



Erasmus+



PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

COMPENDIUM

OF NATIONAL GOOD PRACTICES

- on effective forecasting as a mechanism for aligning VET and Economic Development Strategies

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The views expressed within this report are those of the authors and not of the European Commission.

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INTRODUCTION









The Compendium of National Good Practices is the outcome 4 of the VET-EDS project (“Effective forecasting as a mechanism for aligning VET and Economic Development Strategies”). The essential objective of VET-EDS is to create a “toolkit... which will help labour market observatories [LMOs] to tailor their forecasting activities to the needs of VET actors and economic development audiences in their particular region or locality”. In pursuing this objective, the project draws from the knowledge and regional and national expertise of the project partners, which are LMOs and bodies from the Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Through a number of standardised *case study* (longer, more in-depth studies) and *good practice* (shorter studies) reports, each partner has presented the most important examples of good practice which highlight a relationship between the forecasting activities of LMOs and economic development in general. These *case studies* and *good practice* reports have been carried out at both the regional and national level. In order to compile and analyse the numerous examples of good practice which have been presented, a “Synthesis Report” has been produced at each level.

This compendium provides a simple overview of all the *good practice* reports which have been produced at the national level, as well as a corresponding compendium compiled from all the *case study* and *good practice* reports gathered at the regional level (outcome 2). In comparison to the outputs describing the regional level initiatives, the Compendium of National Good Practices gathers *good practice* reports currently with no *case studies*. In Output 5, on the other hand, all the *case study* reports represent a combined database made of the regional and national levels. In all the compendiums (outcomes 2, 4 and 5), a taxonomy of five “themes” is employed to structure each compendium, as in Table 1. For reference, Table 1 also lists the *case study* reports which have been produced at the national level. Each theme has a section under which the corresponding *good practice* reports are briefly described. A link to specific Annexes with the corresponding *good practice* reports are also included throughout this document.

Table 1: List of *Good Practice* and *case study* examples according to theme.

Theme	Good Practice
<u>1 Matching the education with employers’ needs</u>	Hezibi 
	Innovation Learning Work (IAL) 
	National Register of Vocational Qualifications (NRVQ) 
	Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (MYH) 
	VET Plus – The Dual Course of Study 

	<p>Child Care Professionals – VET and Labour Market Strategies to meet the increased demand in Germany</p> 
<u>2 Forecasting</u>	<p>Excelsior</p> 
	<p>Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers (ISFOL)</p> 
<u>3 Sector Specific Training</u>	<p>The sectoral skills development framework</p> 
<u>4 Integration of socially excluded into the labour market</u>	<p>Labour market activation through a literacy diagnosis</p> 
	<p>Skills development for employment of people at risk of social exclusion</p> 
	<p>Swedish for professionals</p> 
	<p>Project Prototyping Transfer as Innovative Approach in German Labour Market and VET Policy</p> 
	<p>Migrant Advisory Committee's Points Based System (PBS)</p> 
	<p>Borderless Employment</p> 
	<p>Online Learning</p> 
	<p>Guarnateed Jobs</p> 
<u>5 Analysis and Monitoring</u>	<p>National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation</p> 
	<p>Regional competence platforms</p> 

	Wales Learning and Skills Observatory 
	UKCES approach to LMI 
Theme	Case Studies
<u>1 Matching the education with employers' needs</u>	No case study
<u>2 Forecasting</u>	Infoabsolvent 
	The Occupational Compass (Yrkeskompassen) 
<u>3 Sector Specific Training</u>	No case study
<u>4 Integration of socially excluded into the labour market</u>	Work integration social enterprises (WISEs) 
	The Recognition Act in Germany – Integrating Foreign Professionals in the German Labour Market 
	Companies for work and income 
<u>5 Analysis and Monitoring</u>	Scottish Skills Planning Model 




THEME 1: MATCHING THE EDUCATION WITH EMPLOYERS' NEED


This theme consists of six examples: one from Spain, Italy, the Czech Republic and Sweden, respectively, and two from Germany. There are no national case studies available within this theme, and thus the listed *Good Practice* studies account for all the national examples which have been studied within the scope of VET-EDS.

Nevertheless the examples gathered throughout the VET-EDS project demonstrate a crucial need of instituting strong links between the providers of education and the demands on the labour market. Interestingly, the studied institutions provided examples of initiatives taken from all the main parties in the world of work; that is from the world of business (Hezibi in Spain), the trade unions (IAL in Italy) and a variety of other public agents (all remaining studies). In all the examples, however, it is also apparent that each particular institution has relied heavily on formal or informal links to the

demand side of the labour market, to succeed with its objectives. Finally, all the studied *Good Practices* (with an exception of the IAL in Italy), displayed another common feature. They are still rather new initiatives and therefore often still in a developmental stage. This developmental cycle in itself can be interpreted as a response to growing needs of increasingly qualified VET at the post-secondary level and above, as often projected for modern economies.

Table 2: *Good Practice* examples of “Matching the Education with Employers’ Need” (Theme 1).

<i>Good Practice</i>	Description
<u>Hezibi</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combines training at VET centre with workplace training (apprenticeship). • New model of work-linked training (since 2012). • Resulted as response to request from business association. • Accounts for both national and international previous experiences. • Companies are given decisive role in the learning process.
<u>Innovation Learning Work (IAL)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training institute founded in 1955 by one of Italy’s major trade unions to promote a better protection of work, from the professional qualification of workers to the competitiveness of enterprises. • Provides services, activities and training programs for both people and organisations, on the basis of a network of qualified partners in Italy and abroad. • "Tailored" professional training programs, with certified quality through the accreditation of 14 social enterprises. • Customised methodologies of teaching are implemented through the activation of a network of e.g. firms, experts, and institutions related to the world of education.
<u>National Register of Vocational Qualifications (NRVQ)</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public register of qualifications on the labour market. • Continuously updated. • Based on existing skills needs, as defined by practitioners and to promote employability in the workforce. • Enables candidates to gain nationally recognised certificates of professional qualifications accrued in the world of work. • Enables comparison with qualifications in other European countries.
<u>Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education (MYH)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MYH is one single national public agency that is responsible for all the Higher Vocational Educations (HVE) in Sweden.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MYH brings together almost all VET-programs at the post-secondary level in Sweden. It features an innovative approach combining a system with publicly-funded programs and a “demand-side” with external applications. Providers of education may be firms, municipalities, universities or other organisations. • MYH is constituted to evaluate and ensure that the supply of education meets the demand from the labour market. • Providers have to fulfil mandatory requirements regarding on-the-job training and cooperation with the world of work. • The quality of HVE in Sweden is high according to a recent external evaluation.
<p>VET Plus – The Dual Course of Study</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Combines higher education and VET into one study. ▪ Provides the labour market with well-trained and highly-educated professionals. ▪ A model to create a better connection between the studies and the future occupation. ▪ A combination of theory and practice. ▪ A way to meet the demand from the labour market.
<p>Child Care Professionals – VET and Labour Market Strategies to meet the increased demand in Germany</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Due to a new law, children aged 1-3 years now have the right to get a place in a kindergarten or a similar professional institution. ▪ This law increased the demand for skilled childcare personnel. ▪ The goal then was to increase the number of skilled professionals in the kindergartens. ▪ Different initiatives were taken to attract people to this profession. ▪ The number did increase and the share of personnel with a certified education stayed at the same level which makes it successful.



>>>For [description of individual practices see Annex 1](#)<<<

THEME 2: FORECASTING

This theme consists of two *Good Practice* examples from the Italian context. In addition, three national *case studies* from the Czech Republic (“Infoabsolvent”) and Sweden (“The Occupational Compass”) have been produced within the scope of VET-EDS. In all the studied examples, the collection, process and analysis of generic forecasted labour market information (LMI), has been provided by public bodies and generally at no cost. To effectively improve on labour market efficiency, however, LMI eventually needs to effectively include individual choices of education and

career plans. Not surprisingly, therefore, the studied examples feature easily accessible LMI and a comprehensive approach. In addition, the studied examples show a number of different functions and related LMI which are provided to complement outright occupational forecasts. All examples offer descriptive information on a large number of occupations through web applications. In the Swedish *case study* example, and for a selected number of occupations, this information is also available through short films. Excelsior, in Italy, also stands out by providing easily accessible data sets, bulletins and more in-depth thematic analysis as well as regular publications on the labour market. Interestingly, also Infoabsolvent has been explicitly designed to increase an interest in technical fields of work in addition to supporting better informed educational choices more generally. Finally, several of these good practice initiatives (e.g. Infoabsolvent, ISFOL) offer different types of self-assessments tools, in which “skills”, (and not “occupations”), is the elementary domain of analysis.

Table 3: *Good Practice* examples of “Forecasting” (Theme 2).

<i>Good Practice</i>	Description
<p><u>Excelsior</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible and free information system on the labour market. • Data and analysis on employment demand and required training. • Very large interview survey (physical or telephone) is the basis of regular forecast, conducted in each province through the network of Italian Chambers of Commerce. • Several other outputs in addition to the forecasts (medium term): open database, statistic tables, bulletins and ad hoc (thematic) as well as regular publications. • Broad target group.
<p><u>Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers (ISFOL)</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible and free information system on the labour market. • Supervised by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. • "Skills profiler" and similar tools, providing evaluation of individual skills and personality with respect to occupations and training. • Data and information on the labour market and occupations. • Detailed information on the skills required by 800 different professions, including information on knowledge, skills, attitudes, activities and work context. • Forecasts of labour demand in both the short- (one year) and medium term (five years) by industries, professions and regions.

>>>[For description of individual practices see Annex 2](#)<<<

THEME 3: SECTOR SPECIFIC TRAINING

This theme consists of a single example from Australia. Under this theme and at the national level, there are no *case studies* available, and thus the *good practice* from Australia is the only national example which has been studied within the scope of VET-EDS. At the regional level, however, five *good practice reports* and three *case studies* have been produced. The national *good practice report* describes the Australian model for analysing future demand for skills and for developing appropriate educational programs. It emphasises the need for good planning and investment in future skills, and in particular the work of Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) is highlighted as a good practice.

Table 4: *Good Practice* example of “Sector Specific Training” (Theme 3).

Good Practice	Description
<p>The sectoral skills development framework</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sectoral approach is a key feature of the VET system in Australia. • Key institutions in the sectoral skills development framework are the national and state level industry skills bodies. • Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) bring together industry, educators and governments in order to create a common industry-led agenda for skills and workforce development at the national level. • States have their own industry-led sectoral skills development networks. • Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) are autonomous, industry-led bodies that aim to identify and prioritise their industry’s skills and workforce development needs. • The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (AWPA) supports the formulation of workforce development policy and advice, and direct skills funding to industry needs. Its members represent industry, employees and employers, academia, and providers of training and education.


>>>[For description of individual practices see Annex 3](#)<<<




THEME 4: INTEGRATION OF SOCIALLY EXCLUDED INTO THE LABOUR MARKET




This theme consists of 8 examples from five countries: one from Sweden, the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively, two from Spain and three from the Netherlands. In addition, two three national *case studies* have been produced within the scope of VET-EDS: one from Spain (“WISE”) one from Germany (“The Recognition Act”) and one from the Netherlands (“Companies for work and income”).


Many of these examples focus on increasing immigration flows as a potential solution in addressing a vast skills shortage present in many professions. The first example from the Netherlands explores cross-border (Netherlands-Germany) work training and support, aimed particularly at unemployed Dutch citizens considering work opportunities in Germany. The second example from the Netherlands looks at the growing use of e-learning in provision of training for those furthest away from the labour market. The third Netherlands example looks at a variety of supportive mechanisms in tackling the unemployment, such as regionally-implemented national programme which guarantee so far excluded people places within paid employment across a range of industrial and commercial sectors. In the *good practice example from Germany*, describes a process established to assist foreign professionals in having their qualifications formally recognised. In the *good practice example from Spain*, a new customised literacy programme is described as a way to springboard people into the labour market. The Swedish example describes programs focus on the use of professional Swedish language in an attempt to shorten the educational system pathway. It is also an example of an integration of newly arrived immigrants into the labour market. Lastly, the UK example shows a specifically design system which uses immigration in reducing skills shortages.

Table 5: *Good Practice* examples of “Integration of Socially Excluded into the Labour Market” (Theme 4).

<i>Good Practice</i>	Description
<p><u>Labour market activation through a literacy diagnosis</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of literacy skills of long-term unemployed people followed by design of a tailored VET programme • Targeted to activate the low literate people. • It starts with customised literacy training and then vocational training combined with a part- time job within a specific area. • Response to the view that the VET system traditionally has offered the same training solutions for all, and thus contributing to poor performance by low literate people. • It requires the cooperation of social organisations, training centers, foundations, development agencies, etc. • It reinforces the interrelation between the business and educational worlds.

<p><u>Skills development for employment of people at risk of social exclusion</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme developed to improve the employability of the most vulnerable sectors of society. • Model of active participation of all social agents involved (business, public administration and the third sector). • The programme is both a monitoring and a training tool for the development of the most demanded skills. • Includes tools for objective measurement of skills level as well as specific training materials, as well as risk profiles including a social analysis. • Online application which allows career advisors to automate and manage the registration of candidates, their assessments and identified skills gap.
<p><u>Swedish for professionals</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different courses that focus on professional Swedish language, related to specific areas of work. • A way to shorten the path through the educational system for newly arrived immigrants. • Target groups are unemployed people with none or basic knowledge in Swedish who knows which occupation would suits them. • The idea is that the learning process of professional Swedish will increase the overall language skills. • Two objectives: Reduce the shortage of labour in certain areas and shorten the integration process. • A two step programme where the first step prepares the individual for a labour market training programme. • The second step is performed within a labour market training programme.
<p>Project Prototyping Transfer as Innovative Approach in German Labour Market and VET Policy</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An approach to gain formal recognition of competences and professional skills. • Comes from the Federal Recognition Act in 2012. • Targeting professionals with a foreign degree from a non-EU country. • A way to secure supply of skilled professionals in Germany. • Uses practical work and its assessments to gain recognition of competences and skills. • A way to attract foreign professionals to the German labour market.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both regulated and non-regulated professions.
Migrant Advisory Committee's Points Based System (PBS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using migration to support the skills needs in the UK. A way to handle the skills shortages with migration. A points-based system to modernise and strengthen the UK's immigration system. The model represents an evidence-based and independent approach to the difficult topic of migration. Led by the Migrant Advisory Committee (MAC) that consists of a chairperson and 5 independent economists.
Borderless Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims to have 800 Dutch citizens who live in areas close to the German and Belgian border get a job just across the border. Focus is on cross-border related training and support - specifically for their future jobs. Participants also have the possibility to follow language and cultural courses and they can receive on-the-job training. The project aims to bring supply and demand on the labour market in border areas together. Builds on existing knowledge of placement across borders.
Online Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People with limited labour skills are being encouraged and supported into conventional work environments. In the past they could work at a special firm, with similar colleagues and special guidance. Governmental organisations are trialling e-learning to train those furthest from the labour market. The WORK portal is the most used program for these people. It is aimed at improving the employee's employability skills as well as labour-specific skills. The e-learning program makes those with limited labour skills feel more independent, proud and included.

<p>Guaranteed Jobs</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guaranteed jobs are intended for people with limited employment opportunities. • For this reason a large number of supporting measures can be undertaken to facilitate the guidance of these people towards jobs in regular companies. • Examples of this are grants that supplement the salary value of an employee to the legal minimum wage, and no-risk insurances in case of illness. • Another important instrument is the support of job coaches providing personal- and skills training on the job often for a longer period of time. • A final important element in the approach is the use of assistive technology in the work area.
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>>>[For description of individual practices see Annex 4](#)<<<

THEME 5: ANALYSIS AND MONITORING

This theme consists of four examples from three countries: one from the Czech Republic and Sweden, and two from the United Kingdom respectively. In addition, another national example from the United Kingdom has been studied within the scope of VET-EDS (“Scottish Skills Planning Model” *case study*). The main focus of these studies is placed on monitoring trends and developments in the labour market. It concerns the identification of skills shortages (and areas of concentration) that are forecasted to be increasingly in demand in the future, as well as the consideration of challenges that are attributable to the specific forecasts and analysis. These issues are closely related to the scope of economic growth and development in general, and as such the national examples provided here contribute specific insights to the understanding of the role of skills supply within the context of development.

The *good practice* from the Czech Republic highlights a strategy to strengthen the knowledge capacity in the country aligned with the strategic objective of unlocking further development opportunities for Czech companies to become less dependant on the import of entrepreneurship from other countries. The Swedish example stresses co-operation between different actors at the regional level, through the mandatory establishment of “regional competence platforms”. The UK examples highlight the importance of gathering and analysing data, and disseminating the LMI to better align skills supply to the expanding sectors of the economy. The studies also put forward specific planning models, with particular emphasis on the importance of using evidence-based input when planning.

Table 6: *Good Practice* examples of “Analysis and Monitoring” (Theme 5).

<i>Good Practice</i>	Description
<p><u>National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and regional strategy to effectively target funds (European, national, regional, and private) to promote human capital with respect to innovation activities. • Process of participation of all relevant stakeholders through innovation platforms at the national and regional levels, and also within regional innovation councils. • The Strategy will be updated every two years, mainly in response to changes in the environment, progress of addressed activities, and barriers to implementation.
<p><u>Regional competence platforms</u></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A government commission set up in 2009 to establish regional meeting areas (Regional Competence Platforms, RCP's). • A way to gather knowledge about the supply and demand for labour, in order to facilitate efficient matching. • The RCP's are responsible for the coordination and cooperation when it comes to labour market issues on a regional level. • Cooperation between organisations and stakeholders concerned with labour market issues are crucial. The RCP's have made the cooperation easier. • A good way to produce and disseminate LMI on both regional and national level. One successful LMI is the long-term forecasts on education and training. • Many different actors involved in the RCP's, such as education providers, regional and national authorities and representatives from different industries.
<p>Wales Learning and Skills Observatory</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A national LMI observatory • Provides data, information and intelligence on Welsh labour market, including education, learning and skills sectors. • Most of it is virtual. • Follows the Skills Implementation Plan (SIP) that has detailed priorities. • The SIP sets out a key role for Regional Skills Partnerships. This in order to identify economic challenges and needed skills within the workforce.
<p>UKCES approach to LMI</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKCES is publicly funded and led by the industry. UKCES offers guidance on employment issues and skills in the UK.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is supposed to provide good labour market intelligence which facilitates businesses and people to make good choices. • One objective is to maximise the impact of employment and skills policies to support growth and a competitive skills base. • UKCES involves employers, trade unions and representatives from the Devolved Administrations. • The latest product is Working Futures 2010-2020. Looks at future jobs and skills supply and demand. • LMI for ALL brings together already existing sources of LMI to one place. Makes data available and encourages open use by websites and applications.
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>>>[For description of individual practices see Annex 5](#)<<<

ANNEX 1

PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICE (ANNEX 1)

Theme 1

Matching the education with employers' need

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VET-EDS Good Practice

HEZIBI- A new model of work-linked training

PROSPEKTIKER (Raquel Serrano and Eugenia Atin)

Introduction

In the Basque Country, the work-linked training has its roots in the Apprentice Schools promoted by large companies during the first half of the 20th century. HEZIBI was created in 2012 in response to a request made by companies of the Basque Business Association about the need to implement a new type of vocational training that would allow for the return of apprenticeships in companies. This way, thanks to the collaboration and consensus of the Basque Government, Confebask, companies and VET schools and their associations, a new model of work-linked training was defined.

- This practice reinforces the interrelation between the business and educational worlds.
- The close relationship between Basque vocational training centres and SMEs contributes to fostering the competitiveness of SMEs.
- The practice directly impacts on the competitiveness of the main economic sectors in the Basque Country by guaranteeing talent in strategic knowledge areas.
- It reflects the nature of the Erasmus+ programmes in relation to the need of cooperation between different actors and establishes a cooperative process.
- It is an innovative approach for reinforcing the strategic importance of training in the work place.

Summary

HEZIBI is a new model of work-linked training which promotes a type of training that takes place alternating periods of time between the VET centre and the workplace.

Its aim is to facilitate the student to acquire some other skills in order to complete those acquired in the VET centre, discover the daily management of a company and acquire knowledge, skills and competences needed to practise a profession and meet the specific needs of a company.

This model takes into account both other successful models at the international level and our own experiences, while necessarily adapting it to the needs and characteristics of the Basque Country.

This type of work-linked training shifts part of the learning processes to companies, giving them a decisive role in the learning process.

Context and setting

The Basque Country is situated in the north of Spain, up against France's south-western border, comprising the provinces of Alava, Gipuzkoa, and Bizkaia. Although not a nation, the Basque Country enjoys a high level of self-government in matters as important as health, education, research, security, housing, employment, economic development or taxation. It occupies a surface area of 7,235 square kilometres and is home to 2,169,038 people

In the Basque Country the work-linked training has its roots in the Apprentice Schools promoted by large companies (Euskalduna, Cerrajera, Babcock and Wilcox, La Naval, etc.) during the first half of the 20th century. These companies needed capable technicians to carry out the imported production processes and therefore they opted for training their own technicians through courses that were given at the company's workshops, and by using their own equipment, means and methods. This is how the apprenticeships began which today have become work-linked training.

HEZIBI was created in 2012 in response to a request made by companies of CONFEBASK (the Basque Business Association) about the need to implement a new type of vocational training that would allow for the return of apprenticeships in companies. This way, thanks to the collaboration and consensus of the Basque Government, Confebask, companies and VET schools and their associations, a new model of work-linked training was defined. This model takes into account internationally successful models, while necessarily adapting it to the experiences, needs and characteristics of the Basque country own production fabric.

The strategic goal of the III Basque Vocational Training Plan is to create an integrated vocational training system, impelled by the education system and the labour market. Strengthening the links with businesses and the world of production and enabling unskilled unemployed young people to acquire certified vocational competences are key objectives of the plan. The programme HEZIBI is aligned with the Basque Vocational Training Plan.

Description

In the Basque Country (Spain) the internship programmes have a long tradition, however, the HEZIBI programme, which started in 2012, is worth highlighting in greater detail. HEZIBI promotes a type of training that is delivered in a format of alternating periods of time between the VET centre and the workplace. Its aim is to support students in acquisition of some additional skills which complement those acquired in the VET centre. The programme helps students to discover the daily management of a company and acquire knowledge, skills and competences needed to practise a profession while meeting the specific needs of the company.

HEZIBI is aimed at young people aged 16-30, registered in Lanbide, the Basque Employment Service. The work done by the student in the company must be closely related to the professional profile of their training cycle. Students will acquire technical and soft skills in both the VET centre and the company.

It is an employment contract-based model whereby the students become trainees, with all of the rights and obligations this entails, and for which they will receive the corresponding salary.

Due to an affordable cost companies actively participate in the training of the current and future workers. The reduction in social security contributions and the receipt of additional funding to allow the teacher to devote time to coordinating and scheduling the students' activities entices businesses to step forward and quickly reap the benefits of having a well-trained workforce.

This type of work-linked training partially shifts responsibility for training to companies yet giving them a decisive role in a design of the learning process. It allows the classroom training to be linked with the workplace training to better integrate technical competences and transferable or social competencies. At the same time it provides young people with training and work opportunities, and ensures that companies have the qualified production personnel they need in both the short- and long-term.

These general conditions have meant that, in rapid time, Vocational Training in the Basque Country has managed to bring together companies, students and teachers, getting all of the administrative and legal procedures out of the way.

The projects generally include one year of training at the school and a one year of work-linked training, backed by a oneyear long employment contract. The students do the 1st year of the training cycle in the VET centre and in the 2nd year they will alternate between the company (not exceeding 75% of the total hours of the agreement) and the centre (not less than 25% of the hours of agreement).

The student is present practically every day at both the company's premises and the school for example, 4 hours in the classroom and 4 hours in the company. The training/ learning plan for the student is designed jointly by the VET school and the company. This plan has as reference the professional degree that the student will obtain. The VET school is responsible for searching for a participating company.

The approach towards teaching and learning processes is constantly evolving. HEZIBI, is not simply adopting models which exist in other countries but instead it is developing its own methods. Therefore, throughout the training contract (which lasts for between one and three years, with a maximum of 75% internship hours in the first year), it has been possible to design a model with the following features:

- It is intended for students in the 2nd year of any training course or for people who want to obtain a Certificate of Competence, who have volunteered for this type of training, and who have been selected by both the VET's teacher and the participating company as sufficiently mature and equipped candidates to participate in the programme and .
- The work carried out in the company must be associated with the course or certificate for which the student is studying, so that they can learn on the job.
- During the training time agreed in the contract, students learn and train in the Training Centre and in the workplace, with both learning methods complementing one another to acquire the skills defined for the Course or Certificate.
- It is an employment contract model whereby the students become trainees, with all of the rights and obligations this entails, and for which they will receive the corresponding salary.
- The company actively participates in the training of the current and future workers, reaping the benefits straight away at an affordable cost due to the reduction in social security contributions and the receipt of additional funding to allow the teacher to devote time to coordinating and scheduling the students' activities.

The training programme is supported by an agreement between the company, the students and the training centre. The company and the student sign an Employment Contract (for training and learning) which last at least for 1 year. In 2012, 126 students signed an employment contract, with the involvement of 92 companies and 27 VET centres. In 2013, a total of 281 students participated in the programme. In 2014, 255 students, 141 companies and 30 VET centres were involved in the project.

HEZIBI was created to help enhance the vocational training system. As in any process, we must work permanently to improve it, adapt it, grow it and innovate it. We must all make an effort to get work-linked training in the Basque Country to acquire an appropriate size for an advanced economy such as ours.

Impact and Replicability

This new method of learning allows the students to acquire technical skills in real environments, to improve soft skills obtained within the working environment (responsibility, initiative, teamwork etc.) and to become integrated into the labour market at what is clearly a difficult time. It represents a magnificent opportunity for the company to select the staff and gradually shape them to meet their needs.

More than 600 students and 350 companies have been involved in this HEZIBI programme. Despite the economic situation, the programme has helped to increase the number of companies that, thanks to HEZIBI, see an opportunity to plan for and prepare the professional workforce in the short-term.

For businesses, HEZIBI means being able to get people with a qualification that is closer to their needs and processes, as well as improving productivity, motivating employees and earning their loyalty.

Since work-linked training takes place partially in the company itself, it therefore is a great platform through which students can acquire the kind of direct and horizontal skills that companies are looking for (teamwork, problem solving, adapting to change, intrapreneurship, etc.) On the other hand, it reduces the costs of personnel selection and adaptation, while also enabling a much easier transfer of knowledge between people of different ages and at different employment/ career cycles.

We must not forget that this programme is also a quantitative and qualitative improvement of employment. It generates gainful employment, as the student works under a contract and gets paid by the company. In addition the programme answers the problem of low birth in our region, since the work-linked training allows students to access the labour market at an earlier stage and it also increases the number of contributors to social security.

A design of the programme makes it possible to intensify relations between training schools and companies, thanks to two key figures in the students' learning process, the tutor in the school and the instructor in the company. A fluid relationship between tutor and instructor contributes to a better mutual understanding and new areas of cooperation, as well as a better response to the needs of the people.

Work-Linked Training in the Basque Country is an innovation in the learning process which we welcome, despite all of the difficulties associated with its implementation. We believe that after further improvement the programme will continue to benefit everyone involved and society as a whole.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

IAL Co. Ltd Social Enterprise

Silvia Dusi

Introduction

IAL - Innovation Learning Work is the largest social enterprise network operating in the field of professional training in Italy.

The CISL (one of the three main Unions present in Italy) founded it in 1955 to promote a better protection of work, from the professional qualification of workers to the competitiveness of enterprises. The IAL has based its structure in labour policies gaining a leadership position in providing services, activities and training programs for both people and organizations, thanks to a network of qualified partners in Italy and abroad.

Giulio Pastore, in relation to the 1st National CGIL's Congress (Rome, 4-7 November 1949) put a new question to the assembly of delegates and to the Italian trade union about professional training, qualification and specialization of adult workers and apprentices.

This "explicit function of initiative" started in 1955 during the constitution of the IAL, a CISL's body for training, qualification and upgrading Professional, Culture and Social workers.

Since the beginning there was a strong need to "get in this field in specific situations, also to stem the alarming impoverishment of qualification in our workforce, and at the same time to allow the reopening of an important market for worker's children".

Those can happen through a professional training aimed specifically at objectives of "first training, qualification, specialization and advanced [...] in favour of apprentices and adult workers" and even then assumed to level "business, intercompany and outside the company."

Summary

Guiding the young people to choose their own way but also accompanying learning adults, especially in education in the transition to new jobs, often as a result of crises in employment, is a fundamental activity for the IAL. The identification of qualification pathways, upgrading and re-training, specialization, functional to capitalize on the talents each of which is a carrier, a process is effective only if seriously anchored to the knowledge of the labour market and professional needs it expresses. IAL, also due to the daily confrontation with the many companies that have chosen us as a partner, can be a decisive resource to help one side to recover, through training, the large mismatch between skills possessed and those required by the market and on the other, to promote and mediate the meeting of demand and supply of labour in the market, in response to the demands of relocation but also flexibility and conciliation, in synergy with the network of institutional, economic and social.

Context and setting

Some of the economic and institutional changes affecting the Italian labor market have made it clearer the need for LMIs and information on the dynamics of labor and employment, in order to support the design of effective employment policies and services.

Flexibility, dynamism and change are factors which characterized the modern Italian labour market; in respect of the past, Italy is experiencing a strong growth in both job turnover, and occupational, contractual, and professional mobility. Moreover, the economic crisis emerges with evidence in the actual dynamics of labour market, characterized by a substantive reduction of the job opportunities, a substantial increase of the unemployment rates and also an increase in the use of temporary contracts by the employers. As results, the traditional Italian employment policies, mainly based on the safeguard of the lifetime job, are losing their capacity in responding to the needs of both firms and workers, and the attention of decision makers is rather on active labour market policies aimed at promoting flexibility and security for all.

Recent institutional reforms have modified the functioning of the labour market. A comprehensive reform of the labour market was implemented in Italy in the '90s which gave significant autonomy to regional governments in these areas of policy. Since the 1990s there has been a significant devolution of functions relating to labour market policies and services, which has changed radically the relationship between the central government, the regional governments, and local governments¹. Moreover, the two national laws n.469/1997 and 30/2003, have abolished the public monopoly in the provision of employment services opening the labour market to private – profit and non-profit providers (labour market intermediaries), which were to coexist with the traditional Public Employment Services (*Centri per l'Impiego* - CPI)². Finally, as far as training and employment services are concerned, the Italian reform grants to regions wide freedom in the choice of the specific model to be adopted for the management and provision of employment services³.

¹ Based on the principle of vertical subsidiarity, the institutional-administrative system was re-defined in order to increase the local dimension, with the assumption that policies and services would have been more effective if they were closer to users, and therefore designed on their specific needs.

² According to the national law n.30/2003, public, private (profit and non profit) and “special” employment services - universities, foundations, chambers of commerce, secondary schools, business associations, and others - need to obtain an authorization at the national level to provide services such as intermediation, temporary work provision, recruitment, training, and so on.

