

High unemployment has become one of the greatest problems in most countries nowadays. In Western Europe, more than twenty million workers are on the dole, and nearly half of them have been out of work for more than a year. In the USA about nine million people are jobless and the economy doesn't seem to recover. For the first time, millions of workers have part-time or temporary jobs that they may lose at any time and in which they have no social guarantees such as health and retirement benefits.

The rise in unemployment is partly due to the economic crisis. Because of the competition with Japan and other countries which produce better quality goods at a minimum cost, thousands of factories in America and Europe have been forced to close or to reduce the number of their workers. On the other hand, millions of unemployed people are jobless because the work they once did is now unnecessary or has been made easier and faster by machines: farming, mining, automobile assembly and banking rely more and more on robots and computers.

To fight unemployment, people have to adapt to a fast changing job market. More importance is now given to information, education and knowledge. Although workers still use their hands, their work is less physically tiring, but they also have to think and take more important decisions when doing a task. As an expert in economy said: "The future belongs to people who use their heads instead of their hands." It is estimated that tomorrow's young qualified worker can expect to change careers six times during his working life. If a worker learns a job today, within ten years or less, this job will probably disappear. The best way for people to prepare for these changes is through continuous training and education while they are looking for a job or in their place of work.

