oil products since the mid-1970s because it has been the main alternative in the transport sector. While a number of other countries have started producing substitutes for petrochemicals or fuel, Brazil's experience has been the most salient.

This study provides the first in-depth analysis of the ethanol programme in Brazil, where large-scale production began in 1975 and grew steadily to 58 million barrels a day in 1984-85, in spite of unstable and falling world oil prices. It assesses the impact of the programme on oil import substitution, the balance of payments, employment and income distribution. It discusses the ethanol policies followed during the 1975-83 period and reviews the issues that are of potential interest for the planning of commercial ethanol production in other developing countries.

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