³ Public and private providers may seek accreditation at the regional level, and thus become instruments of active policy and receive public resources to perform the related necessary activities. Regional governments are bound to create a list of all private and public accredited providers of employment services, and to define rules and norms for accreditation and for cooperation between private and public providers. The Italian situation assumes that public and private actors learn to operate and cooperate in creating networks of policies and services for the “employability” at the local level, with the aim of providing effective quality services to citizens and businesses.

Description

IAL Co. Ltd Social Enterprise

IAL - Innovation Learning Work offers services and highly competitive "tailored" training programs based on efficiency, flexibility and certified quality, guaranteed by the accreditation of 14 social enterprises. This requirement is essential for work in the field of publicly-funded education and inter-professional funds.

The IAL's system provides integrated services planned taking into account the real needs of people, enterprises and territories to develop growth opportunities looking, at the same time, to Europe where the IAL is represented by delegations in Brussels, Stuttgart and Sofia.

Quality and efficiency, flexibility and rationality, consistency and innovation, growth and participation are the foundations of our way of thinking and doing "training". The site is strictly connected with the "Training tomorrow" magazine.

This kind of training requires strong analytical skills which the IAL's network offers thanks to CESOS Co. Ltd social enterprise, an historical research centre of Economic and Social Studies sponsored by the ICFTU specialized in transformations of industrial relations systems and training policies. This is an example of an Effective training focused on the achievement of the main goals. An open training that offers solutions and innovative paths to producers, executives and managers which are too specialized to find an adequate position in the traditional structure.

This is why investments in new technologies were increased, developing a range of paths and web-based services that are provided through our platform for distance education accessible from the national portal.

The dimension of IAL action, the flexible organizing strategies and good practice are considered a real added value.

Customizing methodologies of teaching applied on a daily basis are implemented through the activation of a network of collaborations with:

- Prestigious firms and consulting companies
- Experts in research and development
- Authoritative experts from the academic world
- Managers and experts in human resources
- Institutions related to the world of education (eg. ISFOL)
- Project managers and administrators able to manage complex projects
- Trainers with proven experience

The commitment in training has been consolidated through interventions on cross-cutting themes often in accordance with representative organizations, companies and the specialized contribution of our partners, especially:

- Managers and governance training
- Human Resource Management

- Health and safety at work
- Equal opportunities
- Empowerment
- Collective bargaining and development
- Customer management
- Communication
- Marketing
- Team building
- Data and ECDL
- Linguistic area
- Management review

It also supports development strategies of enterprises with regard of the available funds (regional, national, communitarian and allocated by inter professional funds).

Innovation-Learning–Work is an important business partner for companies offering an high quality training support in the analysis of requirements and management training.

The **vocational training courses** are structured to meet the needs of young people to acquire skills, abilities and qualifications spendable in the labour market and the need for workers to maintain and constantly update their skills, including in relation to the needs expressed by companies. The vocational training system, therefore, includes a set of courses and training opportunities, calibrated - also flexibly - because of the profile and needs of the people, confirming its strategic role for the promotion of adaptability and employability of young people and workers.

The profound changes in the labor market determined by the changes in the productive structures of the countries, technological development and globalization, have accentuated the weakness of the traditional tools of employment policies especially related to the problems of rising rates of inactivity and unemployment long-term and, in particular, of the entering and re-entering the market.

The goal of the European economy and society of knowledge postulates in fact a rewriting of the systems of employment and training around the axis of the skills, such as body of knowledge and skills necessary to exercise their citizenship, which must therefore be fed and increased throughout a lifetime to follow adaptively, not in a subordinate way, the trajectories of a development that wants to be economic and social, collective and individual. For this employability - understood as "everyone's ability to be employed", i.e., the ability to actively seek work, to find it and to keep it" - becomes the common strategic goal of a set of political, educational, labor and welfare, to program and if necessary reform from a perspective of efficient integration.

Promoting employability means overseeing the process of building skills, exercise their professions and their relationship with the quality of work, affecting the path of integration of young people into work as the one of adult workers.

The investment in human capital and the adoption of strategies to support learning throughout life then are the main ways to improve the quality and labour productivity, participation, integration and social cohesion. All institutions, economic and social, including the agencies that operate in the services and training for the job should go towards these objectives.

To increase the employability is and remains the foundational purpose of the IAL, as a synthesis of a strategic mission is anchored in the promotion, for all people, of active participation in the life and work and in supporting growth qualified, productive and sustainable enterprises.

Why it works

The IAL's structure emerges clearly in its distinctive features that still characterize the journey:

- Work and quality are and remain the centre of our action in its values of independence, dignity and freedom. They constitute the major challenge for the trade union through the contractual and concerted action it reasserts the irreplaceable function of vehicle of citizenship and participation as the basis of our constitutional pact.
- A good training is the one focused on the person, the one who speaks the language of the promotion, protection, citizenship, trying to translate constraints into opportunities. The one which contrasts "poverty" by supporting individual talents in a larger project of helping people to try to be protagonists of their own destiny. In this sense it's necessary to use all the resources to make effective choices and being aware of the possible consequences that may result for themselves and for the society.

The IAL's original mission through the years has been adapt to the evolution of the economy and society, with the rhythm and character of industrial development, the changing world of knowledge and work, to the demands of younger workers. There was a shift from a standardized, sectorized, centralized type of market to another specialized, flexible, decentralized and unstructured.

In this direction also the needs and desires of workers and younger people are changing. Those are real needs that need realistic and personalized answers.

All guidance services, vocational training and matching supply and demand, of training courses about work, qualification, requalification and retraining, updating profiles and skills, even at an high level, are all available through an e-learning procedure.

Since the beginning our mission has been an effective, open and quality training for people. Facing the current challenges our main object is to start from the people and from work finding a stronger ability to act with the logic of innovation, to set up a network of services for training and work following the efficiency and effectiveness of the "market". At the same time this project requires a real commitment to the values of solidarity and attention to the social cohesion.

Today we're starting over as a social enterprise, delivering our mission through our name - Innovation, Learning, Work - proud of our history and of the professionalism matured In time . Thanks to the widespread presence throughout the country and in major areas of 'Europe, the qualified partnerships with the business community, university and research system even at the international level.

The IAL system: the regional Co. Ltd

The Secretary of the Confederation and the USR have started with the reorganization of the entire IAL's network and it has been concluded with the transformation of 14 Regional IAL in Co. Ltd with the title of Social Enterprises.

The National IAL, turned into joint-stock company with the title of social enterprise, has acquired 10% of the Co. Ltd regional's capital share consolidating in this way the "connection" between those companies and the architecture "system" IAL.

The regional CO. LTD delegates also to the national IAL, beside the representative functions, the formation of employees, executive and management functions, coordination of inter- sectarian activities as well as a permanent audit on the financial balance sheet of all companies.

This path of reorganization and rehabilitation has taken as central references all the expressions of work, its culture and its values, combining the actualized problems with the priorities of education and training.

IAL has as its purpose the promotion of human resources and the development of human potential through the medium of education as an opportunity for personal and professional growth.

In this sense, the IAL main practice areas are:

- implementation of training activities, training and retraining, further training or retraining
- promotion, organization and implementation of training, cultural and social activities, in favour of Italian or foreign workers and migrants in Italy or abroad
- implementation of educational activities for young people and adults
- information and awareness on the social and economic problems in the labour market
- career guidance and matching between supply and demand
- carrying out studies, research, testing and scientific and technical assistance, in collaboration with institutions and public or private
- promotion, organization and participation in conferences, studies and surveys on economic and social matters concerning the organization of work and professionalism
- elaboration, publication and dissemination of studies and research, and more generally of teaching and learning material
- participation in activities and initiatives promoted between vocational training institutions, including transnational, in coordination with international organizations or nation states

Impact and Replicability

Since the beginning the IAL was an "institution", the mission has been an open and quality training for people. Facing the current challenges it's necessary to start from the people and work by setting up a network of services for training. At the same time it is important to keep in mind the innovation but to remain faithful to the values of solidarity typical of the trade union action.

While Economy, society, the world of knowledge and work are changing at the same time the needs of people are changing too and gets stronger the need to start again from the work, the value of autonomy and dignity.

Since when the work was considered only "a trade" the IAL has trained thousands of young people, workers, citizens, enterprises through these fifty years of extraordinary transformation of the country and its culture from the economic and social point of view. The IAL offers paths and growth opportunities both professional and personal as a result of the careful listening to the needs and expectations of people. This action has become more and more complex, specialized and innovative in its methodologies and techniques.

The belief that a good training is the priority based on the promotion and protection of the person, trying to translate constraints into opportunities is the thing that characterize our strategy of work. A

belief which is confirmed as we move from an unprecedented economic and financial crisis to a new perspective of growth that will be credible, according to the renewed European strategy, if it will be "sustainable, smart, inclusive".

Improving work and its quality is still an ongoing challenge which greater productivity and competitive capacity of the entire system of the country depend on.

This is a challenge giving priority to training in all fields, its value and its quality, not only with respect to education but also to society and the labour market, as a cornerstone of a system of safeguards intended to support the growth of each person, through opportunities of learning involving "long life" and "long wide".

This system is also able to help workers inside and outside the workplace referring to the model of "active welfare". The aim is to consolidate their active policies starting from the supply and demand encounter to the demand of labour intermediation, from the orientation training to the continuous one. The subsidiary role of social actors is valued through bilateral agencies and interprofessional funds which represent in the trade union's action an exercise complementary to bargaining and participation.

When training was considered only "training" the IAL has taken the idea of functional training to help the development of the people's total capacity to try to be protagonists of their future using all the resources, making effective choices being aware at the same time of the possible consequences.

Our crucial role in the world of work has given us the privilege to grow within the real society among young people, workers and closer to the enterprises.

Listening to their needs and responding to their expectations we have improved the social character of our action so we pursued, team up with the trade union work, the compatibility between economic growth, well-being and social cohesion essential condition for the "citizenship".

Citizenship is challenged today by the labor market, the weak participation of women, young people, stuck without real job offers and by the economic crisis that created also difficulties for the reintegration of the over 50 in mobility.

Those are real needs that require personalized solutions. Through the e-learning program is possible to obtain guidance services and work training matching with supply-demand with the aim of requalification, skills updating or a complete retraining.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

National Register of Vocational Qualifications

Vera Havlickova, Marta Sobkova

Introduction

The National Register of Vocational Qualifications is a continuously built-up public register of all full and partial qualifications on the Czech labor market, tailored to the needs of citizens and employers. The register is a state-sponsored activity fulfilling many purposes, such as:

- It enables candidates to gain nationally recognized certificates of their professional qualifications without having to sit in the classroom.
- It is based on the labour market skill needs defined by practitioners and thus contributes to better employability of the workforce in the labour market and economic development.
- It serves as a framework for initial and continuing education and recognition of learning outcomes.
- It enables comparison of Czech qualifications with qualifications in other European countries.

Summary

The NRVQ is an initiative demonstrating a good practice in relation to streamlining the recognition of skills and qualifications. It describes the objectives, design and processes involved in the setting up of this national register, and the role of institutions involved in the process of establishing the framework for recognising qualifications at national level.

It also provides a link to the English version of the database of national qualifications, which takes into account the knowledge and skills individuals need to necessary demonstrate during the process of testing (to be awarded a certificate confirming the appropriate qualification).

This is a significant step towards interconnecting the Czech qualifications and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Context and setting

The chapter comprises of three parts:

- a- Economy, geography
- b- Nature of the VET concerned
- c- Nature of the Economic Development (local/ sector etc.)

The Czech Republic is a fully-fledged parliamentary democracy, and is one of the faster growing economies as well as one of the ten countries that entered the European Union on 1st May 2004. The population of the Czech Republic reached a total number of 10,538.3 thousand at December 31, 2014.

The structure of economy has changed considerably since 1989 when the transformation of social system started. The share of agriculture and heavy industry in the economy has decreased while the share of services has increased. The share of manufacturing in the economy (Gross Added Value and employment) is significantly higher than on average in the EU-28. The business service sector is developing rapidly.

The industrial economy traditions date back to the 19th century. VET that is related to industry also has long history and traditions.

Most of vocational education and training is provided by secondary vocational schools (ISCED 3C) and secondary technical schools (ISCED 3A). This upper secondary education is generally open to all applicants who have fulfilled the compulsory school attendance of nine years and meet the admission criteria (they are usually set by the school director).

Like most countries in Europe, the Czech Republic's population is ageing. The total number of economically active population is in decline. It is expected that the proportion of the 65+ age group will increase from current 16% to 24% by 2030 and up to 32% before 2065. The ageing of the population will have impact on particular sectors of education and training⁴. The role of adult education and training will increase considerably and especially basic and secondary schools are already facing the problem of less young students. Secondary VET schools are supported by national and regional authorities and by national and European structural funds to develop their capabilities for adult education.

Another way to support the supply of qualifications for the labour market and to reduce the risk of its lack from the side of the IVET is recognition of qualifications obtained outside the educational system.

This system tool has been developed since 2005 within the project Development of the National Qualifications Framework (*"Rozvoj národní soustavy kvalifikací – NSK"*). The project has laid the basis for the verification of especially skilled crafts and services (ISCED 3C). Within the follow up project Development and implementation of NQF (*"Rozvoj a implementace NSK"*) they were complemented by an appropriate level of qualification to upper secondary (ISCED 3A) and higher level of education (ISCED 5).

⁴ The education system of the Czech Republic comprises nursery schools, basic schools, secondary schools, conservatoires, language schools entitled to administer the state language examinations, and tertiary professional schools. All these institutions are codified by the School Act. The highest level of educational qualifications within the education system is gained in higher education institutions, which are subject to the Higher Education Institutions Act.

Description

Reason for inclusion

The National Register of Vocational Qualifications is bridging the VET sphere and employment in the economy. It helps to match both formal and substantive requirements of employers on qualification and skills of employees and job applicants. It is a tool for obtaining a state certified document of competences and knowledge for job applicants who want their qualifications to be recognised in practice or in professions.

This way the employability of individuals, who lack the right formal education the economy needs, is being enhanced. From a macroeconomic point of view, this strengthens the flexibility and adaptability of the workforce in the labour market and, ultimately, the competitiveness of the economy. Another effect is to strengthen the public's interest in lifelong learning. The implementation of this system in the Czech Republic has benefited from experience in other countries - in terms of how to recognize learning outcomes achieved by various forms of education. It confirms the transferability of this system.

Type of VET and policy

There is a traditionally high attainment of upper secondary education (ISCED 3), in particular of vocational education in the CR. Vocational education accounts for three quarters of all upper secondary education graduates. This type of education is either concluded by a matura examination (ISCED 3A – 47% of all upper-secondary graduates) enabling further studies at tertiary education level or graduating without matura (ISCED 3C – 29%). The latter is intended mainly for direct entry into the labour market (5). For a long time there has been a decline in interest for vocational secondary education and rising interest for general secondary education. Pupils also chose more often secondary education with matura rather than without matura examination. While the young population decreases, the absolute numbers of study places at the secondary general schools (gymázia) remain stable which results in a declining proportion of learners in vocational education

Adults can take part in any form or level of VET provided within the school system⁶. As concerns training programmes, levels of qualification, curricula, quality assurance and assessment, no distinction is made between young IVET students and adults. Most schools offer part time and distance courses suitable especially for adults (these courses usually last one extra year). However, the participation of adults in these formal forms of study is rather low.

Target groups

- Interested individuals applying for the recognition of a qualification
- Authorising bodies (mostly other ministries different from the Ministry of Education)
- Authorized persons/bodies (the examiners, ie. persons who verify professional qualifications, must meet the competency requirements set out in the assessment standard of the relevant professional qualification, and material and technical equipment for the execution the exam).

(⁵) The rest 24 % of upper secondary graduates represent those of general programmes (only ISCED 3A level concluded with matura).

(⁶) The so called 'school system' is a system of schools (under responsibility of the Ministry of Education) with the main task of providing formal education to the children and youth leading to a qualification level (IVET).

a- Organisations involved and stakeholders (demand and supply side)

Supply side:

- The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports coordinates the activities of central administration bodies, approve, amend, repeal and publish the list of complete vocational and vocational qualifications broken down according to the competences of authorising bodies, approve, amend and repeal qualification standards and assessment standards and support the activities of the Board materially and financially;
- Authorizing bodies (other relevant ministries) decide on granting authorisation to an applicant who is legally entitled to be granted authorisation provided that he/she satisfies all conditions for granting authorisation, monitors exams, maintains records stipulated by the law and provides them to the National Institute for Education and participates in preparing qualification standards and assessment standards.
- Authorized bodies (schools, associations, firms, public or private providers of continuing education etc.) assess learning outcomes of learners (exam applicants) regardless of the method they were obtained.
- Stakeholders (chambers of employers, associations, representatives of schools and universities) participate in preparing qualification and assessment standards.
- National Board for Qualifications is an advisory body of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in the field of qualifications.
- National Institute for Education administers the information system NRVQ and in cooperation with the National Board for Qualifications, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and other stakeholders prepares qualification and assessment standards, submits them to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports for approval and publishes them on the NRVQ information system at www.narodnikvalifikace.cz.

Demand side:

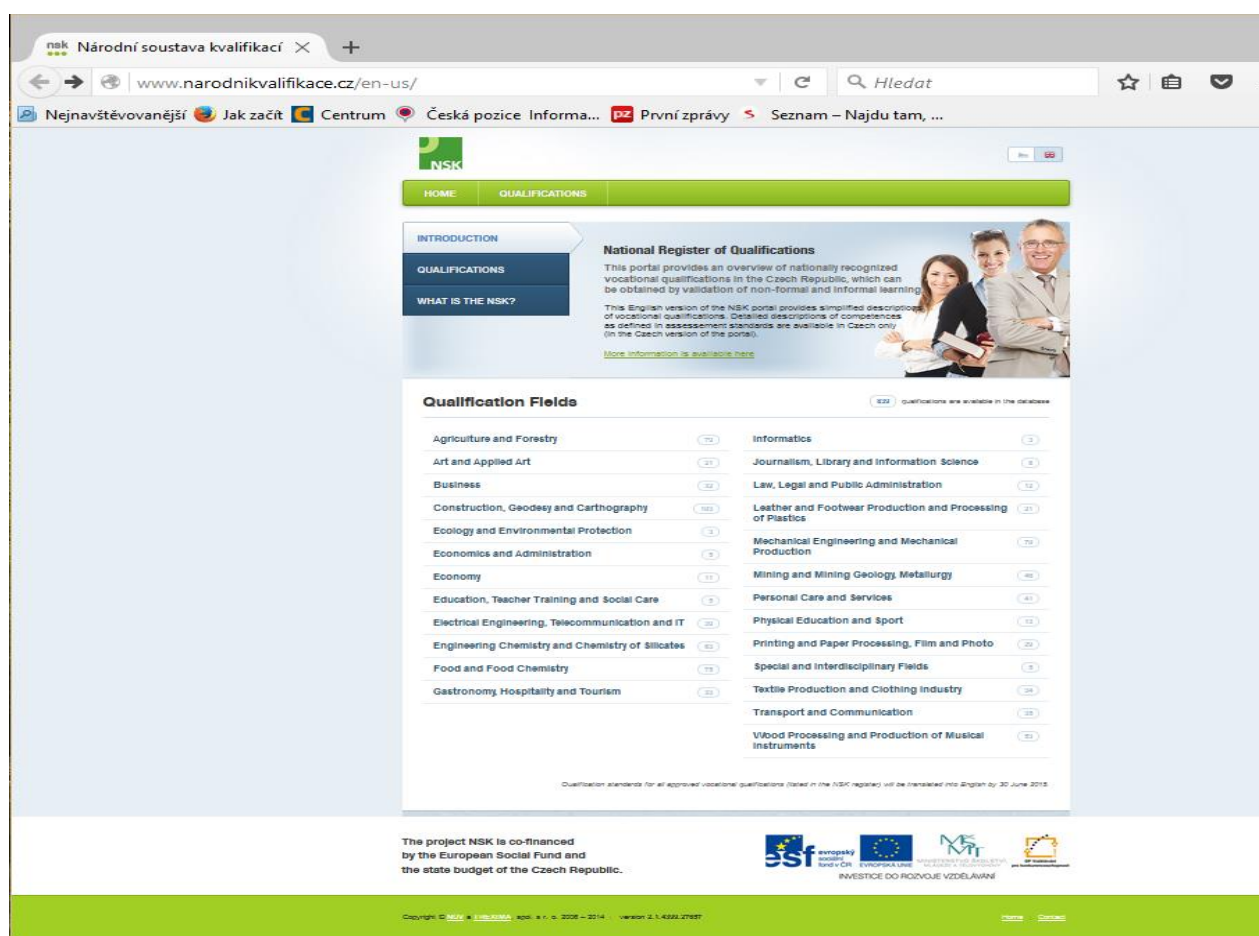
- Interested individuals

How it is organized

The legal framework for the NRVQ is governed by the act 179/2006 Sb., on the Verification and Recognition of Further Education Results. The Act (effective since 2007) defines the **National Register of Vocational Qualifications** (NRVQ) that contains descriptions of qualifications in the form of standards for the so called (a) vocational and (b) complete vocational qualifications). In recent years, these have been gradually developed nearly 850 vocational qualifications of the total planned 1000-1100 (state to December 2015). All the so far approved standards and related information are published in the NRVQ information system (see English version at <http://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/>) The English version provides simplified descriptions of vocational qualifications. Detailed descriptions of competences as defined in assessment standards are available in Czech only (in the Czech version of the portal)

The development of the NRVQ takes place through the creation of partial qualifications by sector councils, in which employers and other actors in particular sectors. The sector councils monitor the coverage of their sectors by vocational qualifications and propose, with reference to the National System of Occupations and the needs of the labour market, new vocational qualifications as needed.

Picture: Home page of National Register of Qualifications



Source: <http://www.narodnikvalifikace.cz/en-us/>

Any person who has gained certain skills and knowledge in some vocational field may, after meeting relevant requirements, acquire a nationally valid certificate of the respective qualification that is recognized by the employers. Distinction is made between vocational and complete vocational qualifications:

- **Vocational qualification** is defined as “ability of a person to duly perform a task or a set of tasks within an occupation”. It corresponds to certain career opportunities (e.g. furniture assembly, installation of lifts, manufacture of upholstered seats, sports massage, flower arrangement, cold dishes catering, production of ice cream, etc.), but does not cover the whole occupation.
- **Complete vocational qualification** is defined as a professional competence to duly perform all the tasks within an occupation (e.g. pastry chef, hairdresser, plumber, economist, engineering technician, etc.). They are equivalent to qualifications acquired within IVET.

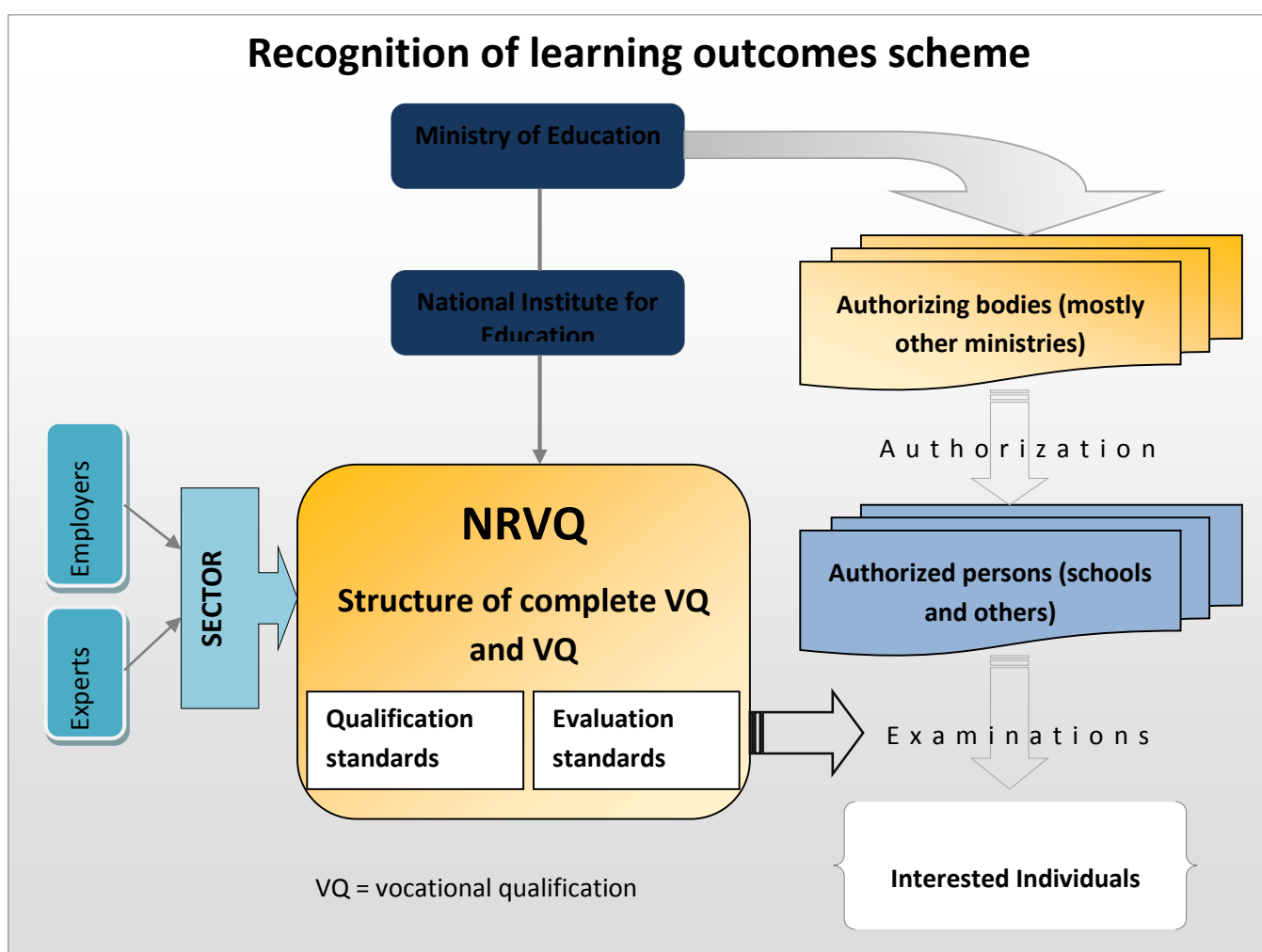
To obtain vocational qualification, the applicant needs to demonstrate all competencies listed in the qualification standard of the National Register of Vocational Qualifications. Verification is carried out by means of examination implemented by the so-called **authorised persons** (often schools)⁷. Upon passing the exam the person gets a nationally recognized certificate of a vocational qualification.

⁷ Authorised persons are licenced by the so-called awarding bodies, which are organisations of state administration relevant to the given field (ministries or the Czech National Bank).

Acquiring complete vocational qualifications, that is equivalent to those acquired within formal schools system, is more demanding process. It is necessary to acquire all relevant vocational qualifications. This allows for the trade licence in the field. If a person wants to obtain also the respective qualification level, the same as awarded within IVET, he/she must subsequently pass an examination required for the corresponding field of study within IVET (certified by the *maturita* or vocational certificate) at a school. It is so far just rare to acquire complete qualifications in this manner.

A significant step towards interconnecting the Czech qualifications and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) was the approval of the National Referencing Report by the Czech Government in July 2011. As a direct consequence, as of July 2011, all qualification standards for vocational qualifications are submitted for approval to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in both Czech and English versions.

Diagram – Processes of recognition and validation of learning outcomes



Source: NTF.

Continuing (vocational) education programmes provided outside of the formal school system usually respond directly to the demand of the market. Upon development of programmes existing national registers may be consulted, e.g. the National Register of Occupations (www.nsp.cz) or the National Register of Vocational Qualifications (narodnikvalifikace.cz). Since 2009, the providers of the retraining programmes (accredited within the active labour market policy) must link the content of these courses

to the National Register of Vocational Qualifications, thus, the successful participants can get a nationally recognised certificate.

What worked and why

The NRVQ has been developed within two projects co-financed by the European Social Fund and the state budget of the Czech Republic. The first one concentrated on the design and pilot implementation was developed as a project of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports in 2005-2008 (*The NRVQ Development*). In 2009 a new project *The NRVQ Development and Implementation* (NVRQ 2) started, was implemented by the National Institute for Education. The second project finished in 2015.

Both projects strengthen substantially the role of the social partners (especially employers) and their involvement in the area of setting the content and structure of qualifications. They also support the development of educational programmes leading to qualifications and integration of initial and continuing education.

Constraints

The demand for the recognition of vocational qualifications in majority of fields develops rather slowly due to low awareness and maybe also costs and complexity of examinations. Policy measures are being implemented to further promote the system and enhance awareness and it is expected that the number of applicants shall increase.

Impact and Replicability

Labour market requirements described in the qualification standards for complete vocational qualifications will gradually play a key role in creation and revision of the initial (vocational) education curricula too.

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Erasmus+

VET-EDS National Good Practice

HVE in Sweden: Partnership and Quality Under a Common Agency

Victor Tanaka

Introduction

1. In OECD countries, providers of **HVE** are an **increasingly important** set of institutions in providing professional qualifications to meet future labour market needs.
2. From a national perspective,
 - a. from the start MYH has showed increasing **popularity** amongst students as well as potential providers; and
 - b. quality controls, evaluations, and a recent quantitative study show **good results**.
3. From an international perspective, an OECD study emphasizes MYH as
 - a. a “successful innovation” with “scope for bottom-up and **entrepreneurial approaches** within a publicly funded framework”;
 - b. “a model with **strong links** to employers and labour market needs against a background in which most vocational provision has been very separate from employers”; and, therefore,
 - c. “a model... possibly more **exportable** than other models whose success in national contexts depends heavily on

Summary

In OECD countries, providers of Higher Vocational Education and Training (HVE) are an increasingly important set of institutions in providing professional qualifications to meet future labour market needs (Cedefop, 2012). In Sweden, since 2009, the whole set of HVE programmes has been gathered under a common state agency (MYH), with common rules for, e.g., quality control, workplace learning, and mandatory partnership requirements for providers. Potential providers are chosen according to procedures, and granted providers may be private actors, municipalities or even universities. Following positive results from evaluations, and increasing popularity amongst students and potential providers, the number of students enrolled in HVE have increased considerably. At the individual level, a recent quantitative study shows positive results regarding employment and income figures for graduates. From an international perspective, an OECD evaluation stresses that MYH is a successful institutional innovation that may be relatively easy to replicate, promoting strong partnership on the labour market and the provision of programmes of high quality.

deeply entrenched cultural expectations.”

Context and setting

The share of people who have attained at least upper secondary education is relatively high in Sweden in an international comparison, in total (25-64 years) yet particularly when excluding the younger share (25-34 years) of the population. The attainment of tertiary education is high as well from an international perspective. Vocational education at the upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary level is at the OECD average, yet with the male share considerably above the OECD average and the female share somewhat below.

