

Paris, 25th October 1994

OLIS : 25-Oct-1994

dist. : 25-Oct-1994

SG/PRESS(94)70

**OECD JOBS STUDY: EVIDENCE AND EXPLANATIONS**

The OECD has published *The OECD Jobs Study: Evidence and Explanations*, the companion report to the overview published in June under the title *The OECD Jobs Study: Facts, Analysis, Strategies*.

The first report described the characteristics and evolution of today's unemployment, analysed its fundamental causes and laid out elements of a strategy to create good, durable jobs and help people prepare to fill them. A key finding was that much unemployment, and many poor jobs, can be traced to a growing gap between the need to adapt to change and the economy's and society's ability and even willingness to change.

The two-volume *Evidence and Explanations* provides the detail that lies behind that finding, along with technical arguments and some examples of policy and experience from individual member countries. Further work at the OECD will extend the country-specific analysis. Studies are underway to examine which policy areas are particularly important for which countries and possible prescriptions; and to analyse under various policy themes, problems and solutions that affect groups of countries.

The multi-faceted analysis in *Evidence and Explanations* reflects the point made in the summary report that "there is no single recipe for full employment, but there is a menu of measures that can help move OECD countries towards higher employment with good jobs."

The opening chapter describes the nature of unemployment, and each of the following eight chapters addresses a broad policy area. Among the issues treated through the two volumes:

- Have errors of macroeconomic demand management caused unemployment, and to what extent can macroeconomic policy affect output and employment?
- How do international trade and investment flows affect jobs, and does competition from low-wage countries depress the demand for low-skill workers or force down wages in the OECD area?

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- Are we experiencing technological unemployment and how do new technologies and the sprouting of high-tech industries affect the number and nature of jobs?
- What is the relationship between wage flexibility and jobs, and how much is that flexibility reduced by factors such as collective bargaining and minimum wages?
- Do more flexible wages mean more employment? Does legislation to protect employment actually lead to fewer or to less stable jobs? Do active labour market policies get people back to work faster than passive policies?
- How can education and training systems be reformed to provide a strong educational base and encourage the lifelong learning that is required to adapt to the constant flux of necessary job skills?
- Do generous unemployment benefits encourage unemployment? How can benefit systems be reformed to reduce benefit dependency and long-term unemployment?
- Should tax systems be redesigned to switch tax burdens away from labour or away from those with low-income? How can governments do away with "poverty traps"?

Journalists may obtain a copy of the two volumes of **The OECD Jobs Study: Evidence and Explanations** from the OECD Press Division, 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris cedex 16 (tel. 45 24 80 88 or 80 89 - fax. 45 24 80 03).

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"The OECD Jobs Study: Evidence and Explanations"  
Part I: Labour Market Trends and Underlying Forces of Change, 170 pages  
Part II: The Adjustment Potential of the Labour Market, 300 pages  
France only: FF250                      All other countries: FF325; US\$60; DM98  
ISBN 92-64-14241-X (03 94 04 1)  
Available from the OECD Publications Distributors - see attached list.

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