In Sweden, the educational system is rather cohesive up to the secondary school level. Before secondary school, students choose and apply amongst a set of national programmes, of which twelve are categorized as Vocational Education and Training (**VET**). At the post-secondary level, there are numerous programs of higher vocational education (**HVE**), meaning that these are “postsecondary non-university programmes closely connected to labour market needs” (Kuczera, 2013, p. 10). This is the educational domain of *Myndigheten för yrkeshögskola*, the “Swedish National Agency for Higher Vocational Education” (from now on **MYH**), which is responsible for administrating the provision of certified and qualified HVE. In addition, there are also a large number of professional higher education qualifications at both bachelor’s and master’s level. At all the levels of the educational system in Sweden, the vast majority of education is publicly provided and tuition free. To a large extent, the supply of educational programmes from the secondary school level and above is determined by what Swedish students demand. HVE programmes are an exception in this respect, as MYH is formally stipulated to take labour market needs into close consideration when choosing its supply of educational programmes.

The Swedish economy is export-oriented, with nearly half of its gross domestic product depending on exports abroad. The manufacturing industry is thus an important element of the economy, and “technology and manufacturing” engages about one of six students enrolled in programmes provided by MYH (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, 2015, p. 15). The public sector is another dominant feature of the Swedish economy, and the third largest set of programmes provided by MYH sorts under “healthcare, nursing and social work”, covering 10 percent of the total number of students enrolled. The largest set of programmes, by far, is “economics, administration and sales” (31 percent).

Description

Reason for inclusion

As argued by Kuczera (2013, pp. 12-13), HVE equips a substantial share of the labour force in OECD countries with professional qualifications to meet present and future labour market needs. The category “technicians and associate professionals” is the one most closely linked to postsecondary VET, and while accounting for 15 percent of EU employment, the category is expected to generate nearly two thirds of total employment growth between 2010 and 2020 in the EU (Cedefop, 2012). In Sweden, as represented by MYH, HVE has been growing for some time now and during 2014 there were almost 19 000 individual seats to be applied for. On average, more than two applications were received for each seat that could be applied for. In 2015, the national government announced that MYH will expand by another 8 500 seats during the next two budget years, explicitly to address skill

shortages and match growing inefficiency on the Swedish labour market (Swedish Government, 2015).

In several aspects, MYH appears to stand out as a successful institutional innovation, both in comparison with other segments of the Swedish educational system (Lind and Westerberg, 2015) as well as from an international perspective (Kuczera, 2013). According to MYH's estimates, which are part of the agency's quality control process, about 86 percent of the HVE graduates were employed or self-employed one year after graduation. As compared to the figures before the graduates were enrolled in the MYH programme, it corresponds to an increase of about 20 percentage points. And while impressive in itself, another successful result is that this particular type of education appears to improve mostly for the groups of students with least favorable figures before enrollment. This means that MYH programmes feature a catch-up effect, were young women, foreign-born, and students within technical programmes (ICT, and technique and manufacturing) improve mostly as of employment and income figures. MYH's graduates also appear to stand out in comparison with graduates with a degree from tertiary school, with equal employment rates after controlling for individual characteristics (Lind and Westerberg, 2015). A degree from tertiary school does have a substantially stronger positive effect on income, yet not surprisingly as it is a longer education which in general is attributed both higher status and quality.

Type of VET and policy

MYH was established in July 2009 as an overarching state agency. It was instituted to solve the previously addressed problem of how to bring together existing VET-programs at the postsecondary level. MYH followed on and, for an overlapping period, also gathered the set of programmes offered by the preceding agency *Kvalificerad yrkesutbildning*, KY, which was established on trial in 1996 and set up in permanent form 2001. Under the new administration, a number of different programs were given a new and common institutional status, for example allowing its students access to the national study loan system (CSN). Most importantly, however, the reform was targeted to strengthen the ties between studies at this level of education and forthcoming (or at least existing) demands on the labour market.

The purpose of this postsecondary educational form is to "offer up-to-date programmes in areas where employers meet shortages of qualified labour", with a unique approach within the Swedish educational system in that it offers "shorter programmes (than in tertiary school) which feature practical learning through workplace learning and a high level of involvement from the parties of the working life" (Lind and Westerberg, 2015, p. 3). The approach may be seen as a "separate tier of postsecondary institutions to deliver short cycle career-oriented programmes" that exist in many countries, like "education colleges in England, TAFE's in Australia, professional colleges in Switzerland, professional academies in Denmark, *Fachschulen* in Germany, polytechnics and junior colleges in Korea, and community colleges in the United States and Canada" (Kuczera, 2013, p. 18). The Swedish variant, however, "is distinctive in that it is defined as a set of programmes and a funding stream, such that it can be delivered by many providers both in the public and private sector".

Almost two of three programmes offered correspond to two years of full-time studies. The vast majority of programmes range between one and three years of full-time studies, yet both longer and shorter programmes may exist (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, 2015, p. 16). The shorter length

and practically-oriented focus of the programmes that MYH offers imply that these are narrower and less theoretical as compared to those pursued in tertiary school. To be eligible for MYH, a general basic requirement is that the student must have a finished degree from secondary school.

Nevertheless, the educational provider may make exceptions from this rule for up to 20 percent of the students enrolled (Ministry of Education and Research, 2009, 3 kap 4 §). As a complement, the educational provider is free to set up additional eligibility requirements (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008, p. 45). For instance, this may imply screening on the basis of grades from secondary school, specific experience from the labour market or specific earlier studies, and ad hoc tests designed for the particular program.

Target groups

With a major goal being to “provide postsecondary VET which responds to the needs of the labour market” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2008, p. 1), the target group of MYH is broad indeed. As pointed out by Lind and Westerberg (2015), the offered supply of educational programmes caters to, for instance, professionals in need of further training and education or those who are pursuing a new professional career. Another important target group is recent graduates from secondary school, and an explicit aim is to attract individuals which otherwise would not have continued to study after secondary school. In comparison to students in tertiary school, MYH students were on average enrolled at a higher age (23 years as compared to 21), they were to a much higher degree employed before starting their studies, and they had considerably lower school grades from primary school. In general, MYH students may be considered a relatively strong group according to socioeconomic indicators, yet not as strong as those choosing to study on tertiary school (Lind and Westerberg, 2015, p. 16).

Organizations involved, stakeholders, and how MYH is organized

The organization of MYH, and the stakeholders involved in its activities, may be described as follows:

“By being assigned the tasks of control and evaluation of all VET-education at the postsecondary level in Sweden, [MYH] is expected to stand as guarantor for the quality of this particular type of education and training. Providers of education at this level may be firms, municipalities and even universities. Irrespective of the provider, each program that [MYH] accepts to give state grants has to establish a directory involving representatives of the working life, including a student representative. The authority is responsible for evaluating both the quality of the granted programs as well as its results. Thus, for instance, assessments of the job-rate are made systematically, there is a constantly ongoing process of physical supervision, students (“quality agents”) are explicitly encouraged to report flaws, and, in extreme cases, [MYH] has the authority to cancel a program.” (Tanaka, 2015, p. 8)

As a state agency, MYH is regulated to “take measures to assure that the programmes... respond to the needs of qualified manpower on the labour market” (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, 2014a, p. 11). Therefore, “occupational analysis” have been carried out on a yearly basis since the agency was set up in 2009, amounting to about 120 separate analysis by the end of 2013. These analysis are important elements in supporting MYH’s decisions on whether to accept or not accept applications for grants to start a program. Another basis for taking these decisions, and a more recent kind of analytical output is the report “Regional demands for skills and education within MYH”

(Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan (2014b)). In particular, the purpose of the report is to make assessments of forthcoming needs at the regional (county) level, to support decisions on where to allocate particular programmes. As with the “occupational analysis”, this type of Labour Market Analysis and Information (**LMI**) gathers information from a number of different sources, including labour market forecast at the national and regional level, and analysis provided by different trade associations. To some extent, interviews with specific employers and interest groups may be carried out to complement the available LMI (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, 2014a, p. 11). Under 2013, 1 185 applications were received and considered by MYH and more than two thirds of these were rejected (Myndigheten för yrkeshögskolan, 2015, p. 11).

What worked and why

As has been argued previously, both in Sweden and in other OECD countries HVE appears to account for an increasingly important set of institutions in providing professional qualifications to meet present and future labour market needs. In Sweden, the recent government decision to expand MYH’s activities under the next two budget years may be seen as a continued political recognition of the importance of MYH in addressing future labour market needs. From the “demand side”, both the number of applications to MYH (for grants to organize VET programs) and the number of students enrolled has increased considerably after the economic downturn in 2011.

According to the latest OECD evaluation, MYH appears to be a “successful innovation, with demand from students, support by employers, and interest among bodies wishing to run courses”, and giving “scope for bottom-up and entrepreneurial approaches within a publicly funded framework” (Kuczera, 2013, p. 18). In particular, the report highlights the achievement of having implemented a model which appears to have created strong links with employers as well as with present and future labour market needs. Based on the view that training in the workplace is a valuable feature – to train and develop soft and hard skills, for potential recruitment, and as a proxy for employer needs or skill shortages – MYH’s “mandatory principle” is argued as key to foster “partnership between training providers and employers”:

“Training providers understand that it is a condition of funding that they pursue such partnerships, while employers for their part appreciate that if they do not offer training places, then the publicly funded training from which they benefit will be diverted to other parts of the country or other sectors of industry. This principle not only supports workplace training with all the benefits that follow, it also has the power to foster local partnerships between vocational programmes and employers with all sorts of spin-off benefits – for example in sustaining the familiarity of the teaching profession with the needs of modern industry.” (p. 19).

Another key ingredient in the model is that MYH is assigned overall responsibility for HVE at the national level. As a result, the agency has developed a number of instruments in responding to this fundamental and demanding requirement. This includes regular inspections of programmes; the principle that educational providers are directly responsible for the quality of the programmes they offer; a system of personal contacts between providers, students and tutors during the workplace training; and the use of follow-up questionnaires targeted to students and training instructors (Kuczera, 2013, p. 20). Notwithstanding its potential, OECD (2010) has pointed out that a system for assuring a minimum level of quality in workplace training is important, to prevent the exploitation of students as cheap labour and to avoid that too narrow and firm-specific skills are formed. The overall

assessment is that MYH's system for qualification control is functional, and that it appears to work well also regarding workplace training. The two OECD evaluations that have been carried out (Kuczera 2008 and 2013) point in this direction, and so do the results from the follow-up questionnaires that are regularly carried out by MYH. Recently, moreover, the first econometric study has been carried out by Lind and Westerberg (2015), allowing a more careful and comprehensive evaluation of the value added by HVE at the individual level. As previously commented, the results show significant and relatively strong positive effects on income and employment.

Constraints

Two intrinsic problems appear to be built-in into the approach adopted by Sweden, as implemented in 2009 through the reform which established MYH. Both have to do with the need to forecast future labour market needs, and the first is that the existing "LMI infrastructure" seems to add limited value to the "occupational analysis" which are carried out on a regular basis by MYH. To considerable extent, this seems to be the result of an essentially positive aspect of MYH's basic approach, which is to provide educational programmes which are closely knit to the labour market and its needs. In pursuing this value, the domain of applications to provide a programme often caters to relatively narrow and specific skills. This is good news, given that labour market needs tend to be specific and non-theoretical, and if one interprets this outcome as the expression of "real" skills needs in the labour market. Rather, the problem is that available forecasts, seemingly without exceptions, do not operate at the level of occupational detail which is often addressed by MYH. The bias towards building strong partnerships seems to, at least partly, deal with this problem: in the absence of available forecasts on a specific occupation, soft information which result from the contacts with stakeholders may to some extent substitute the absence of formal forecasts.

Presently, moreover, an attempt is made to provide forecasts at the regional level to directly address the specific LMI needs of MYH.⁸ The second, and closely related problem, is that the approach for providing educational programmes is demand-side driven. As an external application is a necessary (yet not sufficient) prerequisite to start and run an educational programme, appliers must be well informed in order to allow this part of the skills supply system to function well. Actors which are most qualified in providing VET programmes are not necessarily the actors which are most well informed on future skills needs, so the existence of relevant and easily available LMI on future skills needs seems to be a key component in allowing MYH to function optimally.

Finally, a shortcoming emphasized by Kuczera (2013) is that the programmes offered by MYH are largely inconsistent with tertiary education. This implies that there is an overly large threshold to further educational attainment for those with a degree from MYH. This may not only deter further educational attainment by individuals which are essentially motivated to do so, it may also appear as a disadvantage for individuals considering to pursue a degree from MYH.

⁸ Following the national government mission to establishment Regional Competence Platforms (*Regionala kompetensplattformar*), in 2010, regional governments have developed different approaches to foresee forthcoming skills needs. A collective approach, involving the largest urban regions in Sweden, Swedish Statistics and other actors, has developed a formal forecasting model, which is now being adapted in an attempt to cater to the taxonomy of MYH.

Impact and Replicability

The model for HVE that Sweden implemented in 2009, through the establishment of MYH, has two important pillars. One is that it relies on a national and overarching system of quality control, and the other is that it stresses the importance of partnership with, and close relation to, the labour market and its needs. In comparison to other parts of the Swedish skills supply system, it stands out as a unique feature to have these two elements as prominently emphasized within a single yet national administration.⁹ MYH employs a number of approaches and procedures to assure quality control and to induce strong and relevant partnerships. It is particularly interesting to note that the basic approach appears to work well, and has been implemented relatively rapidly, even though the Swedish skills supply system has no strong tradition in pursuing these two important aspects of the VET system. The OECD have thus emphasized that the basic elements of the Swedish model are probably well-suited for replication outside the Swedish context:

“It is a particular achievement of the HVE system to have developed a model with strong links to employers and labour market needs against a background in which most vocational provision has been very separate from employers... Many countries struggle to engage employers in the development of vocational provision, and often attribute many of their difficulties to the lack of any historical tradition of such engagement. HVE may therefore be a model applicable in these contexts, possibly more exportable than other models whose success in national contexts depends heavily on deeply entrenched cultural expectations.” (Kuczera, 2013, p. 18)

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⁹ The second feature, regarding partnership with the labour market, is also emphasized at the national level for some VET programmes at the secondary level, through the initiatives *Teknikcollege* and *Vård- och omsorgscollege*.

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Erasmus+

VET-EDS National Good Practice

VET Plus – The Dual Course of Study

Daniel Kahnert

Introduction

The Dual Course of Study combines university level higher education and professional training into a single course, which seeks to provide an optimally balanced combination of general education and competence development, as well as applicable professional skills. This concept responds to a steadily increasing demand in Germany for employees with higher level degrees at the times when traditional higher level education institutions in Germany, namely the universities, do not provide professional vocational education and training. How do these two aspects relate to each other? There is a problem that most of the young university graduates, while being well-educated, at the same time severely lack tangible professional skills. Overall, an educational path where higher education certificates and vocational training are combined is largely underrepresented in the German system. What the concept of Dual Course of Study tries to provide, is a way for companies to get access to and hire young professionals with both, higher level education and immediately usable professional skills.

This combination of higher education and professional skills is scarce so far, as the two dominant adult education fields, university education and dual vocational trainings, each alone usually do not yet provide both to an equal extend.

Summary

Dual Studies represent an innovative approach to combining higher education and vocational training into one study. What seems to be a very good idea to provide well-trained and highly educated professionals for the German labour market, is not yet a fully developed and coherent concept and further improvement is necessary. .

This concept however shows great potential and are well worth looking at as a good example for advancing German VET and labour market related policy.

Overall, the Dual Studies in Germany show possibilities of addressing problems in historically grown structures in the VET-system, which are considered by some actors rather hindering than useful approach.

Context and setting

The idea of Dual Courses of Study (or dual studies in the following) existed since the 1970's in Germany and was initiated to have a stronger linkage of scientific higher education on the one hand and practice training on the other hand, combined in one type of tertiary education. This approach was the basis of the founding of the so called "*Fachhochschulen*", also known as universities of applied sciences. See Figure 1 for more details on a classification of the three basic ideas of a university based education.

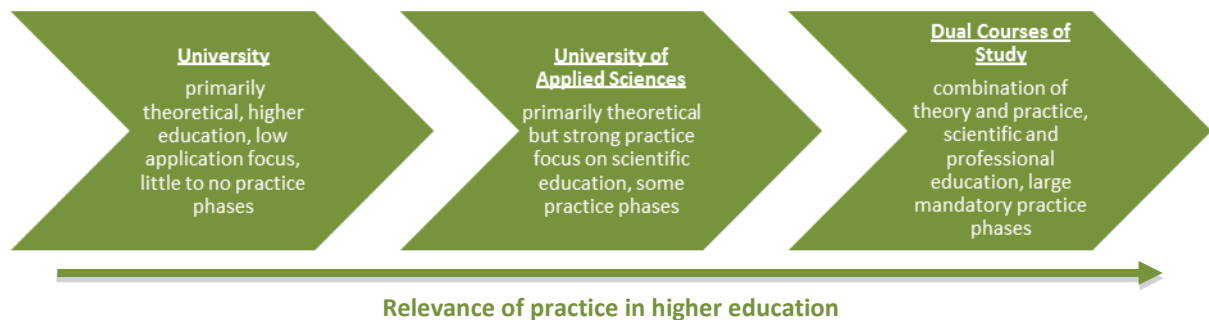


Figure 1: Relevance of practice in higher education in Germany

Source: Own elaboration

In this figure, universities of applied sciences are classified as an own type of higher education, although they also are providers of *Dual Studies*. This is due to the fact that not all studies at such universities can be classified as dual. In fact, many of them are still primarily theoretical with an increased share of practice phases (compared to universities) and a stronger focus on practical relevance of the content.

Traditionally, higher university-based education in Germany was not supposed to be directly preparing for specific fields of work. Going with the idea of Alexander von Humboldt, higher level education is supposed to be an end itself. The goal is to become a well-educated citizen with broad knowledge and wide-spread abilities. The reference system for such education is much rather academic knowledge processing and intellectual thought and reflection, than professional activity and applied knowledge and competences. The latter has traditionally and until today been the domain of the dual VET system in Germany where young adults are practically trained in a specific occupation, learning to master the important tasks how to solve the common problems in their future job.

With the rising demand for university graduates however, also came the demand for young professionals with both, higher education and professional skills. This demand today is supposed to be met, by the universities of applied sciences as provider as well as the *Dual Studies* as concept. To date, about 30% of all German students study at universities of applied sciences (Wissenschaftsrat 2010), while only about 3.3% are in a *Dual Study* (Wissenschaftsrat 2013). These numbers show, that the *Dual Studies* are not yet a wide-spread concept and are not pursued by a large number of

students. The concept itself nonetheless is innovative as well as interesting in the context of ensuring skilled personnel for a labour market with an increasing relevance of highly complex jobs and tasks.

Description

While the term “*Duales Studium*” is well established and widely used to describe the *Dual Study* concept, it is a rather vague term. This is because there are many different concepts following the idea of a *Dual Study* each in a different way. Although most of them share that they try to make it possible for students to obtain higher education as well as professional skills at the same time, they differ to such a large extent that it is well worth looking at the variety of concepts under the label of “*Duales Studium*”. Table 1 gives an overview of a classification of concepts, with different approaches to introduce practice and work into a study and integrate one into the other.

Table 1: Classification of Dual Courses of Study in Germany

Individual Educational Stage		Locus of Education and Practice	
		Intertwined	Parallel
Initial Education	Including Professional Training	<u>Integrating Professional Vocational Training</u> (Bachelor)	<u>Alongside Professional Vocational Training</u> (Bachelor)
	Including Practice Phases	<u>Integrating Practical Activities</u> (Bachelor) Structured Training at Practice Partner	<u>Alongside Practical Activities</u> (Bachelor at Uni [of Applied Sciences]) Including Mandatory Traineeship/Internship
Further Education	Including Professional Activity	<u>Integrating Occupation</u> (Master/Bachelor) Including Structured Reference Frame	<u>Alongside/Integrating Occupation</u> (Master/Bachelor) without Structured Reference Frame
	Including Practice Phases	<u>Integrating Practical Activities</u> (Master/Bachelor)	<u>Alongside Practical Activities</u> Including Traineeship/Internship or Practice Phases (Master/Bachelor) without Structured Reference Frame

Source: Own elaboration based on Wissenschaftsrat 2013, pp. 9.

As shown in Table 1, there are numerous ways the *Dual Studies* can actually be designed. Table 2 delivers a more in depth explanation of the different approaches.

The major differences are:

- a) the ways the practice phases and the theoretical parts of the study are brought together and integrated in terms of content and
- b) how the two aspects of the *Dual Study* are organized in terms of quantity, locus, formal acknowledgement and partner communication.

Large differences in all these aspects exist in different studies that can be done in Germany at the different educational institutions, which offer *Dual Studies*. Such differences are possible, because the term Dual Studies is not protected and can be used rather freely to describe a study concept, which however loose, structured or unstructured intertwines theory and practice.

Table 2: Explanations for Classification of Dual Courses of Study in Germany

Study Alongside Professional Vocational Training

Students do a full-time study alongside a vocational training in the dual system, but without any structural connection between the two. The full study requirements have to be accomplished and there are no transfers of accomplishments from one (VET) to the other (study).

Study Integrating Professional Vocational Training

Vocational training is structurally integrated into the study. Study and VET are structurally and institutionally intertwined (contact and exchange of university, practice partners, schools, etc.) and accomplishments in the VET are relevant and taken into account for the study.

Study Alongside Occupation

Full- or part-time study, which is done in parallel with a regular job. There are no structural or content related links between study and job. The full amount of credits/accomplishments has to be achieved in the study.

Study Integrating Occupation

Full- or part-time study, which is closely related to a regular occupation. Content and structure of study and occupation are intertwined and there is a regular exchange between employer and education institution.

Study Alongside Practical Activities

A study with extensive practice phases, which are not structurally related to the content of the study. Practice phases do not count as study accomplishments.

Study Integrating Practical Activities

Practice phases are larger than in regular studies and are closely related to content of the study (often mandatory internships). In addition, they count as study accomplishments and are structurally supported by the study program (via exchange of practice partners and education institution).

Study for Further Education

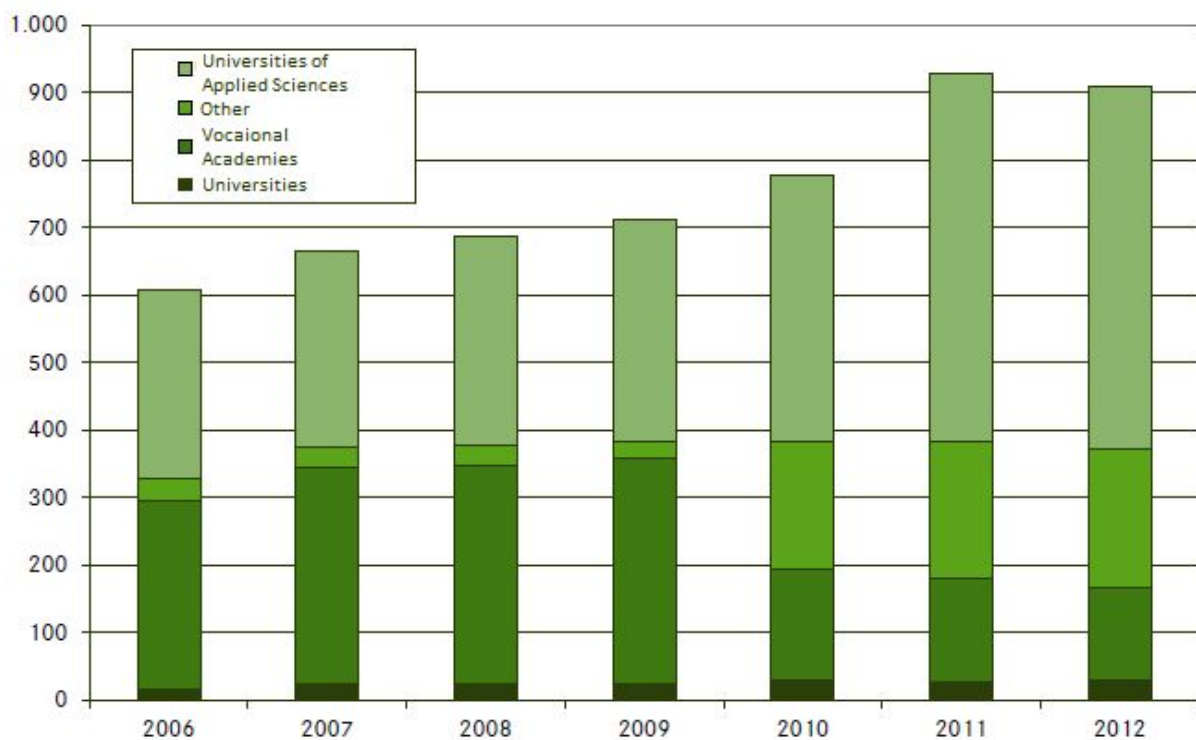
To take part in this further type of study, an initial study or accomplished VET is mandatory. This type of academic further education does not equal further professional adult education.

Source: Own elaboration based on Wissenschaftsrat 2013, pp. 9ff.

Looking at which different areas of study are most important in Dual Courses of Study, it becomes very clear that there are two very dominant fields: Engineering and economic sciences. Over 80% of all dual studies are covered by these two fields. Two other fields which are increasing in importance but still concentrate much less students are social work/social pedagogics and computer sciences/informatics.

Another aspect to look at is who the providers of Dual Studies actually are. While the universities of applied sciences seem the logical provider within the system of higher education, figure 2 shows that even if they indeed are the largest providers of Dual Studies, Vocational Academies as well as other (mostly private providers) also hold a large share of the total offer. Especially the field of private providers is growing. The large increase since 2010 can be explained with a statistical change, where the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University, one of the largest providers was moved from 'Vocational Academies' to 'Other'. Very obvious is the still extremely low share of the regular universities among the providers.

Figure 2: Providers of Dual Studies in Germany



Source: Own elaboration based on Wissenschaftsrat 2013

What works?

Many of the *Dual Study* graduates immediately find a job at one of the companies which served as practice partners during the study. In fact, in some cases the students are already contracted during the study or even right at the start. Because of that, most graduates have less difficulties with finding a job than many other university graduates, even if not contracted early at a partner company. In general, *Dual Study* graduates are valued as very well educated and qualified. It is often acknowledged that a dual program means a high work load and requires the students to invest a lot into the study. Thus, this type of education is generally highly regarded, even at Bachelor level.

The online-portal “AusbildungPlus” (TrainingPlus) is a project that was funded by the German government until the end of 2014 and provides in-depth information about *Dual Studies* in general as well as individual offers at numerous different providers in a database. Such a central point for information about the concept, partners and contacts is very valuable for promoting the idea and helping interested students to gather information. It also provides statistical data on many different aspects such as number of students, number of studies, and number of providers. Since 2015 the project is run by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB).

Figure 3: The Online-Portal "AusbildungPlus" (TrainingPlus)



“The AusbildungPlus (TrainingPlus) project uses a free internet database to provide information on training programmes which offer additional qualification in combination with vocational training and about dual courses of study which combine university studies with vocational training in Germany. The project is funded by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training. The centrepiece of the AusbildungPlus project is a database that contains information on training programs offered by enterprises, universities, chambers of commerce and vocational schools where trainees and students can currently earn qualification.”

Source: https://www.bibb.de/de/ausbildungplus_index.php (accessed: Jan. 2016)

Constraints

The most obvious constraints and problems right now are: a) the lack of transparency and b) the still low number of students. For the concept to be more successful and to attract more students in the future, it seems absolutely necessary to make more transparent, which different types of studies and structures can await interested students behind the label *Dual Study*. The large differences in organization of content, practice phases and general workload make it an important necessity for all interested students to gather detailed information before applying for a study.

Increased transparency could also lead to an increase in numbers of students and thus, make the idea of a *Dual Study* more successful and in turn more attractive to young adults. Another way to achieve higher numbers could also be an increase in quality of the concepts. Looking at some of the concepts above, it seems at least questionable, whether simply adding a vocational education on top of a regular university study is a worthwhile and attractive concept. Merging theory and practice in a much more meaningful way than just adding one alongside the other. This would require partners to work together to find frameworks, structure and concept to integrate both, higher education as well as vocational training into a single package.

The German Science Council made recommendations for how to label different types of studies in the future and what to label *Dual*. This recommendation makes clear that only those types of studies should be labelled *Dual* that integrate higher education and vocational training in a way, in which both elements are represented so that their nature is maintained and each their fundamental goals are reached. In addition, the second term of the concept – *Study* – should be taken seriously. Only concepts, in which an actual academic study with scientific standards is pursued as on part of the education, should be labelled *Dual Study*. What seems obvious first, is important because it marks a very high standard to be fulfilled by any provider that offers a *Dual Study*.

Impact and Replicability

Looking at the constraints and the list of different models all labelled as *Dual Study* one could ask, how exactly this example is a good practice in the context of the German VET-system. The answer to the question is that while there obviously is room for improvement, the idea of bringing together the historically divided fields of higher education and vocational training is as interesting as ever if done in a reasonable and meaningful way. It can be seen as an upgrade to the dual system of training in Germany, which already has the great strength of adding general education to professional training to a certain extent and thus, producing the typical German *Facharbeiter*, often called the backbone of the German economy. As the economy is changing towards more skill intensive and increased share of academically driven branches and industries, the need for even more and higher general education can be met by implementing a *Dual Study* in such a way that a new, upgraded type of *Facharbeiter* as graduate of such studies is enabled to work in professional fields with highest skill demands.

Thus, the impact of this example in reality right now may not be great yet when looking at the general landscape of education in Germany, but the potential of the *Dual Study* remains very high. It seems to be an answer to the many complains of companies in need of young professionals able to meet the dual requirements of general competences and problem-oriented thinking, typically

learned in contexts of higher education, as well as immediately useable professional skills typically acquired in vocational training. Future initiatives and programs should seek to ensure that this general promise of the concept can be held by as many *Dual Study* graduates as possible. This can be supported by better intertwining theory and practice into cohesive structures.

The replicability of *Dual Studies* should be rather high. In fact, the position of the universities in Germany to not engage in professional education is not equally dominant in many other European countries.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

Child Care Professionals – VET and Labour Market Strategies to meet the increased demand in Germany

Daniel Kahnert

Introduction

On August 1st 2013 the Child Care Funding Act (Kinderförderungsgesetz KiföG) stage two - a new stage of a law concerning day care for children younger than 3 years - became effective in Germany. Children aged 1-3 years now have the right to get a place in a Kindergarten or equivalent professional childcare facility like a childminder. The Child Care Funding Act caused a huge rise in demand for childcare places and consequently in the skilled childcare professionals in Germany.

How this fits with aim of VET-EDS

This example shows, which strategies actors in policy and the practical field have established to meet the increased demand for childcare professionals in Germany. It serves as an example to illustrate how changes in a legal framework lead to extensive changes and new challenges in the labour market and VET related issues in an occupational field.

Why is it successful and a good practice

The case of childcare professionals in Germany illustrates how a national-level initiative is affecting strategies and actions not only on a national, but also on a regional and even local level. It also illustrates which measures are taken and to which success those can be brought.

Summary

Since the introduction of the second stage of the Child Care Funding Act

(Kinderförderungsgesetz - KiföG) in 2013, children at the age of one year have the right for early childhood education and care in a Kindergarten or equivalent childcare facility.

Securing skilled personnel for the increased demand for childcare is one of the major tasks following the expanded right for early childhood education and care.

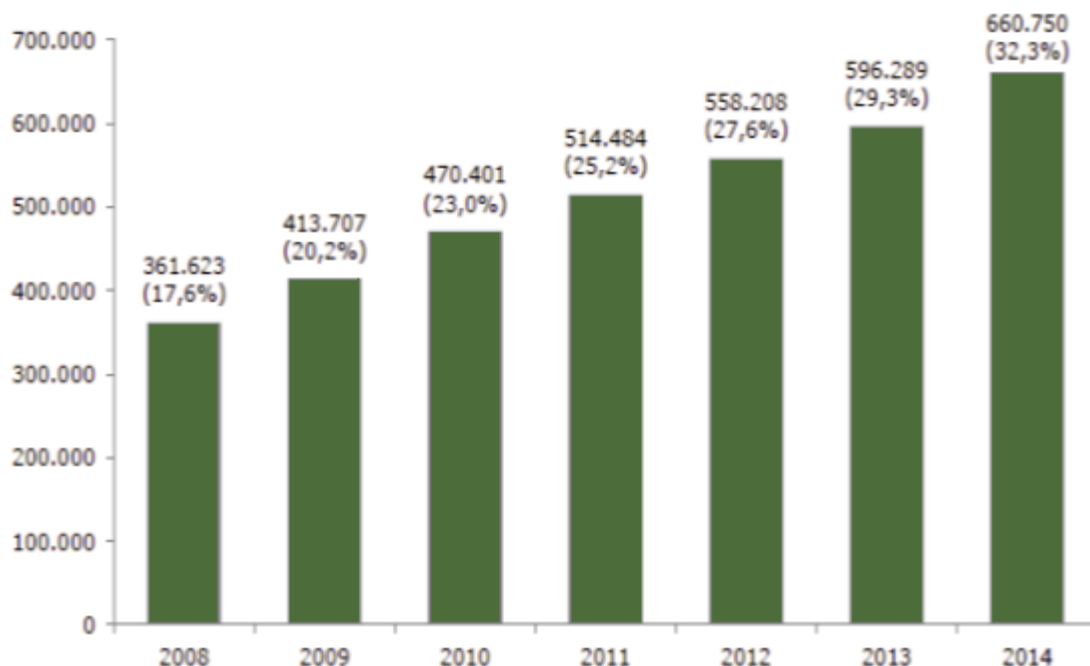
This example shows, which strategies actors in policy and the practical field have established to meet the increased demand for childcare professionals in Germany. It serves as an example to illustrate how changes in a legal framework lead to extensive changes and new challenges in the labour market and VET related issues in an occupational field.

Context and setting

Since the introduction of the second stage of the Child Care Funding Act (Kinderförderungsgesetz - KiföG) in 2013, children at the age of one year have the right for early childhood education and care in a Kindergarten or equivalent childcare facility. Until then, this right was exclusive for children aged three years and older. During the first stage, the Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youths (BMFSFJ) introduced the legal obligation for childcare facilities to create more places and expand their offers. Two major drivers led to this development:

1. It is seen as an important task of the German state to enable families to give both parents the option to work. This is due to several reasons: a) households should be able to ensure their income required for a living without the support of social welfare support, b) commonly parents' labour market chances and especially those of mothers, were severely hindered by long phases of child care responsibilities, c) parents, and again women especially, are a valuable resource for the labour market and the German economy.
2. The second reason is closely connected to the value such early care and education provides: a) early institutionalized education and care provided by skilled professionals is seen as a valuable support for child's growth and development, b) as well as support for families and parents in their task to raise the children up.

Figure 4: Children under the age of three in childcare facilities, total numbers and percent of total population same age



Source: Own elaboration based on BMFSFJ 2015

The introduction had huge impact on most of the aspects of professional childcare in Germany and forced to reorganize the large parts of professional education framework. Some of the impacts can be illustrated in quantitative figures, as shown in Figure 1. Other parts can be illustrated by looking at

changes that were made in parts of the professional training of childcare professionals as well as within regulations regarding the facilities and the professional work. In this good practice example, the impact and resulting strategies of the Child Care Funding Act in Germany are briefly illustrated, especially its labour market relevance.

Description

As described in the Introduction, securing skilled personnel for the increased demand for childcare is one of the major tasks following the expanded right for early childhood education and care. This task has two inherent dimensions:

1. A quantitative aspect: Securing sufficient numbers of childcare professionals.
In order to make sure that enough skilled professionals are available for different types of childcare several programs and initiatives were undertaken to attract young people to start their professional career in this area, as well as professionals from other occupational groups to retrain into this area, and provide enough resources for training providers and ensuring they can meet the demand for trainings in this area.
2. A qualitative aspect: Securing sufficient education and training of childcare professionals.
The second important aspect of supporting the expansion of childcare is the quality of childcare according to the highest occupational standards. Several initiatives and programs target this aspect and aim at securing the quality of training and professional education of childcare professionals by a) making sure that the usual school-based professional education of childcare professionals retain its high standards even though the numbers of applicants and graduates had largely increased, b) the standards and trainings professionals from other occupational fields are high to provide them with all the required skills for their future work and c) implementing further education and life-long learning an integral part of childcare occupations.

Along these two dimensions and their sub-categories labour market and VET-related means are taken by different institutional actors on different levels of the system. While several further means target structural aspects and the actual work arrangements as well as the physical nature of kindergartens and other daycare facilities, such means are a lot less related to labour market and VET-system and will therefore not be elaborated further on in this example.

It is important to note that VET policy as well as education and childcare are fields, which the Länder (States) are mainly responsible for in Germany. Nonetheless, there are several initiatives launched by either the national government, providing guidelines and general directions to be arranged by the Länder, or programs as joint efforts by national and regional actors in cooperation, often with third-party actors such as scientific and research support or branch organisations, unions and others.

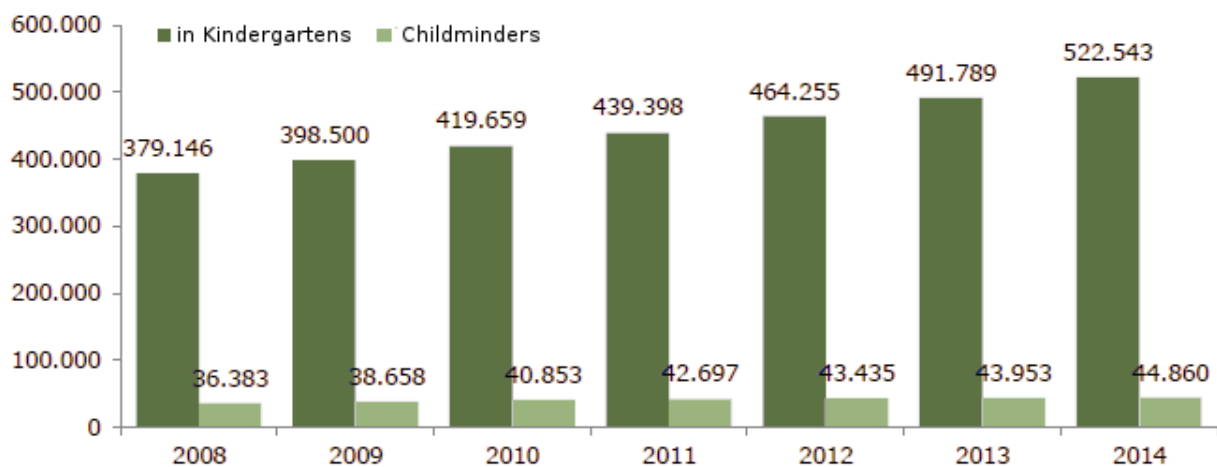
Two major professional fields are covered by the Child Care Funding Act. Both got large attention and were targeted with several initiatives to increase the number of professionals while holding or improving the quality of professional trainings in their field:

1. Kindergartens and similar facilities specialized on childcare, in this case childcare for children younger than 3 years old. Kindergartens represent the biggest type of professional childcare institutions in Germany. About 85% of all children in professional childcare institutions are in Kindergartens. In addition, most of the professionals work there, too.
2. Childminders are the second large group of childcare professionals in Germany. Although only about 15% of children in childcare go to childminders, this group is an important part of the general strategy to meet the demand for high quality childcare and early education for children from age 1-3 years.

Kindergartens

One of the main goals was and still is to increase the number of skilled professionals in Kindergartens to meet the risen demand. Figure 2 shows that the number of professionals has indeed increased.

Figure 5: Number of professionals in the two major fields of professional childcare in Germany



Source: Own elaboration based on BMFSFJ 015

What is especially interesting is that at the same time the share of personnel with a certified education stayed on the same level. Close to 90% of the pedagogical staff have a certified professional education or university degree.

Initiatives in this field (examples)

“Profis für die KiTa” - Pros for Kindergartens: An information initiative funded and supported by the BMFSFJ and led by the Gewerkschaft für Erziehung und Wissenschaft – GEW (Union). Core is to produce information material to make the occupation attractive for interested students and other professionals.

„GROSSE Zukunft mit kleinen HELDEN – Werde Erzieherin/Erzieher!“ - BIG future with small HEROES – Become an educator!: Initiative of the Hessian Social Ministry to launch a marketing campaign and interest students in the occupational field.

„MEHR Männer in Kitas“ - MORE males in Kindergartens: ESF program funded with about 13 million € to launch project in 16 different regions to especially attract males to work in Kindergartens.

In most states, it is possible for people with a professional degree or higher general education to join a shortened program to get a certification as educator or childcare professional. This is especially true for those, with professional experience or education in fields closely related to childcare as well as university graduates.

Childminders

While a large number of initiatives and programs target the kindergartens and personnel in such institutions, many other programs were launched to support childminders and to increase the number of places for children in this type of childcare. It is important to know that childminder is not a professional occupation equal to educator in a kindergarten. Childminders do not have a standardised training in the dual system of VET or a school-based training. They have to pass courses and fulfil certain standards but overall the field is still much less professionalised than the field of Kindergartens. Nevertheless, for the expansion of professional childcare in Germany and the overall labour market strategy, childminders play an important role.

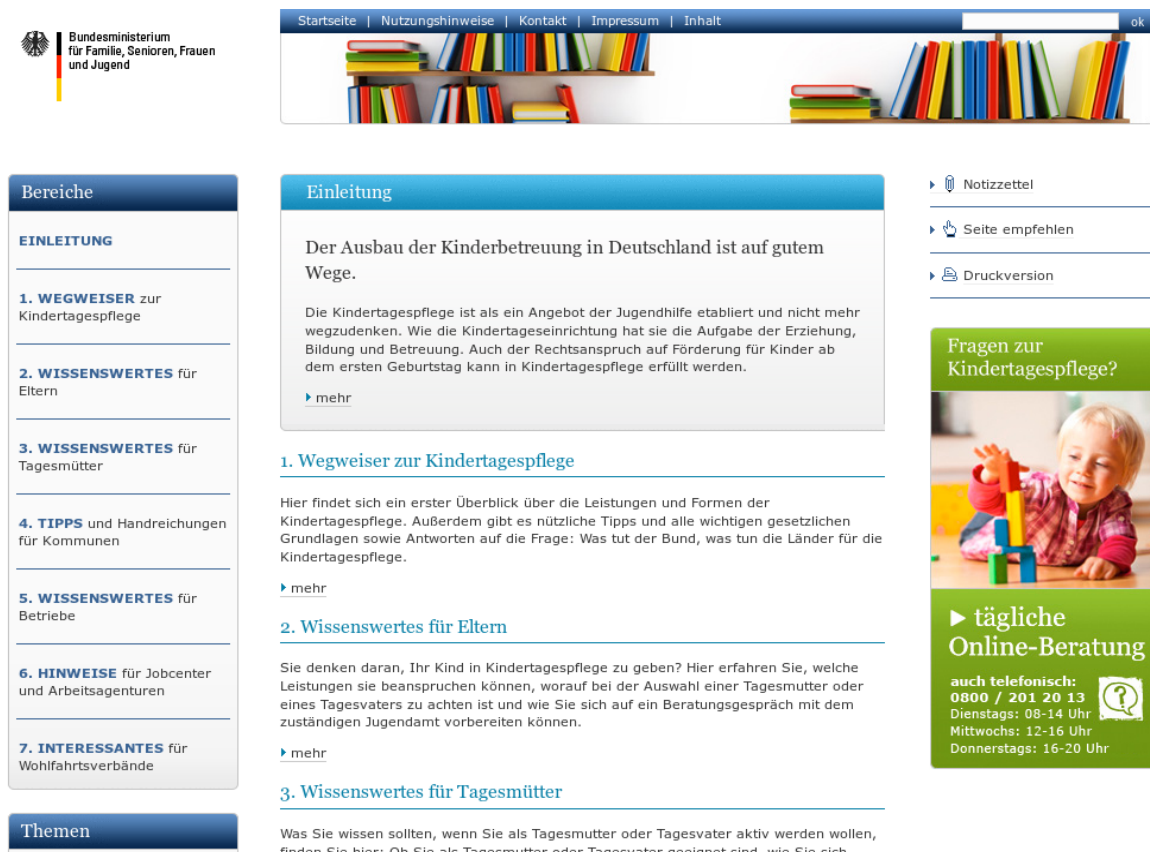
Initiatives in this field (examples)

“Aktionsprogramm Kindertagespflege” – Actionprogram Childminding: This is the major initiative by the BMFSFJ to support the process of expanding and improving the range of childminding options. The targeted share of places in such offers is about 30% of all places in professional childcare in Germany. Aims of the initiative are a) making childminding more attractive for interested personnel, b) improving the quality of care and increasing the attractiveness and upgrading the image of the professional field in general.

In an ESF-funded program, 160 regions were supported to develop good practices to pursue the initiatives goals. A certificate in form of a quality seal was developed, which is given to those who meet the newly introduced standards of training and education. Those standards were developed by the German Youth Institute and result in a mandatory 160 hours course program required to work as a certified childminder since 2009.

A large information portal and extensive information material for different target groups including parents, students and professionals in other fields have also been developed.

Figure 6: Information portal of the BMFSFJ on childminding



Source: <http://www.handbuch-kindertagespflege.de/> (January 206)

Kindertagesbetreuung 2013 – 10-Punkte-Programm für ein bedarfsgerechtes Angebot” - Childminding 2013 – 10-point program to meet the demands: This is another support program by the BMFSFJ, also financially supported by the ESF. It names and supports 10 points to improve the quantity and quality of professional work in childcare. The three most important of the ten points for childminders are:

1. Permanent positions for childminders in companies and other organisations.
2. Strengthening and professionalising childminding mainly by supporting the implementation of the competence-based qualification standards of the German Youth Institute, but also by making the legal framework more transparent.
3. Attracting skilled personnel for childcare work. Working groups of all social partners are developing further strategies to ensure a sufficient supply of childcare professionals like childminders in the future.

Impact and Replicability

The impact of the introduction of a new legal framework was immense for the complete field of childcare work and all adjacent aspects. While public discussions were mainly focused around the quality of childcare in Germany, many other initiatives were launched to secure a supply of skilled professionals in this field. The success of these labour market programs and initiatives is that although many labour market projections foresaw a huge gap in future supply and demand for this occupational group, the expansion of childcare for children under the age of three could largely be implemented and the supply gap developed to be much smaller than initial projections showed. Another success is that the share of skilled professionals with certified trainings among the personnel in Kindergartens has not gone down since the introduction of the *Child Care Funding Act*. This means that the demand was not met with low or unskilled helpers, but with an increase in graduates from the school based VET or other equivalent professional education.

However, occupations in childcare and education of young children are still a field of scarce supply and skilled professionals are still hard to be found in many regions. The strategy to strengthen the image of childcare occupations and further upgrading of the occupations as a whole, is not yet far developed and can be seen as a possible future focus of labour market policy. Parts of such strategies include higher pay, more secure jobs, full-time contracts for both Kindergarten employees and childminders and higher quality standards, as current initiatives already show in first steps.

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ANNEX 2

PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICE (ANNEX 2)

Theme 2

Forecasting

Fredrik Mörtberg and Victor Tanaka

The Swedish Public Employment Service

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

“Excelsior: Information system for employment and training”

Silvia Dusi

Introduction

The project was born in 1997 thanks to the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Handicraft and Agriculture, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour with an aim to construct a framework based on annual and quarterly forecasts of the demand for labour and professional training needs sought by businesses. The framework is meant to provide guidance which is extremely useful especially in supporting the programming choices of VET, vocational guidance and employment policies.

Summary

Excelsior is an information system that provide data and analysis on employment demand and required training (including professional and academic qualification). It is the only Italian experience made with continuity that can offer an analysis of forecast in the medium-term (2017). The use is easy and intuitive, and are available both data and reports, along with comments and the geographic detail from the national to provincial to get up while the temporal detail that divides both years quarters.

Context and setting

According to ISTAT, in 2014 the Italian population is approximately 61 million. This data slightly decreased in 2012 and 2013, compared to 2010. Even if we take into account the migratory flows, that counterbalanced the declining birth rate and the ageing population at national level, a decreasing trend in the resident population is registered. In addition, the dependency ratio projections concerning aged people show that the indicator increased progressively during the last two decades in Italy.

Birth rates in Italy decreased in 2011 and 2012 and it is currently 8.84 per thousand. In comparison with 2011, in 2012 the total number of births decreased by 2.5% in 2012 in the southern and central regions, - 2,3 % in the Islands and - 2% in the North-West regions.

The positive results emerged in time series till 2008, due to migrant women's higher fertility rate, have recently changed into a new general negative trend, started in 2009-2011. Nevertheless, the number of migrant infants registered a considerable increase: from a 4,8% in 2000 to 14,9% in 2012. The total number of migrant children born in Italy, 30.000 in 2000, increased to 80.000 in 2012.

These dynamics shows the urgent need for change in the organization and allocation of resources among the different sub-systems which compose the overall National Lifelong Learning framework to promote migrants' socio-cultural integration on one hand and the population active ageing on the other.

Some of the economic and institutional changes affecting the Italian labour market have made it clearer the need for LMIs and information on the dynamics of labor and VET, in order to support the design of effective employment policies and services.

Flexibility, dynamicity and change are factors which characterized the modern Italian labour market; in respect of the past, Italy is experiencing a strong growth in both job turnover, and occupational, contractual, and professional mobility. Moreover, the economic crisis emerges with evidence in the actual dynamics of labour market, characterized by a sensible reduction of the job opportunities, a substantial increase of the unemployment rates and also an increase in the use of temporary contracts by the employers. As results, the traditional Italian employment policies, mainly based on the safeguard of the lifetime job, are losing their capacity in responding to the needs of both firms and workers, and the attention of decision makers is rather on active labour market policies aimed at promoting flexibility and security for all.

Description

Excelsior is an information system that provides data and analysis on employment demand and required training (including professional and academic qualification). The information collected with Excelsior concerns, at a glance:

- the characteristics of hiring companies;
- reasons for not hiring for companies who do not take;
- movements openings for classification level;
- hiring provided by the companies by type of contract (employment indefinitely, employment term, project-based, seasonal employment, apprenticeship contracts, insertion etc.).
- the professional, educational qualifications, education levels and their addresses required;
- the main features of the planned recruitment (recruitment difficulties, need for further training, prior experience, knowledge and language skills);
- the planned recruitment of immigrant workers and related professionals;
- the size and characteristics of the annual investments of Italian companies in continuing education and the types of human resources involved;
- companies that host trainees and the number of internships each year in total activated.

The data presented comes from surveys. The survey was conducted in each province by the network of Italian Chambers of Commerce with nearly 300,000 direct interviews or telephone surveys per year (about 100,000 and 180,000 for the annual survey for the 4 quarterly surveys), involving companies from all sectors of the economy and of all sizes. The high number of interviews and the overall methodology adopted in the construction of the sample allow to obtain statistically significant data for all 105 Italian provinces (including the new province of Monza and Brianza and Fermo and excluding the new provinces of Sardinia and Puglia). For this reason, Excelsior is considered one of the most extensive surveys required by National Statistical Programme and represents the most comprehensive source of information available in Italy for the knowledge of professional and training needs of companies. For each company are recognized programs of recruitment of staff for the next twelve months and the corresponding outputs on the occasion of the annual survey and for the following quarter on the occasion of the quarterly surveys.

Information available is a fundamental cognitive support for:

- the measurement of the actual demand professions in the different basins of local labor, in order to provide information support to all those - public or private - are engaged in guiding the supply of labor to the needs expressed by the demands or promote direct meetings and punctual between demand and supply of labour;
- the address of the choices of decision-makers on policies and programming of educational and vocational training, as well as training professionals at all levels,

offering detailed information on the needs of professionalism expressed by industry for the short and medium term;

- the orientation of young people who, at the completion of their own learning, require immediate usability of information on trends in the labour market in general and the most popular professions in particular.

The target is quite broad because it includes policy makers that works on Labour market and a lot of others Labour market stakeholders. Excelsior will appeal to anyone is looking for information on recruitment foreseen by companies from various sectors up to the provincial level and supplied with details about required school addresses and professionals.

The outputs are many: online it is possible to find an accessible database where the user can select data through filters; there are also statistic tables, bulletins and publications. These last ones combines both general publications on employment trends and publications focused on specific topics (Craft Industry, youth employment sector, etc.).

The investigation is ongoing since the start of the project (1997) provided data on an annual basis. Users can access data via the online platform that allows them to filter the variables of interest (such as the territorial dimension), and download it in Excel format.

There is free access to the Excelsior Database, where it is possible to focus on a specific territory (from national to provincial areas) to construct tables and graphs on the available statistical data on the needs of enterprises for professional, industry, education.



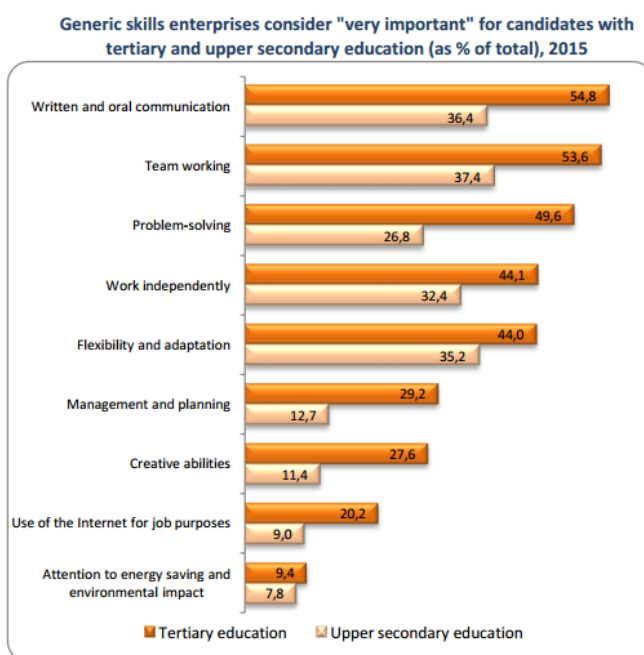
The related publications includes the analysis of the results of Excelsior. In the Report 2015 the main analysis regarded:

- The economic situation and the labor market
- The aggregate demand for labor and employment balances expected in 2015

- Behaviors of enterprise and needs of employees, including companies hiring, motivation and search channels, difficulties in finding workers.
- Training needs, professional and skills needs, including Educational levels and branches of study required by enterprises, Professionalism and soft skills, The employment opportunities for young people, women and immigrants, Young and professional needs of enterprises, The female face of labor demand, The employment opportunities for immigrants
- Needs and engagement of companies in training, like the internships

We think that it is interesting to refer to an extract of the 2015 report to understand the kind of information not only provided with the DataBase but also with the comments:

“In addition to job-specific technical skills, which are not always transferable between occupations, there are several skills that are generic to a wide range of jobs and that are required by employers when recruiting new employees. When recruiting persons with tertiary education qualifications, Italian employers give particular importance to written and oral



communication the capability of team working (which is considered very important for 53.6% of recruitment). Team working is the most important skill for holders of upper secondary education (considered as very important for 37.4% of recruitment). For workers with tertiary education, the most important skill however appears to be the capability to communicate (54.8%). At the other end of the scale, ranks the "attention to energy saving and environmental impact", which is stated as very important for 9.4% of persons with a university degree and for 7.8 of those with an upper

secondary level of education.”

Impact and Replicability

What characterizes the experience of Excelsior as good practice is:

- The methodology of data collection and analysis is certainly established, having been developed and perfected over 15 years;
- It is the only Italian experience made with continuity that can offer an analysis of forecast in the medium term (2017);

- The use is easy and intuitive, and are available both data and reports, along with comments;
- The geographic detail from the national to provincial to get up while the temporal detail that divides both years quarters.

To make the data believable and reliable of course it is necessary to start a process with the willing to continue it over time, aware that it requires a lot of effort. The level of replicability for this Good Practice is quite good even if only feasible with the collaboration of Observatories present on the territory.

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Erasmus+

VET-EDS National Good Practice

ISFOL (Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers)

Silvia Dusi

Introduction

ISFOL was founded in 1973 and is supervised by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. The website "Professioni, occupazione, fabbisogni" developed by ISFOL allows the user to browse through data and information on the labour market and occupations also using some "Tools" designed in a user-friendly way for persons who already have a job and also for those seeking new employment opportunities. The ISFOL is a good practice example because:

- It provides detailed information on the skills required by 800 different professions, detailing information about knowledge, skills, attitudes, activities and work context.
- It provides a forecasting analysis of labour demand in both the short- (one year) and medium-term (five years) by industries, professions and regional territories;
- information is freely usable and easily accessible by the final user;
- specific tools allow to utilise the web-based information accordingly with one's needs (e.g. helps in measuring a level of preparation for a specific profession or identify current gaps in terms of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Summary

The project "Professions, Employment and Skills Needs" is promoted by the ISFOL - Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers. The website, which is a core service provided by the initiative, was created in 2001 to become a national system for permanent monitoring and forecast of professions and skills needs.

On the home page the following tools are available:

- *"The job tailored to your personality";*
- *Seek your place in the classification ("Genius job")*
- *Evaluate your skills to move towards job and training ("Skills profiler")*

On the first page of each occupational unit there are other two tools:

- *"If you perform this occupation compare your skills"*
- *"Compare your occupation with another one"*

Context and setting

According to ISTAT, in 2014 the Italian population is approximately 61 million. This data slightly decreased in 2012 and 2013, compared to 2010. Even if we take into account the migratory flows, that counterbalanced the declining birth rate and the ageing population at national level, a decreasing trend in the resident population is registered. In addition, the dependency ratio projections concerning aged people show that the indicator increased progressively during the last two decades in Italy.

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Flexibility, dynamicity and change are factors which characterized the modern Italian labour market; in respect of the past, Italy is experiencing a strong growth in both job turnover, and occupational, contractual, and professional mobility. Moreover, the economic crisis emerges with evidence in the actual dynamics of labour market, characterized by a sensible reduction of the job opportunities, a substantial increase of the unemployment rates and also an increase in the use of temporary contracts by the employers. As results, the traditional Italian employment policies, mainly based on the safeguard of the lifetime job, are losing their capacity in responding to the needs of both firms and workers, and the attention of decision makers is rather on active labour market policies aimed at promoting flexibility and security for all.

Description

ISFOL carries out research, surveys and TA activities in four core areas:

Labour market and professions

- Analysis of labour market dynamics, also focused on specific target groups and sectors.
- Analysis of employment and career guidance services, industrial relations and social dialogue.

Social Inclusion

- Analysis of social inclusion policies aimed at both general and specific target groups.
- Development and implementation of models for the assessment of poverty.
- Monitoring welfare services.
- Analysis of anti-discrimination and equal opportunities, particularly those relating to gender equality.

Vocational education and training

- Analysis of VET systems and policies.
- Programme and policy monitoring and impact evaluation.

Skills analysis and forecasting

- Occupation and skills needs forecasting.
- Skills analysis, models for skills assessment and validation.
- Assessment of adults competences (PIAAC).

Organisation

ISFOL was founded in 1973 and is supervised by the Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies. Its present statutory basis is the Statute of 11 January 2011 which outlines the Institute's duties.

ISFOL is set up within two departments (Department of Labour Market and Social Policies and Department of Training Systems) as a series of transversal services. Currently the Institute has 600 members of staff with a wide ranging professional experience, recruited through national competition procedures.

Overall authority for ISFOL rests with the Board and the President. The President is the Institute's legal representative.

The Board provides a cross-section of expertise on all issues relevant to vocational education and training (VET) in Italy, and acts as the statutory advisory organ of the Italian Ministry of Labour. The Board's tasks include adopting the annual research work programme and the Institute's budget, and making recommendations on the promotion and development of VET.

Figure...contains the organization chart:

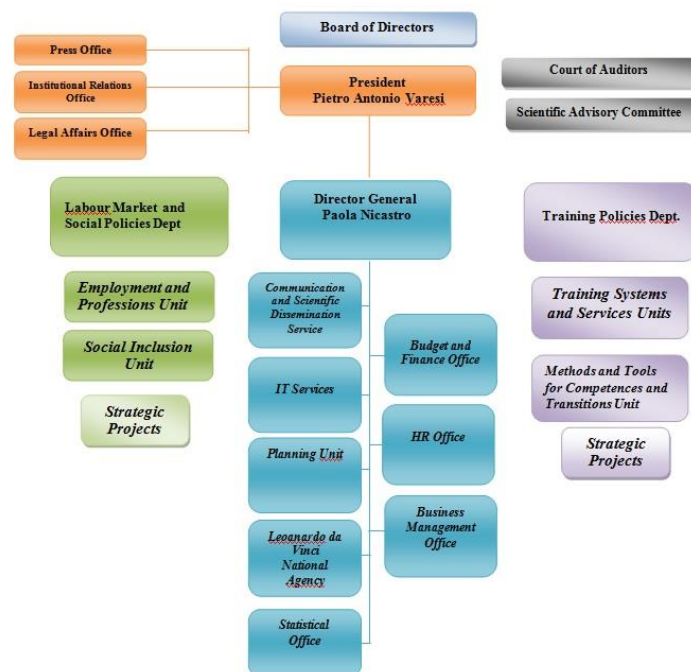


Figure 7

The project "Professions, Employment and Skills Needs" is promoted by the ISFOL - Institute for the Development of Vocational Training of Workers. The web site, which is the core services provided by the initiative, was create in 2001 to become a national system for permanent monitoring and forecast of professions and skills needs.

The project was initiated by the Ministry of Labour in order to provide the labour market stakeholders and individual citizens with quantitative and qualitative information on the topic of labour demand, professions and skills needs. The idea was to create a permanent system and a tool capable of monitoring the demand in real time and, wherever possible, also to anticipate it, while the professions continue to evolve. Moreover, it would have to be a "National", as the professional and training needs to be traced to a common nomenclature in view of the growing mobility of labor, which often exceeds the regional and national boundaries.

The site provides different kinds of information and more information can be found on <http://professionioccupazione.isfol.it>

- (1) *Mapping of professional needs* (knowledge, skills, abilities, etc.). The site allows to browse the information on occupations from the Nomenclature of Professional Units (NUP) developed by ISFOL and ISTAT (National Statistical Office). Each Professional Unit is designed as a set of professions which are as homogeneous as possible, and described in detail in the light of about 400 variables which include knowledge, skills, attitudes, values , work styles, generalized work activities, work conditions, general tasks and activities.

- (2) *Forecasting of labour demand for professions.* The site provides a forecasting of labor demand, distinguished by industries, regions and professions. There are both short-term forecasts (1 year) and medium-term forecasts (5 years). The site also provides a forecast (5 years) for the supply and demand of education in terms of level of education/training courses, and an estimate of the potential mismatch.
- (3) *Tool for the measurement and assessment of the degree of preparation for a specific profession.* Through a predefined list of knowledge and skills and based on an on-line tool, the user has the possibility to measure the level at which he has (or not) a certain skill. It is then possible to activate an automatic test that allows the user to check any possible difference (positive or negative) between the answers given and an average value for a profession.

In addition, the site is proposed as a point of integration between information sources produced on the topic of professional needs in Italy. Then, on the website it is possible to find the updated results of national surveys carried out by Bilateral Bodies on profession and skills needs, forecast of labour demand produced by Unioncamere, other than documents, analysis and studies on the issues and profession and skills needs, produced by ISFOL, and other institutions, public authorities and representative bodies.

ISFOL, in collaboration with ISTAT, carries out a National Survey which aims to provide the characteristics of the Professional Units related to the worker, the work done and the work context. The conceptual model of reference for the survey and the questionnaires used were borrowed from Occupational Information Network, O*Net (<http://online.onetcenter.org>). The questionnaire is divided into ten thematic sections for a total of 255 questions related to knowledge, skills, attitudes and general activities; the questions explore two different and complementary dimensions: a) the importance of the question (item) in the conduct of the profession, b) the level of complexity for which the same item is necessary.

The questionnaire was sent to a sample of twenty workers for each Professional Unit, for a total of 16,000 interviews. The information is then completed by the interventions of experts from the professions and occupations analysts completing the questionnaire. The methodology for predicting trends and employment within industries and territories was developed in close cooperation with the IRS (Institute for Social Research) and REF (Research and Consulting Economics and Finance). The forecasting model is modular: in the first stage, a "multi-sector macro-econometric model" produces the employment forecasts for the whole economy and employment forecasts declined by sectors, on the basis of forecast scenarios of economic and labor market taken from official documents of the Government and other international institutions. The second stage addresses the estimation of employment forecasts considering both the additional and substitutive labour demand; in this case data come from the Labour Force Survey produced every quarter by ISTAT.

The site is designed to meet the information needs of various stakeholders, including policy makers at national and regional level, system of education and training, and individual citizens. Indeed, the project aims to support the processes of choice regarding:

(1) planning of training and education for which the system provides information relating to the forecast of development of the various industries and quantitative information on the immediate needs and trends;

(2) planning of training and education for which the system provides reference points concerning the evolution of the content of the work and the development of knowledge and skills;

(3) orientation to the choice of education/training and orientation to career choices for which the system provides information on the characteristics of the professions and forecasts of employment in the short- and medium-term.

The results of the project are freely available to the individual user through the website. An online and consultable databank is provided while it is not expected any report or summary of the trend of the overall demand for labour and the professions.

All information is accessible via the website where it is possible to search for the information of interest on the home page and select one of the following three routes: "Professions", "Business sector" and "Territory".

The site has been active since 2001 and the first National Survey was made in 2007. Although the frequency with which the survey is implemented is not specified, ISFOL and ISTAT are currently undergoing the second edition of the National Survey.

Here is the home page of the website:



You are here: HOME->

Video Tutorial: presentazione ed esempi di utilizzo del portale



The website "Professioni, occupazione, fabbisogni" (professionioccupazione.isfol.it) allows the user to browse through data and information on the labour market and occupations also using some "Tools" designed in a user-friendly way for persons who already have a job and also for those seeking new employment opportunities. Five "Tools" are available in the web site. Three are accessible from the first page in a dedicated space; the other two are accessible only in the home page of each Occupational Unit in the site section "Occupations" in a specific area.

On the home page the following tools are available:

- "The job tailored to your personality";
- Seek your place in the classification ("Genius job")
- Evaluate your skills to move towards job and training ("Skills profiler")

On the first page of each occupational unit there are other two tools:

- "If you perform this occupation compare your skills"
- "Compare your occupation with another one"

Here is a brief description of aims and the way to use each one of the five tools at your disposal.

With the tool **"If you perform this occupation, compare your skills"** it is possible to measure and evaluate your own degree of competence starting from a specific job in the labour market.

The tool "**jobs tailored to your personality**" allows one to identify more suitable jobs by selecting the main characteristics of one's own Interest Profile. Occupational Interest Profiles gives reference to the several occupational units, which have been indicated by the workers interviewed in the second edition of the national sample survey on occupations ISFOL-ISTAT (2012-2013) and have an approximate value. The US Occupational Network (O*Net) model, from which ISFOL adopted the approach to design the national sample survey on occupations, identifies the Occupational Interest Profiles (OIP) on the basis of the personality theory developed by J.L. Holland. In the Italian experience the Occupational Interest Profiles have been chosen directly by the interviewers who indicated the first three features characterising them.

Table 3

<i>Realistic</i>	Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others
<i>Investigative</i>	Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally
<i>Artistic</i>	Artistic occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs and patterns. They often require self-expression and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules
<i>Social</i>	Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others
<i>Enterprising</i>	Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business
<i>Conventional</i>	Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow

"**Genius job**" tool is a semantic browser that allows to find the place of your in the national through a set of queries the system generate step by step till to arrive to your occupation.

Once on the page of the occupation unit searched for, it is possible to have plenty of information related to: work contents, vocational needs, occupational forecasts, and other useful data. Using Genius Job is very simple. The user will just have to answer to a set of questions generated by the browser. Each question provides three options: YES, NO, I DON'T KNOW.

Questions are asked in a very simple way and they check several aspects such as: type of work, activities carried out; tools utilized, relationship aspects and much more. The exercise lasts

only few minutes and the user will be able to choose the right place of the occupation in which he/she is interested. So, he/she can surf in the website discovering other aspect related to the chosen occupation like knowledge, skills and style of work.

"Occupational profiler" is a self-assessment tool which helps users to guide themselves towards occupations that use knowledge they have. The result is a list of suitable occupations with a link to a demand in the labour market. Using "Occupational profiler" is quite simple. Knowledge levels are rated and for each descriptor the user must indicate his/her own level from 0 (no knowledge) to 100 (perfect command). With a second step users can select the appropriate education level and access to a list of occupational units. So, by selecting the occupational unit one is interested on, he/she can compare the level of knowledge declared with the level required to perform the selected job. A comparison table might show some red symbols indicating knowledge areas to be strengthened. Once found the occupation unit the list of vocational needs is produced and one can further consult on-line job vacancies for the relevant occupation.

The tool **"Comparison with another occupation"** allows to analyse two occupations through the comparison of the values resulting from the second edition of the national sample survey on occupations carried out by ISFOL and ISTAT. The tool that can be launched from the first page of each occupational unit.

Impact and Replicability

The website, as well as the analysis and the tools offered, is really interesting and the path designed for the user is easy to understand and very informative.

A constraint to underline, though, is the difficulty in reaching young people and workers in general: the website is well known by public institutions, observatories and labour market/VET players, but it still requires some steps to get to a broader audience, including students and job seekers.

The replicability degree is quite high, however, data needs to be collected all over the territory for all the occupations and for every business to shows significance of the project. With a collaboration between observatories over the country to disseminate the survey the website could be replicated.

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ANNEX 3

PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPENDIUM
OF GOOD PRACTICE (ANNEX 3)

Theme 3

SECTOR SPECIFIC TRAINING

Fredrik Mörtberg and Victor Tanaka

The Swedish Public Employment Service

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Erasmus+

VET-EDS National Good Practice

TITLE: Common approach of industries, educators and governments to economy future skill needs provision - Australia practice

Vera Havlickova

Introduction

The example of Australian arrangements focused on skills needs assessment and development of appropriate educational programs oriented towards future economic prosperity meets well the VET – EDS purposes to find ways for reinforcing links between education and training with the world of work.

Individuals, businesses, training organizations and governments all have to make decisions about what education and training investments they need to make now in order to maximize the future return on those investments.

The need to improve labour productivity and multifactor productivity is a critical priority and requires a strategic approach to workforce development, more than just ad hoc accumulation of qualifications through education and training.

The example of Australian experience with collecting information about future skill needs and its transfer to education could be a good inspiration for other countries how to do it.

Summary

The Good Practice shows a working system of looking into future skill needs in industries and its reflecting in education and training programs.

It describes basic institutions such as Industry Skills Councils, Industry Training Advisory Boards etc., as well as elaborated documents and products, in particular annual 'Environmental Scans' or annual change drivers reports.

The main focus is paid to the form of collecting information about the drivers of workforce development.

Context and setting

Australia is a developed country and one of the wealthiest in the world. In 2014 Australia ranked the world's fifth-highest per capita income. With the second-highest human development index globally¹⁰, Australia ranks highly in many international comparisons of national performance, such as quality of life, health, education, economic freedom, and the protection of civil liberties and political rights.¹

Australia is a constitutional monarchy with a federal division of powers. It uses a parliamentary system of government with Elizabeth II at its apex as the Queen of Australia. It has six states—New South Wales (NSW), Queensland (QLD), South Australia (SA), Tasmania (TAS), Victoria (VIC) and Western Australia (WA)—and two major mainland territories—the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and the Northern Territory (NT).

Nature of the VET concerns

In general children are required to attend school from the age of about 5 up until about 16. In some states (e.g., Western Australia, the Northern Territory and New South Wales, children aged 16–17 are required to either attend school or participate in vocational training, such as an apprenticeship).

Australian Apprenticeships cover all industry sectors in Australia and are used to achieve both 'entry-level' and career 'upskilling' objectives.

The Australian government uses Australian Apprenticeships Centres to administer and facilitate Australian Apprenticeships so that funding can be disseminated to eligible businesses and apprentices and trainees and to support the whole process as it underpins the future skills of Australian industry.

Australia has 37 government-funded universities and two private universities, as well as a number of other specialist institutions that provide approved courses at the higher education level. Next there is a state-based system of vocational training, known as TAFE (Technical and Further Education). TAFE institutions provide a wide range of predominantly vocational tertiary education courses, mostly qualifying courses under the National Training System/Australian Qualifications Framework/Australian Quality Training Framework. Study subjects covered include business, finance, hospitality, tourism, construction, engineering, visual arts, information technology and community work. TAFE colleges are owned, operated and financed by the various state and territory governments.

Nature of the Economic Development

Australia generates its income from various sources including mining-related exports, telecommunications, banking and manufacturing. It is one of the few developed countries which have withstood the effects of the global financial crisis 2008–2009 well, and its economy has remained in a strong position. This is primarily due to the uninterrupted resources boom, accompanied by significant capital investment in the mining related sectors of resource-rich states. At the same time, trade-exposed sectors, such as manufacturing, tourism and education have been negatively affected by the increasing terms of trade. This has created a 'patchwork' economy, as those states where the proportion of these sectors is higher in the economy are growing at a lower speed.

¹⁰ The [Human Development Index](#) (HDI) is a comparative measure of [life expectancy](#), [literacy](#), [education](#), [standards of living](#), and [quality of life](#) for countries worldwide. It is a standard means of [measuring well-being](#), especially [child welfare](#)

Description

Skill and labour shortages have been prevalent features of the Australian labour market for a number of years. While shortages in trade-exposed sectors have eased due to the recent changes, they prevail and are seen as constraining growth in other sectors. The labour market also faces a number of challenges in the long term, such as the ageing population, and slowing labour productivity growth. Addressing these issues through the creation of a high skilled, world class labour force has been the primary focus of government workforce development policies. Training policy responses are being formulated to facilitate the structural adjustment of the labour market.

The sectoral approach has been a key feature of the vocational education and training system in Australia. The key institutions in the sectoral skills development framework are the national and state/territory level industry skills bodies.

Industry Skills Councils (ISCs)

ISCs bring together industry, educators and governments in order to create a common industry-led agenda for skills and workforce development at the national level. Their key role is to represent industry in the management and planning of vocational education and training and in the development of training products, and to provide advice to Australian, state and territory governments about industry skills needs.

The formal roles of ISCs include:

- collecting information on industry training needs from employers, unions and professional industry associations
- providing industry intelligence and advice on current and future workforce development and skills needs to the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (AWPA), government and enterprises
- supporting the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality training and workforce development products and services,
- primary responsibility for the development and maintenance of Training Packages (competency standards)
- providing independent skills and training advice to enterprises, including matching identified training needs with appropriate training solutions
- together with the AWPA, coordination of the National Workforce Development Fund.

ISCs do not provide training or assessment services, or work with individual companies. Rather they focus on strategies that serve the needs of the wider industry.

The network of ISCs was created in 2004 by significantly rationalising the former system of national industry training boards. Eleven ISCs have been established along the main areas of the real economy. ISCs are independent, not-for-profit companies, governed by industry led boards. They are bi-partite

in ownership and through the membership of their boards, but they are not required to have equal representation. ISCs are funded by the Australian Government through base funding and project funding. The amount of funding to each ISC varies in line with the number and size of sectors, enterprises, workforce, and occupations covered by the ISC.

ISCs provide key labour market intelligence to the AWP and other stakeholders through the annual 'Environmental Scans' of their respective industries. The information in the Environmental Scans is unique, as it is based on real-time industry views and evidence from across Australia. A common point in the Environmental Scans is that ISCs use various surveys and consultation to collect information about the drivers of workforce development and the perceived effectiveness of Australia's training system. In addition to this, ISCs use various methodologies to identify current and future skills needs in quantitative and qualitative terms, and to validate the information gathered from industry¹¹. Some of them use high-quality macroeconomic models through contracting professional agencies¹². Others rely more on the in-house analysis of historical data and projections prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and other central agencies¹³.

Besides providing intelligence about industry skill needs to stakeholders, Environmental Scans form the basis for the development of Training Packages.

ISCs work as a network, mirroring the interrelationships between industries and the supply chain nature of the economy. From time to time, they also conduct joint work to provide consolidated, formal advice to government on specific issues that affect skill needs across sectors¹⁴.

State / Territory Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs)

The Australian skills development framework operates across two-tiers of governance. State and territory governments have jurisdiction over education policy, and have training authorities that administer vocational education and training in their jurisdiction. These agencies are responsible for allocating funds, registering training organisations, accrediting courses and have a key role in the development and endorsement of Training Packages. The state training authorities are accountable to their minister, who is a member of the Council of Australian Governments Standing Council on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment.

States and territories also have their own industry led sectoral skills development networks¹⁵. They are state funded, with funding tied to the provision of services to support critical areas of the vocational education and training system. Industry Training Advisory Boards or Councils are autonomous, industry led bodies that aim to identify and prioritise their industry's skills and workforce

¹¹ For example, see http://tlisc.org.au/wp-content/themes/tlisc/downloads/escan_flyer.pdf

¹² For example, Service Skills Australia commissioned detailed 'Labour and Skills Forecasts for the Service Industries', available at <http://www.serviceskills.com.au/labour-and-skills-forecasts>

¹³ For example, Manufacturing Skills Australia in its 'Manufacturing Industry Outlook' <http://www.mskills.com.au>

¹⁴ <http://www.isc.org.au>

¹⁵ Various arrangements exist across the states and territories, the number of state level ITABs are: ACT (2), Northern Territory (6), Western Australia (10), Tasmania (1+industry liaison officers), Victoria (used to have 16, they have been abolished in 2012), Queensland (11), South Australia (9), New South Wales (11).

development needs. Their general role is to ensure the availability of suitable training and skills development arrangements in the vocational education and training sector. In addition to representing industry's skills needs and providing advice to stakeholders, ITABs assist the development of training products, develop training and career information resources, promote the benefits and opportunities of vocational education and training to their industries and provide support training providers.

Similarly to the Environmental Scan of the ISCs, most ITABs produce annual change driver's reports that provide qualitative and quantitative information on current and future skills needs in their sectors, and identify training solutions. Besides surveying industry to collect first hand information, the reports use various methodologies and data sets to provide an analysis and broader context on industry skill needs¹⁶.

The functions of ITABs significantly overlap with those of the ISCs. They seem to better capture industry needs at the state-regional level, while ISCs focus more on issues affecting the overall strategic development of their sectors and the national training system. ITABs often work together with their national Industry Skills Council counterparts. For example, their intelligence feeds into discussions on training, skills and workforce development issues impacting the industry's growth in the national context. Areas of collaboration include attraction of people into the industry, particularly in terms of improving industry's image; building workforce capability and engagement; and improving the quality of training delivery in thin markets.

Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency

The Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency was established in 2012, to support the formulation of workforce development policy and advice, and direct skills funding to industry needs. The AWP's key objectives are to sustain economic growth, avoid future skills shortages and raise productivity by increasing and deepening the skills of Australia's workforce. To achieve these objectives the AWP engages directly with industry on workforce development issues and sectoral and regional industry needs.

The AWP's membership provides balanced representation of industry, employees and employers, and includes experience from academia, training provision or education, economics, industry, and the representation of employees.

The agency has replaced Skills Australia, with expanded roles and functions. As an independent statutory body, Skills Australia's main role was to advise the Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations on Australia's current, emerging and future workforce skills needs and workforce development needs. Building on this remit, the AWP is responsible for:

- skills and workforce research, including into the quality of jobs and future working life in Australia
- providing independent advice on sectoral and regional skills needs to support workforce planning,
- driving engagement between industry, training providers and government on workforce development, apprenticeships and VET reform

¹⁶ For example, www.skills.vic.gov.au/Documents/Publications/Research%20and%20Reports/2610469-2011-Skill-Needs-Profile.doc

- administering the new National Workforce Development Fund, and prioritising industry sectors, regions, and groups for funding
- developing sectoral skills and workforce development plans in conjunction with Industry Skills Councils and industry
- promoting workforce productivity.

A key addition to the functions of the AWP is the administration of the newly created National Workforce Development Fund. The fund is an Australian Government program that supports the training of existing workers and new workers in areas of identified business and workforce development need. ISCs participate in the administration of the fund, as they assist businesses with identifying their training needs, selecting a registered training organisation, and monitoring the implementation of projects.

Rather than being financed from levies¹⁷, the fund is based on a partnership between industry and government under which government funding is supplemented by a co-contribution from employers¹⁸. \$700 million is available through the fund in the next four years. Additional funding is allocated to support up-skilling and re-skilling people over 50 years.

The AWP provides research for a number of key workforce development areas. They prepare the Specialised and Skilled Occupations Lists, which provide the basis of the skilled migration program. They also undertake work on skill needs and workforce development in specific sectors, including in the resources sector, the defence industry, and green skills.

Most importantly, the AWP has established a rigorous process to formulate a National Workforce Development Strategy. The process involves three key stages of research and analysis.

In the first phase, a number of scenarios are developed to identify what factors are likely to drive the demand and supply for skills in the Australian labour market to 2025. The scenario approach acknowledges the limitations of economic modelling methods, particularly in accurately forecasting over the long term. The scenarios provide plausible alternative futures for the Australian economy through which common outcomes and key uncertainties and risks can be identified, thus strategies that take account of uncertainty can be developed.

The scenarios take into account social, demographic and cultural trends; economic and financial trends and globalisation; labour force, industrial and workplace trends; science, technology and innovation trends; governance and public policy; and sustainability. They have been developed through extensive

¹⁷ There is no uniform training levy at the national or state level. However, training levies exist in specific sectors. For example, the building and construction sector applies a levy, but its rate varies across the states:

- in South Australia the levy is applied at the rate of 0.25 percent of the value of building and construction work over the value of \$15,000.00
- in Western Australia the rate of the levy is 0.2 percent of the total contract price or \$200 in every \$100 000 worth of project value, for projects over \$20 000
- in Queensland the levy is 0.1 percent of the project value
- in Tasmania the rate of the levy is 0.2 percent of the project value, where it exceeds \$5000.
- in ACT the rate of the levy is 0.2 percent of the value of work, where it exceeds \$10,000.

¹⁸ The proportion of employer co-contribution depends on the size of employment.

consultation¹⁹ using forums, expert interviews, stakeholder workshops, discussion papers and broadcasting information through a webinar.

The second phase involves economic modelling to draw out skill implications of the various scenarios. The AWPA has commissioned a private consultancy to translate the scenarios into assumptions about key macroeconomic variables. With the use of a dynamic macro model of the Australian economy, the model forecasts the balance between the demand and supply of qualifications under the different scenarios. The model estimates employment growth by occupations, replacement demand, and new job openings. Based on the current qualifications profile, it also projects skills deepening and skills broadening to forecast the implied demand for qualifications. The supply of qualifications has been modelled as additional qualifications resulting from domestic student qualification completions, considering current qualifications completions profiles and demographic projections; and the contribution to qualifications from net migration²⁰. Detailed projections on both the demand and supply side have been produced across a range of occupations, industries, years, qualification levels, and regions.

The third phase includes the development of additional information and analysis for each industry, based on the scenarios and the modelling²¹. These 'Industry Snapshots' include the analysis of industry specific data from sources like the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. Furthermore they utilise the 'Environmental Scans' and other information provided by the ISCs.

This approach seems effective in combining qualitative and quantitative intelligence from a broad range of sources, using sophisticated economic modelling and a rigorous analytical process.

In 2014 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) identified priorities of the new Australian Government. One of the initial priority areas was to streamline governance arrangements. The former COAG ministerial council governance structure was supported by a large number of committees and subcommittees. This led to overlap and duplication, and a lack of accountability. The Australian Government has acted to change this.

The Government has repealed the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency Act 2008 and transferred the functions of the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (AWPA) into the Department of Industry. The change will strengthen the provision of advice to the Australian Government on Australia's current, emerging and future workforce development and skills needs.

Impact and Replicability

¹⁹ For the first strategy, over 400 people attended roundtables and industry briefings and Skills Australia received 45 written submissions.

²⁰ <http://www.awpa.gov.au/publications/documents/DAE-Economicmodellingofskillsdemandandsupply.pdf> and http://www.awpa.gov.au/national-workforce-development-strategy/Australian-Workforce-Futures/documents/AE_Skills_Demand.pdf

²¹ <http://www.awpa.gov.au/national-workforce-development-strategy/2012-workforce-development-strategy/industry-snapshots/industry-snapshots.html>

The important message of the Australian approach to monitoring of future skill needs and their application for economic development is, besides other things, co-operation and dialogue of powerful bodies about questions such as

- What does the State of the Nation in 2025 look like?
- What are the major changes looming that will affect work and productivity?
- What will be the impacts of the 'Asian century' - for the economy, for jobs, for learning/skills development?
- What are the implications for the tertiary sector of meeting the skill needs of employers and individuals?
- Are improvements in labour productivity the key to continued prosperity?
- What are the implications for various industry sectors of all this?
- How will the fast pace of change in ICT and social media/social networking change the way we work?
- What is the impact of technology?

Similar questions promote dialogue raising the profile on the challenges and solutions around developing future workforce in a global economy.

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ANNEX 4

PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICE (ANNEX 4)

Theme 4

Integration of socially-excluded into the labour market

Fredrik Mörtberg and Victor Tanaka

The Swedish Public Employment Service

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VET-EDS Good Practice

LABOUR MARKET ACTIVATION THROUGH A LITERACY DIAGNOSIS

PROSPEKTIKER

Raquel Serrano and Eugenia Atin

Introduction

Recent studies reveal that low skills are found in countries and that these low skills pose problems for individuals trying to cope with work and life in modern societies where the demands for literacy skills are on the increase.

The vocational training system in the Basque Country is currently offering the same training solutions for all the people, and therefore, the low literate people obtain very low levels of achievement because of their understanding problems.

It is therefore crucial to facilitate an appropriate assessment of the literacy skills of the unemployed people and then design a tailored training programme for the specific persons.

- This practice helps to activate the low literate people.
- It requires the cooperation of social organizations, training centers, foundations, development agencies, etc.
- It reinforces the interrelation between the business and educational worlds.
- It reflects the nature of the Erasmus+ programmes in relation to the need of cooperation between different actors and establishes a cooperative process.

Summary

The new literacy programme of Lanbide, Basque Employment Service, starts with a literacy diagnosis to assess the skills of long-term unemployed, that leads to a 4-month customised literacy training and finally a 6-month vocational training combined with a part time job in a specific area.

The Basque Government is aware of the literacy problems within the Basque population and has launched a specific programme in order to provide customized training for the low literate that will activate them in the labour market.

Literacy not only enriches an individual's life, but it creates opportunities for people to develop skills that will help them provide for themselves and their family.

Over 200 students are participating in this pilot project which is not yet finished.

Context and setting

The Basque Country is situated in the north of Spain, up against France's south-western border, comprising the provinces of Alava, Gipuzkoa, and Bizkaia. Although not a nation, the Basque Country enjoys a high level of self-government in matters as important as health, education, research, security, housing, employment, economic development or taxation. It occupies a surface area of 7,235 square kilometres and is home to 2,169,038 people.

In today's technologically-based global economy, considerable emphasis is placed on the contribution made by people, or what economists refer to as human capital, to economic growth. The theory is that the relative contribution of individuals to growth depends on their human capital – the knowledge, skills, competencies and other attributes that are relevant to economic activity. As a consequence, developing the skills and knowledge of the labour force is regarded as a key strategy for promoting national economic growth. Related to this is the assumption that individuals who contribute more by way of their human capital should earn more. Distributional issues are a consideration as well, since increasing access to education and training can help to address inequality in employment and earnings outcomes for more- and less-skilled individuals.

The Basque Country is increasingly interested in assessing the skills of its adult populations in order to monitor how well prepared they are for the challenges of the modern knowledge-based society. Adults are expected to use information in complex ways and to maintain and enhance their literacy skills to adapt to ever changing technologies. Literacy is important not only for personal development, but also for positive educational, social and economic outcomes.

Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

For individuals, lack of basic skills can lead to unemployment or low-paying, dead-end jobs; to status as permanent political outsiders, with no opportunity to have their voices heard; and to the possibility of watching their children repeat the cycle.

The Basque Government is aware of the literacy problems within the Basque population and has launched a specific programme in order to provide customized training for the low literate that will help them find or retain a job. Indeed, 25 pct. of the adults in Spain score at the lowest levels in literacy and show below-average proficiency in literacy and numeracy compared with adults in other countries.

Description

Recent studies by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) show the importance of a core transversal skill such as literacy. This term was born in Canada in the 80s and has been adopted by many international organizations to express fitness or personal ability to understand and use information, at home, at work and in the community, in order to achieve personal goals, broaden their knowledge and acquire skills.

In 2015 the Lanbide, (the Basque Employment Service), developed a literacy programme as a specialty of the Basque catalog of qualifications, with a view to later be taken over by the Spanish catalog. Thus, throughout the year, Lanbide has developed a literacy pilot programme which has taken place in 12 different locations of the Basque Country, particularly training centers historically linked to the delivery of VET and VET for employment.

Currently, vocational training is offering the same solutions to all unemployed people, ignoring:

- the very low levels of qualification
- the situation of long-term unemployed with low qualifications
- the language difficulties

We fail to diagnose people correctly or to provide the necessary training tailored solutions. It is not enough to stick only to the qualification levels. When a common training solution is provided for all, the qualification courses are likely to fail. The testing of different profiles in the Basque Country reveals some shocking data, in many cases people do not understand anything, in others the language is a barrier that prevents a person from not understanding a word of the training.

Lanbide has therefore created a programme in which people are firstly diagnosed regarding their literacy, and afterwards trained in a specific craft that takes into account the skills and abilities of the specific person.

Literacy not only enriches an individual's life, but it creates opportunities for people to develop skills that will help them provide for themselves and their family. Breaking the cycle of illiteracy and improving self-esteem is crucial for many people. By enabling them to become economically productive and independent, they become empowered and can take control of their lives. The importance of education in fostering personal autonomy, and creative and critical thinking skills is central to helping people contribute to their societies.

A solution was therefore sought to allow people to maximize their potential for their given literacy profile, and not their qualification profile. Indeed, indicators of educational attainment have typically been used as a proxy measure, with educational attainment being measured either as years of schooling or as highest level of education completed, ranging from less than a high school level to having one or more university degrees. However, these indirect indicators cannot distinguish between the acquisition of specific knowledge versus general literacy skills. The levels of qualification (0-1-2-3-4) do not measure literacy skills levels and in many cases a high level of qualification doesn't imply a high level of literacy. In nursing for example, in level 4 qualification the average literacy is of 2.6. Skills are a passport to progression. No matter how many qualifications one has, it is what one can do that interests employers.

Immigrants are also inclined to have a low literacy level, in many cases due to the language barrier. Immigrants arriving in Spain in recent years are more educated than immigrants who arrived in the past. However, the evidence shows that despite having high levels of education, the economic performance of immigrants relative to the Spanish-born population has deteriorated. Many immigrants find it difficult to secure well-paying jobs and their earnings tend to be well below those of the Spanish-born population. This could be explained by the noted shift in the new countries of origin from which many new immigrants arrive to Spain. These tend to be countries where native languages are all but Spanish. New immigrants are much less likely to speak Spanish as their mother tongue than previous immigrants and large numbers have completed their schooling in their home countries, often in a language other than Spanish.

Moreover, people receiving a guaranteed minimum income are forced to attend training courses and when they have a very low literacy level, they do not understand anything about the training but will not drop out of the training for risk of losing the subsidy. These are situations that should be avoided with a new process / detection system of profiles of the people.

Lanbide's project for literacy began with the evaluation of the degree of literacy of people, specially unemployed people or with difficulties in maintaining a job. The literacy is measured before and after the programme. The programme therefore consists of 3 basic steps:

1. Identify the people
2. Assess their literacy and qualifications
3. Create customized training (literacy and vocational training)

The target group is the unemployed people nominated by the social services. The selection was made according to the literacy profile of those who can get better use of the programme, combined with the prioritization made by social services. A literacy test was conducted by a private recruitment company hired by Lanbide to handle this part.

One of the key success factor was a detection of homogeneities in the first diagnosis cycle. The areas that are assessed in the literacy diagnosis are:

- Reading: "Functional literacy" is often defined as the ability to read.
- Writing: Written literacy might best be considered to be an individual's capacity to write what she needs to in clear and reasonably accurate language.
- Math: "Numeracy" or "mathematical literacy" refers to the ability to perform the basic mathematical operations - addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and whatever else - normally needed in everyday life.
- Cultural literacy: Familiarity with the background knowledge and Spanish culture.

Once diagnosed, the students start their training in literacy which lasts 4 months to make way for an employment programme combined with vocational training, with six months of part-time contract

In the case of one of the cities involved, for example, the vocational training selected is a professional certificate of level 2 in design and maintenance of gardens and parks. This training has been combined with a module of level 1 about Cleaning Open Spaces, as well as working at height and lifting platform

management. People who have not finished their primary education can therefore access through this programme a training of level greater than 1. Thus, it seeks to train professionals able to adapt easily to changing or new tasks within both areas of skills: cleaning and gardening. This training takes place during 6 months for 4 hours a day, combining the other four hours with a part-time contract.

To meet the expenses of teachers and materials, the participating organisations receive a grant (in one case for example of 54,000 euros to train 17 people). Meanwhile, the cost of hiring the students for six months on part-time work is covered by the organisations.

The students will be hired by the participating entity (eg. the City) from January to June 2016. If the City cannot take care of the training and the work of these people, an agent/ foreman will be hired for the purpose of training the student and in this case the salary will also be paid with the organisation's own resources.

It would be impossible to test the programme with our 160,000 unemployed so a sample has been selected where the very low-skilled, long-term unemployed, etc. have been chosen.

Impact and Replicability

Over 200 students are participating in this pilot project which is not yet finished. The literacy diagnosis has been conducted and the students have been trained in literacy but they have not yet started the specific vocational training combined with the part-time job.

Although the programme is not finished, we do know the reasons why the students engaged in the programme:

- They wanted to improve their employment situations. Whether that meant gaining more responsibility on their jobs, becoming more competent at what they did, being promoted, finding a better job or career, or just being able to work at all, most learners felt that improving their literacy could lead to improving their work life and finances.
- They wanted to be better parents, spouses, and family members. Reading to children or helping them with homework, keeping better contact with faraway relatives, are all cited as reasons for learning to read and write better.
- They wanted to be better citizens. Learners wanted to be able to read about and understand the society's issues, so they could make their own informed decisions.

There is a difference between employment and activation and this is a practice related to activation which enables low literate people to everyday life. Through this programme, we not only provide employment for low skilled and low literate people but this people improve their basic skills and improve their quality of life.

This programme is absolutely replicable in other regions, moreover, similar programmes are already taking place. It is worth noting the high coordination and collaboration needed in the project. This long-term project involves the social organizations, training centers, foundations, development agencies, etc.

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VET-EDS Good Practice

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

PROSPEKTIKER

Raquel Serrano and Eugenia Atin

Introduction

In the area of employment, this initiative has set itself the challenges of training the jobseekers to meet the needs of the real businesses and facilitate intermediation between the Third Sector and private companies.

In order to train vulnerable people to meet the real needs of companies, the programme is working to understand the labour demand in Spain, which could be more easily applied to people with vulnerability and make it available for social organizations in order for them to aim their training processes to it.

Thus, the programme facilitates the matching of the needs of companies and the necessary technical training of unemployed people.

After analysing the labour demand, it is necessary to build on the skills that businesses demand for each job. This new programme offers a new methodology for the development of generic skills based on measurement of personal growth according to the labour market demand.

Summary

Accenture Foundation has developed a programme to improve the employability of the most vulnerable sectors of society through a model of active participation of all social agents involved: private business, public administration and the third sector.

The programme is both a monitoring and a training tool for the development of the most demanded skills.

The programme counts with tools and self-tools for objective measurement of the skills level as well as specific training materials for skills development.

This is a specific programme for risk profiles which includes a social and skills? analysis of the candidate.

The programme has developed an online application which allows the career advisors to automate and manage the registration of candidates and their assessments as well as to identify the skills gap of the candidate towards the desired job position.

Context and setting

The Basque Country is situated in the north of Spain, up against France's south-western border, comprising the provinces of Alava, Gipuzkoa, and Bizkaia. Although not a nation, the Basque Country enjoys a high level of self-government in matters as important as health, education, research, security, housing, employment, economic development or taxation. It occupies a surface area of 7,235 square kilometres and is home to 2,169,038 people.

Under the premise that unemployment is the biggest threat to growth and economic recovery in Spain, and that its impact is much greater on the most vulnerable sectors of society (young people, disabled, immigrants, women victim of gender violence, former prisoners, etc.), Accenture Foundation has designed a specific programme to improve the employability of these vulnerable people.

The employability of a person is considered to be determined by:

- Determining factors:
 - Social elements that influence a person's employability and may pose additional difficulties in insertion.
 - These social elements may require an intervention oriented to adjusting certain situations, either prior or parallel to employment activities.
- Basic skills:
 - Elementary behaviors related to the literacy of the person.
 - They are within reach of the vast majority but are particularly relevant to people at risk of exclusion.
 - They are required for any type of job, it's a minimal agreement that all candidates must have, regardless of the position they hold.
- Transversal skills: Those particularly critical for the development of a particular job, but they are common to many sectors / positions and transferable between them.
- Technical skills: Knowledge necessary for the performance of the functions of a particular work activity.

Accenture Foundation has created a new way to foster the employability of the people, which is a monitoring and training tool for the development of the most demanded skills.

Lanbide, Basque Employment Service, aims to implement a skills managed model and has closely examined Accenture's new programme. Lanbide believes that an intermediation system in which only qualification is required is not complete; there are certain components which are not taken into account in the current intermediation processes that go beyond the educational qualifications. We are currently failing to identify the needs of business when doing labour market intermediation and this new initiative could help in the process.

The challenge of this initiative is to improve the employability of people at risk of social exclusion and do it with a model of active participation of all social agents involved. This is to promote and strengthen a shared vision of the problems, interconnections and possible solutions related to the employment of the most vulnerable among social organizations, companies and public administration bodies in order to enhance employability. Since the beginning of the project, Accenture Foundation has been very

aware of the importance of measurement, they want all the accomplishments to be measured and quantified.

Description

Given the effect of the economic crisis on the people at risk of social exclusion, Accenture Foundation has launched a project of collective impact that was created with the mission to improve the employability of the most vulnerable sectors of society through the collaboration between private business, public administration and the third sector.

The programme is aimed at the needs of SMEs because large companies already have alternative systems which work correctly. For this, training centers act as antennas capturing the needs of companies with which they collaborate. Companies in selection processes conduct tests to detect skills deficits. Commonly, companies do not know how to explain what they need, however they can answer the question of why they have chosen a certain candidate.

This programme is created for the Third Sector to improve orientation and employment of people at risk of social exclusion, and seven social entities have collaborated: Gypsy Secretariat, Caritas, ONCE Foundation, FSC Inserta, Foundation Èxit, Spanish Red Cross and Tomillo Foundation.

Acknowledging the generic skills of each person is key to obtaining and maintaining a job. The programme helps to develop these skills of vulnerable groups in an objective, efficient and attractive way and by encouraging the learning of the necessary skills for the different social groups.

It is therefore based on the measurement and training of those transferable skills demanded by the labour market for certain jobs. The programme counts with tools and self-tools for objective measurement of the skills level as well as specific training materials for skills development.

This is a specific programme for risk profiles which includes a social and labour analysis of the candidate (which identifies external aspects regarding the economic aspects, family, environmental factors, etc. accounting additional insertion difficulties). It also incorporates the skills and professional evaluation with 20 profiles of basic and generic skills and incorporates the most demanded profiles by participating NGOs and a choice of selected companies.

It is easier to identify gaps in the social aspect, it is more transparent and easier to identify. Once the skills are detected and the gaps identified, we are in a position to determine the training of the particular person. This person must be ready to actively participate in the programme.

The new tool provides:

- A new way of working: skills management.
- A new application for carrying out the process.
- New resources on career guidance: measurement materials, training materials ...

Methodology

The methodology was defined among the seven participating NGOs. These are three steps:

1. **Social assessment** or of social aspects that affect the employability of the individual: Identifies external aspects regarding the economic aspects, health, family, social and environmental factors, etc. accounting additional insertion difficulties
 - Barriers: Factors that pose barriers or a limiting effect particularly in the access to employment.
 - Conditions: Factors that pose additional difficulties in the insertion and that are not linked to knowledge.
 - Economic, basic needs.
 - Health, addictions, physical and psychological welfare, disabilities and incapacities.
 - Family, persons under their responsibility, support of the environment...
 - Personal, availability, sex, age, religious and cultural practices.
 - Environmental, housing conditions, access to public transportation, workplace ...
 - Professional, work history, time and educational qualifications.
 - Other, motivation for employment, knowledge of Spanish, personal image, control and guidance...
 - Previous elements. Factors that conceptually cannot be considered as conditioning, as some of them are at the limit of technical skills or basic skills.
2. **Basic skills assessment** of the 5 essential skills to access and stay in any job position. It is a dictionary of skills describing 5 basic skills and 15 transversal competences.
 - Core skills
 - Self-confidence
 - Self-control
 - Communication
 - Compliance of rules and tasks
 - Mathematical reasoning
 - Transversal skills
 - Flexibility
 - Interest in learning
 - Technology focus
 - Capacity of relation
 - Teamwork
 - Customer focus
 - Quality of work
 - Frustration tolerance
 - Initiative and decision-making
 - Organization
 - Achievement orientation
 - Problem solving and analysis
 - Creativity and innovation
 - People management
 - Negotiation
3. **Professional assessment**, with the critical skills that lead to success for the 20 most demanded profiles by NGOs and the selected companies. These professional profiles when compared to

the skills evaluation of the candidate, allow to establish the gaps which may be covered by training:

- Phone operator
- Telemarketing
- Waiter assistant
- Administrative assistant
- Receptionist
- Cook assistant
- Home cleaning
- Companies cleaning
- Data recorder
- Junior programmer
- Technical data analyst
- Warehouseman
- Shop assistant
- Chambermaid
- Personal care at home
- Personal care at institutions
- Forklift operator
- Cashier
- Production workman
- Garden workman

This programme is about innovating in the training system, not to create specific workshops. This way the individuals are trained in social skills while the technical training is done.

Application

The programme has developed an online application which allows the career advisors to automate and manage the registration of candidates and their assessments as well as to identify the skills gap of the candidate towards the desired job position.

It allows the candidate to self-assess their skills. It connects the results with the application as part of the assessment of the candidate. Thus, the tool helps career advisors to make a complete diagnosis of the candidate.

This assessment can be done thanks to the tool developed by the Accenture Foundation under the assumption that identifying the generic skills of each person is the key to obtaining and maintaining a job. This programme allows developing aspects such as self-confidence, communication skills, flexibility, tolerance to frustration, achievement orientation and creativity, among others, in an objective, efficient and attractive way.

To do this, it relies on the measurement and training in both basic skills and those transferable skills really demanded by the labour market for a certain job and the analysis of the skills gap. It counts with online tools and self-assessment tools for objective measurement of the skills level as well as specific training materials for skills development.

Impact and Replicability

Although already implemented in a number of organisations, the Accentur Foundation's proposal has not yet been established in the Basque Country's PES and therefore we cannot offer results.

We can identify however the expected impact and benefits of this employability programme for people in risk of social exclusion.

- Make available to all professionals involved in the intermediation process, an objective and standard methodology for skills measuring and development.
- Enhance the employability of the users, adapting their profiles to the labour market demand.
- Involve the users throughout the job search process.
- Provides tools to objectify the improvement of employability in generic skills.
- Reinforces a particular part of the labour intervention process.
- Adapts to the different types of groups and starting positions.
- Reduces the subjectivity in the process of diagnosis.
- Connects the skills with the needs of the labour market.
- Provides a common language and collaboration among key entities in guidance and job placement.
- Enables both the design of an intermediation system and a training system.
- Moves towards the "forward contracting": this means that before the end of the training, we can inform a company to which extent a particular candidate fits the company's profile.

Note the importance of collective impact. If organizations want to enhance the employability of the most vulnerable, if they really want to generate impact and transform society, it is urgent to begin to share the efforts, successes and failures.

Besides the analysis of the current demand for employment, in the near future the programme is planning to incorporate projections of future labour market and new opportunities through analytical techniques, forecasting demands and trends.

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VET-EDS Good Practice

Josef Lannemyr

SWEDISH FOR PROFESSIONALS

Introduction

The program combines measures toward two of the most obvious threats against regional development: integration on the labor market of newly arrived immigrants and a simultaneous reduction of skills shortages (VET-educated persons). These two factors are crucial for the further economic growth, and considered as key issues in Economic Development Strategies.

Why is Swedish for professional successful and a good practice?

- The program strengthen the role and effectiveness of Vocational Education and Training for newly arrived immigrants as it shortens the time before entering an education.
- The program assist the transition to the world of work as long introduction programs, without contact with working labor market and native Swedish society may create lock –in effects and further entrench migrant segregation.
- The program reshape labour market policy and institutions in its innovative way (in a Swedish context) to facilitate access to employment and tackle social exclusion.

Summary

Swedish for professionals consists of different courses focusing on professional Swedish language, related to specific areas of work. The goal is to shorten the path through the educational system for newly arrived immigrants, and the time it takes before they can start working in their profession. One of the main thoughts behind the Swedish for professionals program is that if you start off to learn a vocabulary within a professional context it will help to increase the overall language skills. Swedish for professional starts off with concentrated studies of professional Swedish in a small group in three months. Then the students enrol in labour market training and combine the VET with individually adapted language studies. Swedish for professionals fulfil two important objectives: It helps to reduce shortages of people with technology and manufacturing VET. It helps integration. Several reports and evaluations suggest that contact with working life in an early stage of an instruction program will shorten the way to employment for immigrants.

Context and setting

Sweden consists of 21 different counties, and the size of these counties varies widely, both in size and population. Sweden's population was roughly 9.7 million at the end of 2014. The three biggest counties in Sweden had about 52 percent of the nation's total population, while the north consist of vast areas of wilderness. Sweden's population is increasing, mostly due to an increasing immigration. The economy in Sweden is growing and the employment has been increasing for a while. The unemployment is still at a high level due to an increasing labour force. Sweden has a relatively high unemployment, however many employers are looking for skilled labour and are unable to fill job vacancies. The recent development of the Swedish' Beveridge curve²² shows that employers are facing big challenges when it comes to matching job vacancies with candidates' skills. Therefore it is important to develop the work with VET-EDS over time.

The service sector in Sweden has been developing in recent years. That includes both public and private service sectors. At the same time the manufacturing industry has been decreasing. The service sector was 8.5 percent larger at the end of 2014 than it was in the end of 2008 (number of employees). The manufacturing industry had decreased by 15 percent at the same time. But Sweden is still a small and open economy heavily dependent on exports. A vast majority of Sweden's export goes to and through Europe. The unemployment among people with shorter education is at a higher level compared to the ones having a longer education. More people need to get at least an education at a secondary level to establish themselves in the labour market. Therefore it is important to have an extensive work with LMI on both national and regional level.

With regard to migrants, Sweden accepts a large number of refugees. Official estimates suggest up to 160,000 could come to Sweden during 2015, a country of 10 million, which is the largest number per capita in Europe. Although Sweden has a well-developed framework for integrating migrants, (scoring top ranks among 38 economies²³) the integration process is lengthy. As in other countries, only 30 percent of participants in the PES introduction program are in employment or full-time education after two years. Accordingly, rising migration inflows pose upside risks to unemployment for some years and new measures are needed.

Swedish for professionals - a fast track to VET for immigrants

Swedish for professionals – consists of different courses focusing on professional Swedish language related to specific areas of work. The goal is to shorten the path through the educational system, and consequently the time it takes before immigrants can start working in their profession or start their own businesses in Sweden.

Hence, Swedish for professionals has a two-folded purpose:

- To give the participants training in vocational Swedish in their intended profession before a planned labor market training programme.

²² The Beveridge curve, which shows the relationship between vacancies and unemployment, has shifted outwards since mid-2009. Unemployment is now higher for a given number of vacancies than before the financial crisis *Swedish Economy August 2014*, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, <http://www.konj.se/swedisheconomy>

²³ Sweden, IMF Country Report No. 15/330, International Monetary Fund, December 2015.

- To give participants an individualised language-learning plan in their professional field while participants are enrolled in vocational training programmes.

The overarching goal for Swedish for professional is a gain of professional language skills to extent which enables learners to attend a regular vocational training program or be eligible for a work experience placement or a traineeship.

Background

The elementary *Swedish language program for adult immigrants* (Sfi) has been running for more than 40 years. However, the program is often a subject of discussion and issue in the debate about integration in Sweden. One critic draws attention to conflicting views on the role and status of the program²⁴. One opinion consider the program should meet changing labour-market demands and others see the program as fulfilling longer-term goals of personal and professional development and future citizenship.

These different views on the primary role of Sfi are mirrored in conflicting opinions of who should take responsibility for the program. The Act on establishment activities for certain new arrivals (2010:197) came into force on 1 December 2010. With this, the main responsibility for helping people granted a residency permit to settle down has moved from the Swedish Migration Board to the Swedish Public Employment Service (Arbetsförmedlingen). This responsibility means that the Swedish Public Employment Service has to assign, if necessary, new arrivals that have a right to an establishment plan to a place of settlement in a municipality. The county administrative boards must negotiate with the municipalities over the reception of new arrivals²⁵.

The reason for The Act on establishment was the time from migrants' arrival in Sweden to entering working life was considered too long. The OECD considers the average length of the introduction period in Sweden of around two years as too long, and contributing to adverse effects related to the absence from the labour market during this period of time. Even though some knowledge of the Swedish language is beyond doubt necessary for labour market integration, the OECD has underlined that a rapid insertion into the labour market, without any prolonged periods of instruction and training, is as crucial for the integration process²⁶. Recommendation was to focus on short and high quality language instruction, whilst avoiding the pursuance of a knowledge level that goes beyond what is demanded by employers.

Therefore, the need for reforms that fastens the road to work for immigrants is a highly prioritized area by the national, regional and local authorities, and viewed as an important issue in the regional development.

²⁴ *Nobody's darling? Swedish for adult immigrants: A critical perspective*, INGER LINDBERG and KARIN SANDWALL – Goteborg University, Sweden, Prospect Vol. 22, No. 3 2007

²⁵ **Reception** of asylum seekers, <http://www.government.se/sb/d/11901/a/125266>

²⁶ *The Integration of Immigrants in Sweden: a Model for the European Union?* Anja Wiesbrock,, Volume 49, Issue 4, International Migration, 2011.

Reason for Swedish for professionals

The goal of Swedish integration policy is equal rights, obligations and opportunities for all, regardless of ethnic or cultural background. The integration policy is also part of the Government's efforts to increase the supply and demand of labour, improved matching on the labour market and more enterprises and improved growth.

Measures to increase labour force participation are to be reached primarily through general initiatives aimed at the whole populace, regardless of country of birth and ethnic background. However, the general initiatives are to be supplemented by targeted initiatives to support and facilitate the establishment of new arrivals during their first years in the country. Such targeted measures are provided within the scope of the establishment scheme, the overarching purpose of which is to facilitate and speed up the establishment of new arrivals on the labour market and in society. Prior studies have shown that Sweden has not been particularly successful in utilising and developing the competence of new arrivals. This is apparent in the considerable differences in the levels of employment between those born in the country and those born abroad, and from the risk of unemployment being almost three times higher for the latter group. In general, it also takes a long time before new arrivals receive employment, while a large portion of those born abroad are overqualified for their work.

Through its work with regional labour market forecasts the PES can provide local information to facilitate matching migrant competence with local needs. However, the necessary first steps in enabling migrants' access to the labour market go through education. Naturally, employers need validation of migrants' prior experiences or certification of their skills. The vocational scheme provided by the PES is called „labour market training programmes“ and provides VET-education for the local labour market's needs delivered by well-known educational providers.

Labour market training programmes

People that are unemployed, or risk becoming unemployed, can in certain cases participate in a labour market training programme. The aim of the programme is to improve the clients' opportunities for finding work and to make it easier for employers to find labour with the right expertise.

A labour market training programme is a vocational education and training scheme that Arbetsförmedlingen (PES) provides through contractors, often a training company or a municipal commissioned service. Labour market training programmes are highly demand –oriented and should answer to the needs of the local labour market. During recent years, most of these programmes have concerned skills development for sectors such as manufacturing, health and social care, and transport.

It is the PES officer that assesses their client's situation in the labour market, and takes into consideration the vocational area, prior experience and the current state of the labour market. On the basis of this information, the officer then decides whether a labour market training programme would be a good way to improve the client's opportunities for finding work.

A labour market training programme usually last for up to six months. The programmes can last longer if such timeframe supports a fulfillment of the training goals.

Swedish for professionals in practice

Swedish for professionals, has a two-folded purposes. Firstly (step A), Swedish for professionals consist of concentrated studies of professional Swedish in a small group. A recommended length of this stage of the program is three months. The goal with this part of the program is that the participant should be able to enter an ordinary labour market training programme.

One of the main thoughts behind the Swedish for professionals program is that if you start of to learn a vocabulary within a profession it will help to increase the overall language skills. To be able to measure the progress in the participants' languages skills the program starts with language test. The test uses the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* or CEFR - scale. After the test the educational provider prepares an individual study plan that appreciates the learner's ability to gain enough Swedish to be able to enrol in a labour market training programme. The Swedish skills needed should also be assessing depending on which craft or education the learners have in mind.

After three months of intensive language studies the participants do a new test to make sure that the objectives are reached and that the participants are ready for a VET provided in Swedish. Depending on the result of this second language test it is decided how much language –training him or she should have during the next stage of the program.

Secondly (step B), depending on the language test results, the learners in Swedish for professionals gets 4, 6 or 8 hours of language training a week alongside the labour market training program. This corresponds to 10, 15 or 20 percent of the activity. The language training is organised individually or in a group format, if there are learners within the same occupation. This stage take a form of an ordinary vocational training within the PES' labour market training scheme with extra language education incorporated within the training.

One of the key feature in the labour market training program is the workplace-based learning (APL). As a part of the VET-education the language training taking place at a company becomes more authentic and the learner gets an up to date in the industries' technical language.

The length of this stage of the process is usually three months but could be longer if this is needed in order for to fulfil the goals of the training. After the end of the training, the educational provider issues the learners whit a certificate listing the gained language skills andan overall development during the program.

Scale of Swedish for professionals.

Swedish for professionals started already 2006. Since then the migration to Sweden have increased sharply and the program have increased in scale. During the fall of 2015, 1 700 people participated in the step B of the program in Sweden. 855 of these were women and 808 had lower secondary education as their highest completed education. 1600 of the participants were born outside Europe and 800 hand been in Sweden for a shorter period than three years. The program was conducted all over Sweden.

Target groups for the program

The target groups for the program are unemployed people with none or basic knowledge in Swedish who knows which occupation suits them. The person should have education or prior working experiences within the profession from the country of origin and have the goal to resume this line of

work in Sweden. However, there is possibility to start the program without prior working experience if an employment officer at the PES considers Swedish for Professionals is a suitable program.

How Swedish for professional is organized

A labour market training programme is a vocational course that Arbetsförmedlingen (PES) commissions service from, for example, a training company or a municipality. There are several providers of this program and the public tendering before the programme starts is regulated and specified in detailed to guarantee the same standard throughout the country. In every region there are pinpointed PES staff working as Public Procurement Specialists that ensures that the criterion of the programs are followed. The client's employment officers are given regular updates about the clients' progress and, of course, the results from the language tests.

The prediction is that the need for Swedish for professionals will increase in years to come due to a sharp increase in refugees. The new procurement will lower the requirements on the teachers (qualified teachers in Swedish as a second language and two years' experience) to be able to match the growing needs of vocational education in Swedish. Hence, a new round of procurement will take place during the spring of 2016. The open procedure invite suppliers to submit tender though an announcement. All interested suppliers of Swedish for professionals can submit a tender and the PES will carry out a qualification of the suppliers and evaluate the tenders received.

What worked and why

Links between the integration programs such as the Swedish for immigrants (Sfi) and the labor market should be strengthened. Contact with the labor market while learning the language should be a tool of integration policy. There is a risk that integration programmes that involve insufficient contact with labor market and native Swedish society may create lock-in effects and further entrench migrant segregation. Labor market contact at an early stage upon arrival can help to solve other integration problems such as poor language skills, and lack of access to informal networks. Therefore it is a key advantage that an introduction programmes and language education program for new arrived immigrants is undertaken in close collaboration with VET-education and local business.

Constraints and challenges

The programs Swedish for professionals have existed since 2006 and have been subject to a few follow ups and there have been critical opinions regarding the focus and extent of available activities, as well as their quality²⁷. In many cases the subcontractors (i.e. the educational providers) are stated to be experiencing difficulties in guaranteeing the quality of the services' provided. Arbetsförmedlingen spends a significant amount of time on checking and pressuring the educational providers to guarantee that quality but even so this is not always the case. One problem is that some subcontractors are insufficiently skilled for working with the target group in question. The solutions from Arbetsförmedlingen have been to initiate a new procurement where the prerequisites of the educational providers have been sharpened and the activities even more specified.

²⁷ Utilizing and developing the competencies of newly arrived immigrants- the right measure at the right time, Swedish national audit office, 2014.

Impact and Replicability

The Swedish for professionals is based on a very simple idea: To get the immigrants with only basic knowledge of the language in a VET as soon as possible and then continue to combine the vocational training with part-time language studies. As simple as can be this is a rather new idea in a Swedish context where introduction programs for immigrants have been seen as a mean to fulfilling longer-term goals of personal and professional development and future citizenship. The VET- education is highly demand-oriented and answers to the needs of the local labour market. Therefore this project is well aligned with the regional development strategies. Working as planned Swedish for professionals fulfil two very important objectives:

- 1) It helps to reduce indicated shortages of workforce in technology and manufacturing. The shortage is expected to be greatest for upper secondary engineers and those educated in industrial manufacturing subjects. A functional VET-education is a central to reduce the predicted shortages
- 2) It helps integration. Several reports²⁸ and evaluations suggest that contact with working life in an early stage of an instruction program will shorten the way to employment for immigrants.

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²⁸ For example: OECD Territorial Reviews, Skåne, Sweden, OECD 2012.



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VET-EDS National Good Practice

Project Prototyping Transfer as Innovative Approach in German Labour Market and VET Policy

Daniel Kahnert

Introduction

The project *Prototyping Transfer* supports the idea of foreign professionals as valuable source of skilled labour in the German labour market.

Integrating foreign professionals into the German labour market is seen as a major part of a strategic political approach to secure a supply of skilled professionals in Germany now and especially in the future. This is particularly important due to the aging workforce caused by the demographic change in the structure of the German society.

The project *Prototyping Transfer* is part of the recognition process framed by the Recognition Act of 2012 in Germany. It represents an innovative approach to gain a formal recognition of competences and professional skills via practical work and its assessment. This is a new approach for most industries in German, which usually rely on formal documentation and certificates when assessing professional skills. The Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) is the coordinating organisation, while six different partners (different chambers) are responsible for the implementation and the assessment process.

Summary

Prototyping Transfer is part of the recognition process framed by the Recognition Act of 2012 in Germany. It represents an innovative approach to gaining a formal recognition of competences and professional skills via practical work and its assessment.

It targets a very specific and yet rather small group of people. Those are professionals with a foreign professional degree from a non-EU country, who seek to have their qualification officially acknowledged as equivalent to a German occupational register?, but are not able proof via official documents what their professional education included.

In such cases, an alternative qualification analysis is conducted as a new and innovative way to assess the practical competences of an applicant.

For the German system, this is especially challenging as normally, the formal occupation is the most (and in many cases only) relevant certified proof of professional skills.

Context and setting

The German labour market and VET system is highly structured by formal certificates as evidence for professional skills. The general reference framework is an occupation. Occupations mark the major structuring element in the classification of labour.

This is closely coupled to the system of professional education. Professional training in the dual system as well as in school based systems usually leads to a formal document indicating an occupational degree. It is extremely important for applicants to have successfully completed a certified occupational training in order to secure a qualified job.

Figure 8: Unemployment Duration and Qualification in Germany



Source: Own elaboration based on Arbeitsagentur 2015: <http://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Statischer-Content/Arbeitsmarktberichte/Personengruppen/generische-Publikationen/Langzeitarbeitslosigkeit.pdf>

This argument is supported by current statistics on the relevance of a formal professional and certified education. While only about 17% of the population in Germany does not have a certified professional education, the share among unemployed lies at about 45%. In addition, not only the risk of becoming unemployed is higher with a certificate, the duration of phases of unemployment are also much longer. Figure 1 illustrates in more details on how the level of certified professional education and unemployment duration relate.

With the certificate and the high standards in the trainings and the education they are attached to, comes the premise that the holder of the certificate also has the professional skills required in the respective professional field. This is ensured and controlled by the chambers and other branch organizations.

With the strategy to attract foreign professionals to the German labour market as a mean of securing supply of skilled professionals now and in the future, comes the need to translate their professional education into the German system.

To support that process and make it more efficient and transparent, the Federal Recognition Act was introduced in 2012. This legal act newly introduces the right to have their professional qualifications assessed and acknowledged for professionals from non-EU countries, which until this introduction did not have the same rights as professionals from EU-member states or with certificates from EU-member states.

Target groups of the Recognition Act

Individual level

Generally, the target group of the Recognition Act are people with foreign professional qualifications, who seek to have these acknowledged in Germany. Most of the time these people are foreigners. The target group can be differentiated according to special legal conditions for each of the following subgroups:

- Asylum Seekers
- Citizens from Third Countries
- Citizens from Third Countries with Qualifications from EU / EEA states
- Citizens of States, Germany has a Bilateral Agreement on the Acknowledgement of Professional Qualifications with
- EU-Citizens
- Expellees
- Late Repatriates
- Refugees

For most of the above listed subgroups, the 2012 Recognition Act brought significant legal changes in the way their access to an acknowledgement procedure is organized. With the new legal basis, each of these groups now has the right to access an acknowledgement procedure, which was not the case for all of them before.

Level of professions

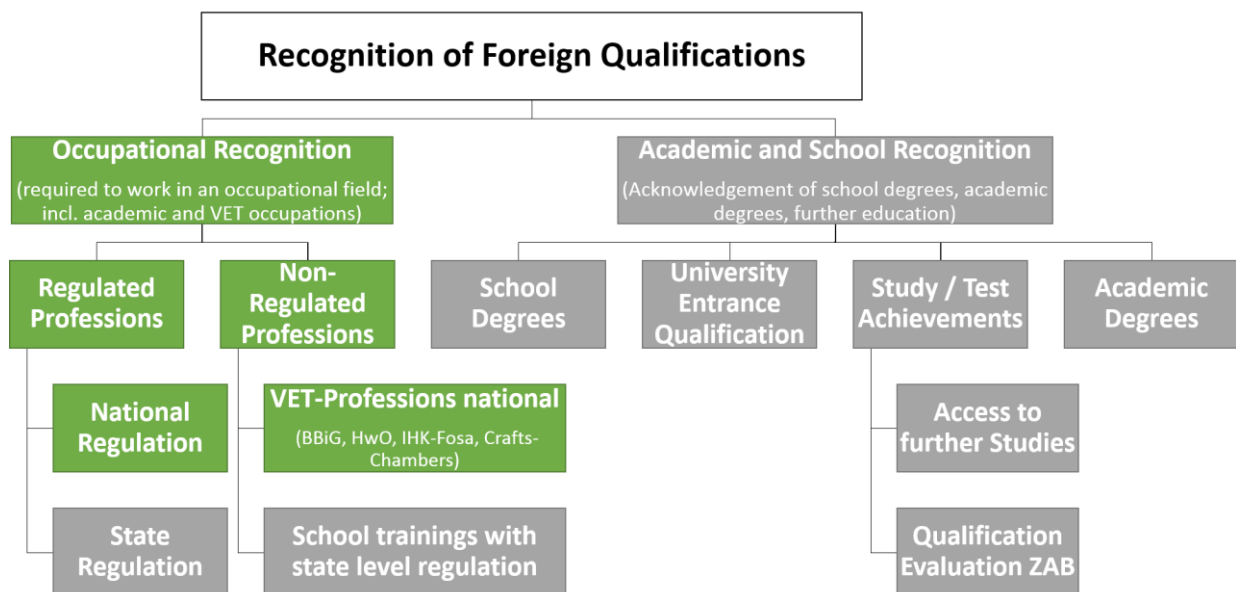
The general idea is to have foreign qualifications acknowledged as equal to a German reference profession. These reference professions are divided into two subgroups:

- a) Regulated professions
- b) Non-regulated professions.

For regulated professions an acknowledgement of the qualification and therefore a successful recognition procedure is mandatory. Otherwise one will not be allowed to work in the respective professional field as a skilled professional. These professions are again divided into those, which are regulated on the national level, and those regulated on the state level. The Recognition Act directly covers regulations on the national level, however in consequence of its introduction, many state regulations have also undergone some changes.

For non-regulated professions a successful recognition of occupational qualifications is not mandatory. Most of the jobs that require vocational training in the dual system belong to this category. Nevertheless, formal acknowledgements of professional skills are definitively helping, when trying to find a job, especially one on an adequate level according to the jobseeker's abilities and qualifications. The 2012 Recognitions Act therefore also covers non-regulated professions to make finding a proper job easier also for foreigners in non-regulated occupational fields. Figure 2 provides information about the scope of the 2012 Recognition Act.

Figure 9: Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and the Recognition Act*



*green fields mark the scope of the 2012 Recognition Act

Source: Own elaboration based on BMBF 2012 pp. 6

For the most part, official documents are required for the recognition process to illustrate, which qualifications a foreign professional has and how those can be translated and transferred into the German system of occupations. But not all applicants always have all the documents required for a comprehensive assessment. At this point the *Project Prototyping Transfer* comes into play.

Description

History of the Project

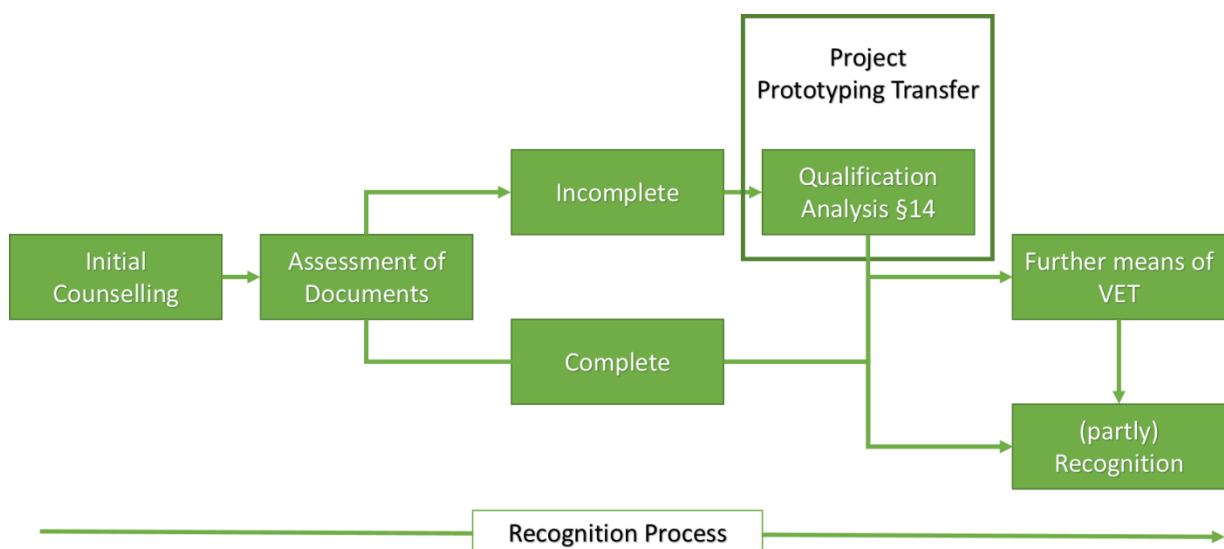
The project Prototyping Transfer is the successor of the project Prototyping. The original idea of this first project was to create a prototype for a procedure to assess foreign professional qualifications in the acknowledgement process framed by the Recognition Act. In this process, the standard procedure is to use official documents and certificates to classify a foreign professional education as equivalent to a German occupational degree or not (or partly equivalent). §14 of the law also describes the possibility of alternative and suitable procedures to assess qualifications, if a

document-based analysis is not possible. Reasons for this can be missing documents or unclear informative value of a certificate.

The original project Prototyping was launched to develop guidelines and regulations, explore where problems and difficulties in the process could arise, as well as working on possible solutions and recommendations for the executive partners.

Project Prototyping Transfer now has the goal to use the structural and conceptual work done in the original project and implement the procedure in the field among the different partners and institutions involved. Figure 3 illustrates how the project is positioned within the whole recognition process and at which stage alternative qualification analyses can be done.

Figure 10: Project Prototyping Transfer in the Recognition Process



Source: Own elaboration

Why is this practice interesting in the context of VET-EDS

The concept of the project is especially interesting as an innovative example for the German labour market and VET system as it represents one of the few examples where a competence-based qualification assessment outside of the standardized dual or school-based VET is done as a substitute for document-based assessment. At the same time, it leads to an issuing of officially certified professional skill document. Although only a rather small scale, and exclusively within the frame of the recognition process, this approach represents a good example of how flexible labour market and VET policy can be – even in the rather formalized Germany system.

Actors Involved

The original project concept was developed in a cooperation of the Westdeutscher Handwerkskammertag (WHKT) (Crafts organization), six different regional crafts chambers, trade chamber Cologne, the research institute for VET in crafts of the University of Cologne and the central VET organization of crafts. The VET-political coordination was done by the head organization of crafts in Germany. It was financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

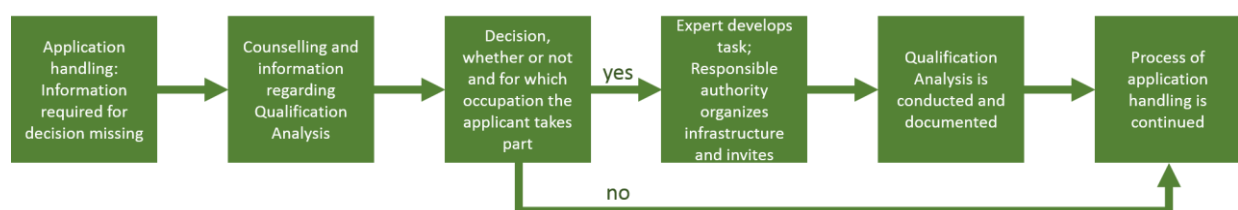
Prototyping Transfer is now coordinated by the Federal Institute of Vocational Education (BIBB). Partners are Crafts Chamber in Hamburg, Mannheim, Trade Chambers in Cologne and Munich as well as IHK Fosa and the Westdeutscher Handwerkskammertag. BMBF is also funding the current project.

Target Group of Project Prototyping

The project Prototyping Transfer targets a very specific and yet rather small group of people. Those are professionals with a foreign professional degree from a non-EU country, who seek to have their qualification officially acknowledged as equivalent to a German reference occupation, but are not able proof via official documents what their professional education includes. Only in such specific cases, the responsible counselling actors will recommend an alternative qualification analysis according to §14 of the German Federal Recognition Act. Note that there is not yet a general qualification assessment procedure based on practical professional competences that is officially acknowledged by the responsible chambers outside of the Recognition Act processes other than the usual dual-system or school-based trainings officially regulated by the industry organisations such as the chambers of trade or crafts. This means that the assessment procedures in the Project Prototyping is officially acknowledged and supported by the respective chambers and industry organisations. It is a significant novelty in the Germany VET system, even if yet only applied for a very small group of people.

Figure 4 illustrates where the qualification analysis is located within the application and recognition process.

Figure 11: Qualification Analysis as part of the Recognition Process



Source: Own elaboration based on: WHKT 2013

The Practice

When during the initial application handling required documents are missing, an alternative qualification analysis can be proposed by the responsible actors (in most cases the local or regional chambers). The decision whether or not such an analysis is done, will then be made by the IHK Fosa, the foreign skills approval organization of the trade chambers. The qualification analyses however, can be conducted in various ways and include different approaches. Six instruments have been developed:

- Comprehensive interview/expert discussion
- Specimen piece
- Trial work at an actual enterprise/workshop
- Case study
- Presentation of work results
- Role-play

The criteria on which basis these six instruments were developed are validity, objectivity, reliability, and economic factors (WHKT 2013).

One or more of these instruments are used in each case of a qualification analysis to assess the competences in a professional field, in which the applicant is trying to achieve recognition of his or her foreign professional education. All these instruments share that a structured and comprehensive observation and documentation is done in during the process. To this end, an operationalization of competences is done by experts, which is the basis of the structured documentation sheet.

After a successful qualification analysis, applicants receive an official document, attesting that they have proven to have certain competences, relevant for their occupational field of work. This kind of document is not only relevant for the general recognition process, but also has labour market relevance in itself. Especially in the crafts industries, actual proof of certain practical competences in form of such a certificate is seen as very valuable by some employers. Even if applicants only receive partial acknowledgement of their professional education (about 30% of all cases) and therefore not a full occupational certificate, holding an official and actual prove of practical capabilities is highly labour market relevant in some cases. For the German system, this is especially interesting as normally, the formal occupation is the most (and in many cases only) relevant certified proof of professional skills and the by far dominant structuring element of the German labour market system.

Impact and Replicability

Looking only at the absolute numbers of cases in 2014 and 2015, the projects Prototyping and Prototyping Transfer seem to have low impact: In 2014, 99 cases of an alternative qualification analysis have been documented. It is predicted that in 2015 it will be only about 40 cases.²⁹ But there are two things to keep in mind when looking at these numbers:

1. The project is part of the formal recognition process framed by the Recognition Act. This fact alone makes the target group very limited as it is only addressing those cases where required

²⁹ (source: expert-interview with project-coordinator)

documents are missing. The current project Prototyping Transfer is still in a rather early phase and increasing numbers are expected in the future, when the practice is more established, known among the different institutional actors and existing problems regarding legal issues, finances and responsibilities can be solved.

2. On the other hand, the significance of the idea and the practice is remarkably high in the context of general VET related policy and discussion. Having a competence based assessment officially certified by a chamber, which makes that document immediately labour market relevant, is very new and innovative in many industries in Germany. Also seeing that a possible competition between only formally approved and actual practically analysed professional competences might evolve from such a practice is highly relevant for the German VET landscape.

The replicability of this practice seems quite high. In fact in many other countries organizing competence assessment procedures should not be something outside the already existing norms and practices. The question much rather might be, which relevance the associated documents and certificates will have in the respective regional or national labour markets.

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VET-EDS NATIONAL Good Practice

Migrant Advisory Committee's Points Based System (PBS)

Dr Andrew Dean

Introduction

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) is a non-departmental public body comprised of economists and migration experts that provides transparent, independent and evidence-based advice to the Government on migration issues.

This case study looks at how decisions are made regarding the national level skills needs of the UK and how these can be supported through migration.

The model can be regarded as good practice as it represents an evidence-based, independent, non-statutory, non-time limited, non-departmental approach to the (politically) difficult topic of migration. MAC reports cover issues including:

- the impacts of immigration
- the limits on immigration under the points based system
- skills shortages within occupations

A number of VET-EDS good practice reports have deliberately looked at 'migration' with a view to informing the forthcoming dissemination event in Groningen that will include cross-border cooperation around skills, VET and economic development strategies.

Summary

The design of the Points Based System (PBS) for managed migration (Migration Advisory Committee) is examined and discussed.

MAC produce annually a report including the shortage occupation lists for use by the UK government.

This includes settlement rights and transitional labour market access for citizens of new EU (European Union) accession states and the minimum income threshold for sponsoring spouses/partners and dependants in order to ensure that the sponsor can support his/her spouse or civil or other partner and any dependants independently.

Since 2011 the Home secretary has asked MAC to "research the labour market, social and public service impacts of non-EEA migration; and to advise on the use of such evidence in cost-benefit analyses of migration policy decisions".

This report is described.

National Policy Setting

The Migration Advisory Committee is non-departmental public body set up to provide transparent, independent and evidence-based advice to Government on where shortages of skilled labour exist that can sensibly be filled by migration.

In 2006, following an extensive public consultation, the Border and Immigration Agency published proposals to modernise and strengthen the UK's immigration system by introducing a new Points Based System (PBS). Alongside the implementation of the new system, the Government requested that the MAC, report on where there were gaps in the current data required in relation to skilled labour shortages, how those data gaps should be filled, and how MAC could report on shortage occupations in the meantime. Reports have subsequently been produced annually. In each case the content represents the independent view of the Committee and not necessarily that of the Government. The Government has also, from time to time, asked MAC to advise on other matters relating to migration.

Context and setting

For 20 years, the UK has seen more immigration than emigration - reaching a peak in 2005. Net migration began to drop in the wake of the credit crunch economic crisis and then again from 2011 after the government restricted entry for some people from outside of Europe. But since 2014 net migration is on the rise again.

The government has suggested that much of the increase in immigration is due to EU citizens coming to live and work in the UK. It points to the fact that 142,000 more EU migrants had entered the UK over the previous 12 months than left. All the data shows that this is indeed true - for the past decade there has been an enormous rise in the arrival of EU citizens to the UK. These movements were initially triggered by the then Labour government's decision to allow Eastern European workers access to the British labour market while other EU members kept temporary restrictions in place.

The number of people coming to live and work in the UK from the rest of the world not only exceeds those from the EU but it also increased in the last year. After three years of falling numbers, in the 12 months to June 2014 there was net migration of 168,000 from the rest of the world, an increase of 20% on the previous period. In the same period there was a 10% increase in work-related visas granted to people from outside the European economic area - the majority of whom were skilled workers. Most migrants coming to the UK are looking for work, but those entering from the EU account for more than half of all the workers in the UK who are not British citizens. National Insurance numbers issued to EU citizens increased 6% to 421,000 in the 12 months to June, with the largest number - 92,000 - allocated to Polish citizens. Latest figures for the third quarter of 2014 show there were 1.7m EU workers in the UK, out of a total non-UK national workforce of 2.9m.

Description

The MAC is made up of a chairperson and 5 other independent economists, who have been appointed under rules relating to public appointments laid down by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). Additionally, the Commission for Employment and Skills and the Home Office are represented on the committee:

- Professor Sir David Metcalf CBE (chairman)
- Professor Alan Manning
- Professor Jonathan Wadsworth
- Dr Jennifer C. Smith
- Professor Jackline Wahba
- Lesley Giles (ex-officio member, Commission for Employment and Skills)
- John Thompson (ex-officio member, Home Office)

The MAC is supported by a secretariat, which is based in London. The MAC is an advisory non-departmental public body sponsored by the Home Office. Further information on the MAC's relationship with the Home Office is set out in its Framework Document, which is published on the MAC's website. The MAC's secretariat is comprised of Home Office civil servants who are operationally independent from the Home Office. Its corporate functions such as Finance, IT and HR support are provided by the Home Office.

Approach

The MAC combines detailed analysis of national level data with in-depth knowledge of, and evidence from, employers and other partners involved in the UK labour market. A key feature of the MAC's work, therefore, is the development of full and effective engagement with a wide variety of partners from within business, central and local government, sector skills councils, trade unions, academia and individual employers.

Partner engagement is actively pursued by the MAC through a number of different fora. A small, focussed panel comprising representatives from the Trade Union Congress, the Confederation of British Industry, British Chambers of Commerce and NHS Employers provides immediate reaction to the MAC's proposals and a sounding board for its ideas. The MAC has had engagement with each of the panel members separately on a commission by commission basis.

A larger, more representative, corporate partner forum offers other groups the chance to interact directly with the MAC. This has a non-fixed membership, with all partners being invited to attend a forum in London each time the MAC is consulting on a specific issue. In addition, meetings for individual sectors such as engineering, health, education, social care, finance and IT and the creative sector are held when necessary. The MAC also visits partners in their workplaces to see specific jobs in action and attends a number of regional and national fora across the UK as well as meetings with partners and representatives from a

wide range of organisations. The Committee values engagement with partners from across the whole of the UK, while recognising that many bodies have headquarters or main offices in London. The MAC has had engagement with over 113 separate bodies during this reporting year. The MAC and its secretariat have undertaken visits to Scotland (twice), Boston, Derby, Kingston Upon Hull, Manchester, Needham Market, Peterborough, Southampton and Wisbech.

There has also been a demand internationally for the MAC to feed into international debates on migration. Members of the MAC attended conferences in Washington and Malaysia during the year.

Structure

The MAC's small secretariat comprises representatives from different disciplines across the civil service and draws on experience of different government departments. Represented within the team are experts in the fields of economics, policy development, corporate partner engagement and administrative skills. All economists are members of the Government Economic Service (GES) and are recruited following GES rules and processes. The secretariat supports the Committee and, more generally, helps to ensure that Government policy and strategy in relation to migration and employment is based on robust evidence and analysis. 39 members of the secretariat have worked on the MAC's published reports over the course of the MAC's existence. As with any organisation, there is a managed throughput of staff with the average number of personnel at any one time numbering between 10 and 12. The secretariat also annually employs a summer intern economist.

MAC Research Programme

The MAC commissions research from external consultancies or academics on an annual basis. Research is procured according to Home Office Science guidelines and tenders are evaluated by a panel of labour market experts and economists. The research must meet at least one of the following two objectives:

- **Relevance to Committee work:** Does the research have relevance to existing commissions or anticipated commissions?
- **Improving the relevant knowledge base:** Would research fill gaps in the literature or obtain data or information that would not otherwise be available in relation to material that is of relevance to the Committee's work?

The Points Based System

MAC operates to support the Tier 2 level of the UK Points based System. The other tiers are:

- **Tier 1 (Entrepreneur)** - for those wishing to set up or take over a business (or businesses) in the UK that they will be actively involved in running. It grants three years leave and those applying must have over £200,000 of funds.

- **Tier 1 (Investor)** – for those who wish to invest capital in the United Kingdom. In November 2014 the investment thresholds were increased to; £2,000,000, £5,000,000 or £10,000,000.
- **Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent)** - The Exceptional Talent sub-category is for those who are recognised or have potential to be recognized as exceptionally talented leaders in the fields of science, the humanities, engineering, medicine, digital technology or the arts.
- **Tier 4** - All student visas are classed under Tier 4 of the points-based system. To qualify, visa applicants must have already been offered a position at an educational institution.
- **Tier 5** - Covers temporary workers and youth mobility.

Tier 2 – Which MAC supports, covers skilled workers with a job offer from a UK-based employer and was introduced in November 2008. It replaced the provisions for work permit employment, ministers of religion; airport-based operational ground staff, overseas qualified nurse or midwife, student union sabbatical posts, seafarers, named researchers, Jewish agency employees, and overseas representatives (news media). There are several categories under Tier 2, these are:-

- General (Subject to annual limit of 21,700, not including those switching to Tier 2 from within the UK);
- Minister of Religion;
- Sports and Creative workers;
- Intra Company Transfer (ICT);

Priorities for MAC to look at have been:

- options to re-focus the route on areas where there are genuine skills shortages
- how to limit the time that sectors can remain on a shortage list
- the implementation of a levy on Tier 2 visas, to fund apprenticeships
- restrictions on the automatic right of Tier 2 dependants to work
- tightening up on the intra-company transfer (ICT) route, including applying the immigration health surcharge to ICTs
- raising the minimum salary levels that migrants have to be paid

Points Scoring

Points are awarded under the points based system for the following:

- Qualifications (this ranges from GCSE A-Level equivalents to PHD's);
- Future Expected Earnings (the salary that is received by the applicant);
- Sponsorship (the type of sponsorship you are applying under);
- English language skills;
- Available maintenance (funds used to support yourself).

Impact and Replicability

The system is not unusual in itself and the regular reviews are clearly necessary. A full review took place in 2013 of all of the occupations on the list and this document can be downloaded from:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/257241/mac-report.pdf

For an occupation or job title to be placed on our recommended shortage occupation lists for the UK and Scotland it must pass three tests:

- First, whether individual occupations or job titles are sufficiently **skilled** to be included on the shortage occupation lists;
- Second, whether there is a **shortage** of labour within each skilled occupation or job title; and
- Finally, whether it is **sensible** for immigrant labour from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) to be used to fill these shortages.

The system is readily replicable but requires effective interaction from all areas of industry and civil society. The relatively high but variable levels of migration (of all occupations) from within the EU are not something the system has any impact on. The success factors are:

- Ability to effect real numbers
- Government buy-in
- Industry buy-in
- Research/analytical expertise reflected in the panel and in evidence-gathering
- Educational flexibility to support provision for target groups

The target figures for jobs/industries do not reflect regional needs directly – these are tackled through the need to have a job offer in place.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

BORDERLESS EMPLOYMENT

KWIZ (Harry Piepers & Tessa Schoot Uiterkamp)

Introduction

Unemployment rates are higher in Dutch (rural) border areas than in other parts of the country. The number of job seekers is high, but the number of vacancies not sufficient. At the same time, there are much more vacancies just across the German and Belgian borders. The plan of Borderless Employment aims to (re)-educate and (re)-train Dutch job seekers living in border areas in order to secure a job in Germany or Belgium for at least one year.

The plan is beneficial for several actors:

- The unemployed: they will be employed again;
- Dutch municipalities: less costs for social security;
- Dutch labour market: more/better skilled employees.

The aim is to train 800 people, to perform similar and new jobs. The plan differentiates between job seekers who have only been unemployed for a short-term and those that are already long-term unemployed.

Four regions in The Netherlands have been selected: the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe, and Limburg and the provinces of Noord-Brabant and Zeeland. The latter two form one region and their unemployed will be trained to work in Flanders (Belgium). Citizens of Groningen and Drenthe will aim for a job in Niedersachsen (Germany) and people from Limburg will be looking to get a job in Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany).

Thus, the plan facilitates bringing the needs and demands of the cross-border labour market together.

Summary

The project Borderless Employment aims to have 800 Dutch citizens who live in areas close to the German and Belgian border get a job just across the border.

It is a two-year project (started in February 2016) for which almost € 10 million is available. This money will be used to (re)train employees specifically for their future jobs. Participants also have the possibility to follow language and cultural courses and they can receive on-the-job training.

The project aims to bring supply and demand on the labour market in border areas together. Areas close to the border in The Netherlands have a higher unemployment rate than other areas in the country. At the same time, areas just across the border are hiring.

The project will use existing knowledge of placement across the border, which is already done by social services in the southern part of the province of Limburg.

Context and setting

Unemployment is higher in Dutch border areas than in other regions of the country. In March 2015, 592.000 people in these areas were registered as unemployed and looking for a job. Business in border areas had to cut off staff or went bankrupt in the last few years, leading to an increased number of employees looking for a new job. At the same time, regions just across the border in Germany and Belgium are looking for employees. Additionally, the population in all border areas is shrinking, making it even more important to capture all possible opportunities and not limit ourselves by our borders. This is why the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment will invest € 4.9 million in a project called 'Borderless Employment' in the upcoming two years. The four parties that drafted this plan (employers' and employees organisations, councils of provinces, benefit organization UWV and a collective of municipalities) will invest the same amount of money, making a total of almost € 10 million available.

Four regions in The Netherlands are selected for the plan:

- The province of Groningen
- The province of Drenthe
- The province of Limburg
- The provinces of Noord-Brabant and Zeeland.

The selected regions across the border are:

- Niedersachsen (Germany)
- Nordrhein-Westfalen (Germany)
- Flanders (Belgium).

The plan aims to accompany and train 800 people for a job across the border. People will be able to participate in retraining-programs, go to language and cultural courses and/ or will be guided within their new companies by receiving training on the job. Their (newly) learned competences and diploma's will be recognized internationally. Three training plans are included: a short, medium and long plan, lasting from four weeks up to six months (depending on someone's distance to the labour market).

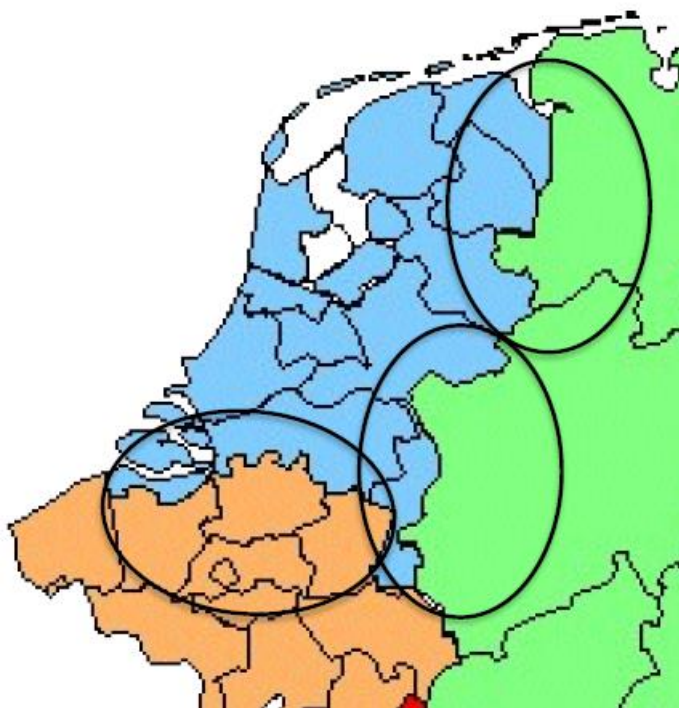
The project is both beneficial to the Belgian and German regions as well as to the Dutch border regions. The latter regions will have to pay less on social benefits whereas Belgian and German companies profit from the work of extra (and trained) employees. Most jobs are available in technical professions, agriculture, logistics, hospitality services, care professions and in the field of education.

Description

The project 'Borderless Employment' tries to bring together supply and demand on the labor market across Dutch borders. By training Dutch unemployed specifically for a future job in Germany or Belgium supply and demand will come together. In Belgium and Germany there is a larger number of jobs available for Dutch citizens when they are properly (and specifically) trained for the job. For some years already people in different areas have been working across the border. At the same time, the infrastructure in border areas is improving and it becoming easier to get an education or get a job across the border. To really capture these opportunities of working abroad, the project Borderless Employment has been initiated in order to help the unemployed.

Research tells us that when the barriers of a border are removed, the number of jobs increases. There are more options for the inhabitants of those regions. Additionally, the diversity of the supply of labor increases leading to better match skills needs between employers and employees. In some sectors there is a shortage of labor force in one country but a surplus of labor force on the other side of the border.

The following regions are included in the project:



Dutch people living in Groningen and Drenthe will be helped to get a job in Niedersachsen. Those living in Limburg are trying to get a job in Nordrhein-Westfalen and people from Noord-Brabant and Zeeland are helped to get a job in Flanders.

The plan tries to mediate 800 people into a new job. More specifically the plan aims at three types of groups:

- 120 people who have a job in The Netherlands (15%)
 - 80 people to a similar job. These people will receive training to improve their existing job-related skills.
 - 40 people to a different type of job. These people will receive a re-training program.
- 520 currently unemployed people who used to have a job and now receive social benefits (65%). These people will enter both a re-training program as a program to improve their existing skills.
- 160 people who receive social benefits for already a longer period or who are entrepreneurs (20%). These people will enter both a re-training program as a program to improve their existing skills.

The project aims at a success rate of 75% for each group.

The length of this project is set on two years. Jobs that will be selected for the project need to be at least for one year and will have to require at least 32 hours per week. The salary must be at least as high as the Dutch statutory minimum wage.

In theory, most of the people looking for a job should be able to get one across the border in Germany or Belgium. Most of the unemployed near the border are skilled at a mediocre level and are looking for a job in the administrative, technical or care sector. These sorts of jobs are available across the border. Ability of job seekers to get a job depends on several factors such as:

- Intrinsic motivation of the job seeker;
- Job seeker's attitude towards the new job;
- Credentials of job seeker's diploma's across the border;
- Language skills;
- Adaptability to a different / foreign company culture;
- Salary;
- Travels (distance + expenses).

Training

The plan distinguishes three types of training, depending on job seeker's (recent) work experience:

- Short training: 4 to 12 weeks. The future employee has recent work experience in a related job;
- Medium training: 12 to 16 weeks. The future employee does have some work experience in a related job but needs substantial training in order to perform his/ her new job.
- Long training: 26 weeks. The future employee has a large distance to the labor market but does have some interest in a particular job or sector.

All of these training activities can be paid by the € 10 million of the project. The project also grants language- and cultural courses, on-the-job training, travelling expenses and training supplies for the participants, mediation for working across the border and any expenses made to have participants' competences recognized internationally.

Partners

The program was initiated by FNV, The Netherlands' largest trade union. Partners of the project are:

- Employees' and employers' organizations
- The border provinces
- UWV (employee insurance agency)
- The organization of Dutch municipalities.

The next four parties can get subsidy from the project:

- Employers in The Netherlands, Germany and Belgium
- UWV (employee insurance agency)
- Municipalities
- Intermediate parties.

Stakeholders

- the unemployed:
 - They can get back to their career and earn money.
 - Their skills will be updated
- the regional labor market:
- The number of people looking for a job will decline.
- the national labor market:
- With an ageing population, it is important that the labor force is strong and well-skilled and equipped, so we have enough people to fill in the jobs that the babyboomers will leave.
- Dutch business
- They care about well-skilled people.

Focus

- Training and re-training. Specific focus on sectors with a lot of vacancies that match with the Dutch potential employees.
- Improving someone's foreign language skills.
- International Diploma Recognition.
- Mapping of competencies.
- Accompaniment, mediation and infrastructure.

All of these focal points need to be addressed/organized wisely, or they can form constraints for successfully conducting the project.

Impact and Replicability

The sectorplan of Borderless Employment has several benefits. First of all, 800 people will have a job again. They will receive (on-the-job) training and will be able to get new certificates and diploma's that are internationally recognized. Even if they are not able to stay at their new job after the project ends (it is after all, partly financed by governmental institutions), they will have more experience and more skills than beforehand. Secondly, Dutch municipalities do not have to pay their social benefits anymore. Consequently, both the Dutch and the German and Belgian regional economy will benefit. The plan will also intensify the relationship between labour market regions in the three countries.

Social services in the province of Limburg do already have some experience with people working across the border. These experiences are useful for successfully conducting the new plan. Understandably, the new plan will have its own successful and unsuccessful factors. These can all be shared with other (national and international) regions, in order to have people work across the border in the best way possible. Even though cultures vary across Europe, experiences of this plan can be used to successfully replicate the project in other regions. Especially since several regions in The Netherlands as well as in Germany and Belgium are involved, making it easier to pinpoint the key success factors.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

Online learning

Tessa Schoot Uiterkamp & Harry Piepers

Introduction

Since the so-called Participationlaw was introduced in 2015 in The Netherlands, people who are limited in their abilities to work need to try to get a regular job. They need help with getting a job, but budgets are limited. Governmental organisations that guide these people with limited labour skills, started using e-learning in order to train them. E-learning is used both before they start a job and when they are already employed.

The e-learning programs are aimed at improving skills that are needed to function properly and to be self-reliant at a normal employer.

The e-learning programs are also suited for those who do not have limited labour skills and are already able to work at a normal job but who do have a smaller chance in getting a job. These are mainly less educated people and/or people on social welfare. Thus, e-learning can be a useful VET-tool for those who need some assistance getting ready for a job and being able to function properly at a regular firm.

E-learning has some advantages over more traditional ways of learning: the training is not bound to a specific time or location, there are no extra costs for teachers and class rooms, students can study at their own pace and it is easy to track someone's progress.

Summary

The Dutch 'Participationlaw' (since 2015), states that people with limited labour skills should get a job at a regular firm. In the past they could work at a special firm, with similar colleagues and special guidance.

To succeed in a regular firm these people need training. Governmental organisations started using e-learning to train those with a distance to the labour market. The WORK portal is the most used program for these people.

Advantages of e-learning are: the possibility to study at one's own pace and in one's own time, being able to repeat a training, tracking the students' progress, making it easier to tune to program to the individual and low costs.

The WORK portal is aimed at improving the employer's general skills as well as labour-specific skills.

The e-learning program makes those with limited labour skills feel more independent, proud and more ready for our society.

E-learning is a promising way to train lower educated people in general.

Context and setting

Since the Participationlaw was introduced in 2015, people with limited labour skills are expected to get a job at a regular employer. Of course they will still get more guidance than people who do not have a distance to the labour market. However, the Dutch government finds it increasingly more important to increase labour market participation at every level of society. In the past, people with limited labour skills could work at special companies where they would get specific guidance and where only people with a distance to the labour market would work. But now the law is introduced, these people need to be trained properly (before their entrance at the labour market as well as on-the-job) to succeed at a regular firm.

In the guidance of these people, municipalities and special firms are starting to use e-learning more and more as a common training tool. Recently, a portal (WORK) was set-up for people who work at a special firm for those with limited labour skills. With the training programs on this portal, they can increase their self-reliance and prepare themselves for a regular and permanent job. The training programs are aimed at improving their job-related communication skills, improving one's ability to work together with colleagues, to deal with aggression and bullying, safety, but also at the orientation of professions and on applying for a job. In addition, the portal contains programs for improving one's language skills, numerical skills and computer skills. It is also possible to do exercises on how to deal with money and how to live a healthy life.

These e-learning programs are suited for lower educated people, who might have a distance to the labour market and/or have limited labour skills. E-learning can be used in several sectors and throughout the entire country. Several studies show that all lower educated adults, and not only those with actual limited labour skills, can benefit from e-learning. It is a very approachable way of training. People can work and learn at their own pace. E-learning is most beneficial when it is combined with more traditional forms of job-training because this links one's new knowledge and skills to their own situation. This combined form of training is called blended learning.

Description

People who have limited job skills, a distance to the labour market, who receive social welfare and/ or who are lower educated can have trouble finding a regular job. They need training for both general work-related skills and job-specific skills. Although these people might be completely suitable for a regular job, they might have difficulty with training and studying in general. In order to succeed at today's labour market, they need (basic) skill such as computer skills, social skills and they might need practice with language and numeracy. This can be learned and trained by using e-learning programs. E-learning is an interactive way to improve basic (labour market-related) skills.

Companies in which only people with limited labour skills work, started using the new portal called 'WORK', developed by a website specialized in online training. This portal is also accessible to others. Next to people with an indication for having limited labour skills, the new portal WORK is also being used to train other groups such as people with social welfare benefits. There are two other online

learning packages for people with a distance to the labour market, to get them ready for employment: oefenen.nl and weblearning from Stimulansz. The three e-learning programs all target a different group and are now offered via just one website to municipalities. In this way, municipalities can see which programs are suitable for which target groups and they can get advice in the best way possible.

1. Stichting expertisecentrum ETV develops educational and multimedia exercise instruction programs for lower skilled people. Target groups can practice (on their own or under supervision) basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and computer skills. The mission of ETV.nl is to encourage people to develop themselves with accessible materials. ETV also wants to contribute to increasing the basic skills of low-educated in the Netherlands.
2. SBCM. Their mission is to contribute to proper, sustainable and as regularly as possible employment for people with a distance to the labour market. They aim at people who are indicated to have limited labour skills. SBCM develops practical tools, such as the online learning package WORK portal, provides training and organizes knowledge sharing meetings.
3. Stimulansz. Stimulansz aims to improve the government's service to their citizens within the social domain. Within online learning StimulansZ developed the Web learning program. This offers municipalities a portal with online courses, training and tests that clients can immediately use by themselves. Their e-learning program is designed to reduce the distance to the labour market.

The WORK portal offers the following training programs (themes are being listed):

- Safety at the workplace. Labour risks and how to deal with them are being discussed.
- Language/literacy
- Calculations
- Workplace related skills (also contains programs about internships and how to apply for a job)
- Education (library and school)
- Money
- Health
- Internet

Success factors for online learning for people with limited labour skills

- Concrete images to support text
- Visual and verbal elements that complement each other
- Elements that belong together (such as text and images) are put close together
- The information is as concrete as possible
- No unnecessary information or distracting images
- The instruction is cut in manageable chunks
- Opportunities to determine one's own learning path and pace
- Lots of opportunities to practice
- Lots of feedback and encouraging, uplifting comments
- The content suits the target's daily environment
- Simple and clear language

It is the interactive approach of e-learning that makes it so motivating for the targeted groups: movies and animations make the learning process more dynamic and more playful and users are actively involved in their learning process because their answers determine the further progress of the training program.

Another key success factor of the WORK portal is that the students can repeat the training as often as they want. Because people can determine their own pace, they are in control of their own training. This differs from more standardized training program for 'regular' students of course, making this e-learning program a perfect fit for its target groups.

Blended learning

Research shows that a training program that combines online with offline learning is the most effective way of learning. This is called *blended learning*. The WORK portal training programs are also a form of blended learning: there are manuals for teachers to help them train their students by going through the online material face-to-face.

Adjusting e-learning to the target group

The e-learning program needs to be adjusted to the target group: people with limited labour skills. These people have a lower language and developmental level than regular employees. Basic cognitive processes such as reading are a lot more difficult for them. In effect they have less memory space to process the new information and to integrate this information into their existing knowledge. Thus, the language used in the e-learning programs needs to be as simple as possible and auditory and visual elements of the training need to be combined in the best way possible in order to prevent cognitive overload.

Impact and Replicability

E-learning for people with limited labour skills is very useful: they can learn all the necessary skills at their own pace and in their own time. The e-learning programs are both job-specific and contain training programs aimed at general skills that these people might lack. For example on how to work together with colleagues and how to operate a computer. With its interactive approach, by using movies and animations, e-learning is a motivating way of preparing those with a large distance to the labour market for a regular job. The WORK portal makes it possible for teachers to track every students' progress very carefully. This makes individual assistance and guidance possible.

For e-learning programs to succeed, it is important to keep in mind the target group. People with a distance to the labour market have less cognitive capacity than other people, thus making it important to keep the training programs as simple and as accessible as possible. A strength of the programs is the possibility to repeat the training as much as someone wants.

The impact for the students seem to be quite high. Training with the e-learning programs improves self-esteem and increases a sense of independence. E-learning appears to contribute to the personal development of those who have a distance to the labour market. Especially developed computer skills

make people feel more valuable. People are proud of what they have learned and on the fact that they are more independent. They feel more able to participate in the digital society. E-learning is more difficult for those who have trouble with understanding the language which is important to keep in mind while working with a particular group as those with limited labour skills.

Research shows that not only those with labour limitations benefit from e-learning. Lower educated adults in general can benefit from these programs. E-learning is even more effective when it is combined with offline learning, for example by discussing an exercise with a teacher and/or other students. This combination is called blended learning.

E-learning is used by municipalities throughout the Netherlands and does not have to be sector specific. It is extremely useful in the Netherlands these days because the Participationlaw of 2015 states that as much people as possible should get a regular job. This means it is important to train those who used to work at a firm specifically for people with a labour limitation. However, as long as the program is tuned to its audience, it can well be replicated.

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VET-EDS Good Practice

Guaranteed jobs

Harry Piepers, Tessa Schoot Uiterkamp

Introduction

As of 2015, no new entrants are allowed in the Dutch social employment act. At this moment, over 100.000 people are still employed under the conditions of this act. A new PES system was introduced in 2015.

A key element in the new established PES system is helping people with a distance to the labourmarket be employed by regular companies and governmental institutions.

In doing so, so-called sheltered work in social companies is reduced to a minimum and these jobs are only offered to specific groups of vulnerable people who are unable to operate outside a protected environment.

To ensure that there are enough jobs in the future for people with a distance to the labour market, agreements have been made between the national government and employer's representatives. This agreement states that in between 2016 and 2025 a total of 125,000 so called "guaranteed" jobs are realized in regular companies.

The agreement concerning the guaranteed jobs is obligatory. If the required numbers are not met, a quota law will force companies to employ a minimum percentage of people with reduced work capacity.

Summary

Guaranteed jobs are intended for people with limited employment opportunities.

For this reason a large number of supporting measures can be undertaken to facilitate the guidance of these people towards jobs in regular companies.

Examples of this are grants that supplement the salary value of an employee to the legal minimum wage, and no-risk insurances in case of illness.

Another important instrument is the support of job coaches providing personal- and skills training on the job often for a longer period of time.

A final important element in the approach is the use of assistive technology in the work area.

Context and setting

In recent years, the Dutch government enacted a change in the PES system. In 2015, the 'Participation Act' was introduced. The key of this act is that the PES system for all persons with a distance to the labour market is carried out by municipalities.

A second important element is that the executing local agencies can only mediate their client groups towards regular companies and institutions. For that reason, it was also decided to determine the sheltered employment Act (Wsw) (which employs still 100,000 people at this time) for new claimants.

To ensure that there will be sufficient jobs in the future for new entrants to the labour market with constraints, a social agreement with the representatives of the employers was signed in April 2013. The government and the employers agreed to create substantially more jobs for people with occupational disabilities. In total a quota of 125,000 guaranteed jobs need to be achieved in 2026.

Divided by sector, 100,000 jobs will be created in commercial companies and 25,000 jobs in governmental organizations and institutions. The guaranteed jobs need only be created at companies and institutions with more than 25 employees.

There is no specific Vet system used to support the guidance of the candidates for the guaranteed jobs towards new jobs. Often a methodology for supervised work is used. These methods include the following steps:

- Analysis and assessment candidate;
- Identification and recruiting jobs and employment opportunities;
- Job analysis and eventually job division or job carving;
- Matching and placement;
- Training of personal and jobrelated skills and eventually long-term coaching in the workplace.

Description

This good practice describes a pathway chosen in the Netherlands to diminish the number of sheltered employment places in the existing governmental held social enterprises. It focusses on the possibilities to lead people with mental or physical disabilities towards regular jobs which are adjusted to the specific individual qualities and conditions.

This case study is interesting because it represents an initiative shared by the Dutch government as well as representatives of branches organisations of Dutch employers. Because there is no support for legal quota arrangements in the country, a voluntary approach was decided instead.

To make this approach successful a decision was taken to implement this agreement on a regional level. Based on regional labour market information concerning the the number of jobs available over a period of five years, a quota for each region and municipality was set.

With regards to vocational training, this project offers no exciting new opportunities. It uses a broad range of different measurements that can be applied to support the individual-job match.

Type of VET and policy

The following supporting instruments are applied:

Labour cost subsidies. Municipalities receive funds that are to be used for counselling and the application of services in order to integrate the employees. Depending on the performance of the employee, the labour cost subsidy may cover up to 70% of the statutory defined minimum wage.

No risk insurances. Another important tool is the application of no-risk insurance policies by the employer. The no-risk insurance guarantees to cover all kind of risks such as disease and failure issues of the candidate.

Type of contract. A great variety in contracts is possible such as varying trial periods, detached work and if necessary sheltered work can also be the case.

Job coaching. If additional assistance is needed, job coaches can offer their help. The job coach takes care of the necessary guidance of the employee at the workplace, such as practical guidance related to work planning, structure and routine. The job coached also teaches social skills and communication skills, to improve the interaction with colleagues and superiors.

VET trials. In guiding people with a distance to the labour market to work and increasing their skills different kinds of routes can be applied. Instruments that are often used are individual reintegration agreements, apprenticeships and personal- and skills training on the job.

Other instruments. Other instruments include mobility and transport services, audio-visual equipment and workplace adaptations.

Target groups

The jobs that will be created in companies and institutions are exclusively intended for the following target groups:

- people on social benefits who are not able to earn the legal minimum wage on their own;
- persons with a (former) Wsw subsidized indication who were on a waiting list for sheltered work;
- young partially disabled people with a Wajong indication with labour potency;
- people who are still working under the conditions of previously existing governmental subsidized jobs;
- pupils and school leavers of secondary schools for special education.

Individuals only count for the quota number when they are employed by regular employers. Employees working such jobs should earn a salary to the extent to which they are able to be

productive, based on the employer's collective agreement. This is at least the statutory minimum wage (WML).

Organisations involved and stakeholders

In most municipalities, the creation of the guaranteed jobs a task for the local Companies for Work and Income. The most important stakeholders are the employers and the local government. Other stakeholders include: The National Institute for Employee Insurances (UWV), employer associations, trade associations, regional educational organizations (ROC), social institutions and trade unions.

How it is organized

The organization and guidance of people to the guaranteed jobs takes place on a regional level in the 35 Werkpleinen (squares) in the Netherlands. In these Werkpleinen different types of organizations in the field of PES services work together. Municipal organizations have the lead in (re)allocating people towards these guaranteed jobs. The municipalities work closely together with other public employment services such as the National Institute for Employee Insurances, employers, trade unions and educational institutions. The role of the Werkpleinen is thus one of networking, meant to create a platform for regional employers to make deals with municipalities. The actual need for support of employers has a leading role in these deals.

Underneath the main work process for guiding candidates towards guaranteed jobs is described.

Analysis / Assessment participant. It is of utmost importance to get a good understanding of the candidate's profile with clearly mapped out possibilities of roles and areas of work. It is also important to summarise the conditions under which a candidate can operate. On this basis, the job coach can get an idea about a kind of work which should be sought for the participant.

Identification of jobs and employment opportunities. The job coach approaches employers who can possibly offer a job based on the profile created by the assessment of work and conditions of employment. **Job analyses.** Once an employer is interested in the possibilities of a participant, an analysis of the workplace and the environment is made. This should reflect the specific capabilities of the participant. It may be that an appropriate workplace is found by mutating existing conditions or concrete job opportunities are created by a different organization of work in the company.

Matching and placement. The employer and the participant meet under the direction of the job coach. This phase refers to the actual tasks to be performed, the guidance by the employer and colleagues, introduction to the colleagues. Also the trainings plan on personal- and work related skills and the conditions in the contract are being discussed.

Training and coaching in workplace. After the candidate starts to work attention is paid to both professional and employees skills. Professional skills are often taught by someone from the company itself to the candidate. This stage also includes the improvement of the load-bearing capacity. It is intended that the new employee can function as productive as possible.

What worked and why

The initiative to reallocate people with a distance to the labour market on jobs in the regular labourmarket in the Netherlands is one year old. Over this period about 3.000 persons have been reallocated to these so called guaranteed jobs. This is only a half the amount of the targeted number of 6.000 workers for the year 2015.

Constraints

One of the major problems of this new approach is the lack of knowledge concerning this arrangement both by employers and by the targeted group. Furthermore most of the municipalities are not yet fully involved in their new partnership in the regional Werkpleinen. In effect, the employers approach is not yet as effective as expected in advance and less people are consequently placed in jobs.

Impact and Replicability

The approach to place as much as possible people with a distance to the labour market on regular jobs instead of mainly on sheltered jobs is a major new labourmarket initiative in the Netherlands.

A similar approach in other countries is only possible if a number of preconditions are met. The most important is a good system to determine the remaining salary value of individual people with different disabilities. Also, wage subsidies and governmental paid illness insurances are part of it. Only under these conditions it is possible to create jobs in companies and institutions in the regular labour market.

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ANNEX 5

PROJECT VET-EDS

OUTCOME 4

LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICE (ANNEX 5)

Theme 5

Analysis and monitoring

Fredrik Mörtberg and Victor Tanaka

The Swedish Public Employment Service

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

NATIONAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION STRATEGY FOR SMART SPECIALISATION OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Zdeňka Matoušková

Introduction

- The Strategy represents a complex approach for identifying main goals for enhancing the innovation capacity of the economy and changes needed in the skills of human resources and how the educational system should be improved.
- All relevant stake holders (employers, researchers, educational institutions, public administration) were actively involved in the process of the Strategy preparation and the content of the Strategy was widely discussed.
- The realization of individual measures is monitored and assessed, changes can be made based on the changing circumstances.
- The Strategy helps to enhance effectiveness of public funds spending.
- Two strategic objectives relating to VET were identified: "Improving the quality of school graduates", "Identifying and making use of talent".

Summary

The purpose of the Strategy is to effectively target funds – European, national, regional, and private – at activities that lead among other things to strengthening the knowledge capacity and its utilisation in the innovative activities.

The process of participation of all relevant stakeholders were ensured mainly within innovation platforms at the national and regional levels, and also within regional innovation councils. The key role of innovation platforms comprises identifying the needs in selected domains, i.e. also in vocational education and training.

Three problem areas in human resources were identified: The outputs of the education system are average quality with no improvement; Dysfunctional system for identifying and working with talent; Shortage of quality human resources for R&D.

The Strategy will be updated every two years mainly on the basis of information about changes in the environment, progress of the interventions and barriers to interventions implementation.

Context and setting

Economy and geography

At the current period, the Czech Republic is in a situation where industrial specialisation is the main catalyst of the economy, to which a number of commercial services are linked. So far the least importance within the domestic economy is attributed to knowledge-intensive services (KIS), where a significant part of innovations is concentrated. In the EU, KIS account for an average of 40% of employment, while in the Czech Republic this is only 32% (2011). The convergence occurs very slowly. Positive examples in the Czech Republic include IT and software services, where both their importance within the Czech economy and their export performance are increasing. Activities with the highest added value are most often implemented at the beginning (R&D) and at the end (marketing, sales, customer contact) of the production chain and it is exactly the establishment of these activities that needs to be encouraged or they need to be attracted to the Czech Republic and further developed. By contrast, the development of industry and technical skills of the workforce can become the strength in connection with the envisaged partial re-industrialisation of Europe.

The objective of the Smart Specialisation Strategy is to create such an environment and activities at the national and regional levels that will unlock opportunities for the development of Czech companies. Meeting the end customers' demand for locally generated innovations is hoped to increase the Czech Republic's ability to influence its own economic growth and reduce its dependence on the import of entrepreneurship and strategic management from abroad.

Nature of the VET concerned

The Smart Specialisation Strategy pays attention to all educational level influencing innovative potential of people. Here we concentrate only on VET technically-oriented secondary education. Limited knowledge of own preferences and abilities, and the nature of the different study programmes often results in the incorrect choice of a study programme. For example, experience from the Gateway to Technical Career project, which was organised at technically-oriented secondary schools in the Moravian-Silesian Region, show that roughly one half of students of these schools consider their choice to be inappropriate and do not plan to work in the area they are studying. This fact, along with the lower popularity of technical and natural science programmes that are often perceived by students as more challenging, results in a significant lack of persons wishing to work in technical areas, which can be observed both in tertiary education and in the labour market. The structural disproportion between supply and demand in the labour market, in many cases highly negatively impacts on the possibilities for the further development of companies or even entire industries. The timely identification of aptitude for studying technical programmes would minimize the occurrence of this phenomenon and the inefficiently spent costs for the professional preparation of pupils and students.

Description

Reason for inclusion

The purpose of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the CR (hereinafter the "National RIS3 Strategy") is to effectively target funds – European, national, regional, and private – at activities that lead to strengthening the knowledge capacity and its utilisation in the

innovative activities. The National RIS3 Strategy represents a strategy combining economic strategy and skills development strategy. In the process of preparing this strategy were involved all important stakeholders in regional as well as national level, i.e. public administration, entrepreneurs, researchers and the representatives of civil society. Not only does this process define the strategy's objectives, but it must take place throughout the implementation of the strategy in order to bring feedback and verification of implemented interventions, as well as new suggestions and recommendations for targeting upcoming interventions focused on refining the proposed areas of specialisation.

Type of VET and policy

The availability of technically trained, qualified and skilled labour force for companies and research organisations in the region is one of the most significant identified barriers to the innovation system. The problem of shortage of technically trained, qualified and skilled labour force is reflected across many economic areas from the innovation-oriented companies and manufacturing industry. This shortage concerns not only highly skilled university graduates, but also technically educated secondary school graduates and skilled blue-collar workers. The lack of qualified applicants also affects the research and development facilities.

Target groups

The quality of human resources constitutes the key determinant of the international competitiveness which is based on the ability to develop innovative solutions, new products and services. It is therefore very important to focus on 3 mutually interlaced stages of development of the research and innovative potential of people. The first stage can be perceived as a general level of equipment with realistically applicable knowledge and skills. This is the reason why great attention is given to the systems of initial education. The second stage deals with preparedness for career in research and development. One way to do this is to use a system for identifying and developing talent. The essence of that system lies in developing an individual according to their potential and talents, which should ultimately strengthen mainly those abilities and skills in which it is easiest for them to succeed in the labour market to the largest extent, regardless of chosen occupation. The last stage in developing research, development and innovative potential lies in working with the labour force. The way in which they are recruited, assessed and developed etc. is very important for correctly utilising their potential and for achieving maximum productivity. The parallel implementation of measures at all three levels will ensure a systemic change in the use of human resources for work in research, development and innovative enterprise.

Three problems areas in human resources were identified:

- The outputs of the education system are average quality with no improvement
- Dysfunctional system for identifying and working with talent
- Shortage of quality human resources for R&D

Organizations involved and stakeholders, how it was organized

The preparation of the National RIS3 Strategy and its regional annexes began with analytical work in the regions. This work was accompanied by establishing partnerships in the regions for the purposes

of regional RIS3, often with the use of existing structures (regional authorities, regional chamber of commerce, regional office of Czech Investment and Business Development Agency, universities and research institutions located in the region). The outputs of the work and discussions have been one of the sources for the proposal of the national RIS3 document, to which regional documents are annexed. However, the National RIS3 is a separate document it is not a summary or an excerpt of the regional annexes. The National RIS3 Strategy facilitator appointed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport was in charge of preparing this strategy. The National RIS3 was prepared in connection with existing strategic documents of the CR. In addition, analytical works that had been previously prepared by different entities were also partially used.

The National RIS3 was discussed at a round-table meeting that gave birth to innovation platforms at the national level. National innovation platforms were convened for following specialisation domains:

- Engineering, electricity production and distribution, electrical engineering
- IT services and software, electronics, electrical engineering
- Production of means of transport
- Pharmaceuticals and medical technology

The innovation platforms focused on verifying and, above all, supplementing the National RIS3 proposals, with an emphasis on proposing priorities and recommendations from which the focus of the planned interventions will follow. Innovation platforms at the national level discussed in particular the following:

- Analytical findings from the National RIS3; this discussion was preceded by a structured evaluation of the analytical findings by members of the innovation platforms through an online survey focusing on the members of the quadruple helix.
- Recommendations for interventions that are the most important for addressing problems and causes of problems that were identified in the analytical part and verified by members of innovation platforms.
- Preliminary specification of interventions according to the needs of each innovation platform's specialisation domains.

The process of participation of entrepreneurs, researchers and other representatives will be ensured mainly within innovation platforms at the national and regional levels, and also within regional innovation councils. The key role of innovation platforms comprises specifying the proposed specialisation domains, discussing and proposing their profiles, identifying the needs in selected domains, i.e. also in vocational education and training.

What worked and why, constraints

It is too early to identified pros and coins of this strategy, because this strategy is at the starting point of its realization based on the Implementation Plan of the National RIS3. Implementation plan is prepared by the National RIS3 Manager and his/her team using information and documents from operational programmes and national programmes that contribute to fulfilling the objectives of the

RIS3. The RIS3 Implementation Plan includes a list of upcoming interventions for a period of at least one year, indicating in particular the following information:

- Title and brief description of the intervention and its objectives
- Person/organisation responsible for preparing and managing interventions
- The financial scope of the intervention, including the source, if ESIF funds are used then an indicative breakdown to national and EU resources must be included
- Expected results of the intervention and how and to what extent it will contribute to the objectives of RIS3
- Indicative timetable of the intervention

The monitoring of the interventions through which the RIS3 is being fulfilled takes the form of monitoring reports that are prepared once a year. The monitoring report includes mainly the following:

- An overview of the drawing of resources that are used to implement the RIS3, broken down by the strategic objectives of the National RIS3, i.e. by:
 - ESIF programmes for operations through which the National RIS3 is implemented
 - state budget resources
 - regional budget resources
- An overview of implemented interventions broken down by strategic and specific objectives, indicating the amount of resources for these interventions.
- An overview of the fulfilment of indicators of the National RIS3 using the indicators of relevant OP, broken down by strategic objectives and specific objectives.
- Information on the progress of the implementation of the National RIS3 and the progress in fulfilling the objectives of the RIS3, using evaluation reports, analytical materials prepared by the analytical team etc.
- Information about meetings of innovation platforms and their proposals for the targeting of interventions.

Evaluations of the National RIS3 or its component parts, i.e. individual interventions or groups of interventions and evaluations of various aspects of the implementation of the National RIS3, are prepared as needed, but at least once every two years in advance of updating the National RIS3.

The National RIS3 is updated every two years. Underlying documents for the update of the National RIS3 are prepared by the National RIS3 Manager with support from the analytical team and are submitted to the RIS3 Management Committee. The RIS3 Management Committee discusses the proposed updates and submits them to the government of the Czech Republic for approval. The update of the RIS3 is prepared mainly on the basis of information that includes the description and analysis of:

- Changes in the environment, i.e. the description and analysis of problems and their causes as identified in the National RIS3 (changes relating to the analytical section of the RIS3).
- The progress of the interventions, their success and the progress in fulfilling the objectives of the National RIS3 and regional annexes, including the fulfilment of indicators.
- The progress of interventions that focus specifically on developing selected specialisation domains, including recommendations for the refinement or narrowing of the specialisation

domains at the national level, or on identifying new specialisation domains in response to recommendations by innovation platforms based on analytical documents.

- Barriers to implementation and success of the proposals for their removal.

Impact and Replicability

The measures realized in the frame of the National RIS3 Strategy aims in the area of Human Resource inter alia at two strategic objectives dealing with VET.

The first strategic objective is defined as “Improving the quality of school graduates” and main activities within this objective are:

- Creating a functioning relationship between schools and employers
- Increasing the level of entrepreneurship and other soft competencies
- Improving the active knowledge of English and another foreign language

The second strategic objective “Identifying and making use of talent” includes following objective in initial education:

- The creation and introduction of tools for identifying pupils’/students’ natural talent for entrepreneurship, technical professions and research and development
- The creation and application of development programmes for the above types of natural talent, including the preparation of consultants for working with such them
- The implementation of highly individualised programmes for the development of individuals with an exceptional entrepreneurial talent, a technical talent or a talent for research and development work

This approach is complex but it is easily transferable. The transferability depends only on on the creation of the relevant expert groups able to identify the main problems and outline possible solutions. In the case of the Czech Republic the main areas that could be change for improving economic development are Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Research and Development, Human Resources, Information and Communication Technology, Social Innovation.

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VET-EDS National Good Practice

Regional competence platforms and long-term forecasts on education and training

Fredrik Mörtberg

Introduction

- The work with regional competence platforms (from now on called RCPs) are the way to gather knowledge about labour supply and demand. The RCPs coordinates the work with supply and demand for labour, within the regions. They are monitoring the labour market in order to facilitate efficient matching. **The long-term forecasts on education and training** in some counties are an outcome of this work. That has filled a gap when it comes to regional LMI.
- When working with VET-EDS it is of importance to have good knowledge about the demand for labour. It is also crucial that different organisations and authorities have an established cooperation.
- It is successful and a good practice because it has developed the work with labour issues and expanded the networks between stakeholders. The strengthening of cooperation between different actors should be seen as an important success. The regional forecasts on education and training are an explicit success of the work with the RCPs that can be used by others.

Summary

In December 2009 regional government commissions were set up in each county, in Sweden. They were supposed to establish regional competence platforms (RCPs). These platforms have served as a meeting area for organisations and stakeholders working with supply and demand of labour. It has been successful because the commission has made coordination on a regional level easier and clearer. One of the outcomes is the long-term forecasts on education and training, in some of the counties. This has been so successful that it will expand to more counties. Even though the RCPs can be seen as successful they are facing some constraints. For example the RCPs per se cannot influence the education system explicitly. It would be desirable if they had more power to do so. RCPs and regional forecasts are good examples that could be replicated quite easy in other countries. It is beneficial to have more coordination at the regional level.

Context and setting

Sweden consists of 21 different counties, and the size of these counties varies widely, both in size and population. Sweden's population was roughly 9.7 million at the end of 2014. The three biggest counties in Sweden had about 52 percent of the nation's total population. Sweden's population is increasing, mostly from an increasing immigration. The economy in Sweden is growing and the employment has been increasing for a while. The unemployment is still at a high level due to an increasing labour force. Even though Sweden has a relatively high unemployment it is hard to find the required competence when employers are trying to recruit. The Beveridge curve shows that Sweden is facing big challenges when it comes to matching job vacancies. Therefore it is important to develop the work with VET-EDS over time.

In December 2009 the Swedish government decided to give all the regional administrations the task of establishing regional competence platforms. This in order to establish both coordination of the work with labour market issues and expanded cooperation between different actors. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has the national responsibility to strengthen and develop the work with RCPs. The long-term forecasts on education and training followed the work with the RCPs. That project included the three biggest counties at first and is now extended to a total of seven counties. These forecasts offers a comprehensive analysis of the labour market and the education system on a regional level. These forecasts and analyses covers both the short, medium and long-term sight. From a national perspective it is important to pin down the supply and demand dynamics on a regional level. It is more likely a better way to let regional actors work with this, to get closer to the reality.

The service sector in Sweden has been increasing in recent years. That includes both public and private service sectors. At the same time the manufacturing industry has been decreasing. The service sector was 8.5 percent larger at the end of 2014 than it was in the end of 2008 (as per number of employees), while the manufacturing industry had decreased with 15 percent at the same time. But Sweden is still a small and open economy heavily dependent on exports. A vast majority of Sweden's export goes to and through Europe. The unemployment among people with shorter education is at a higher level compared to the ones having a longer education. More people need to get at least a secondary level education to establish themselves on the labour market. Therefore it is important to have an extensive work with LMI on both national and regional level.

Why was this included?

In order to make comprehensive analyses of the labour market on a national level, it is of great importance to also monitor the labour market on a regional level. It requires that the regional administrations have great knowledge about the current supply and demand of labour. Because of this requirement, the regional administrations in Sweden were assigned to establish regional competence platforms. One of the outcomes from these platforms was the long-term forecasts on education and training. The Regional Competence Platforms (RCPs) and the forecasts are good examples of monitoring functions and comprehensive LMI products. This Good Practice report will focus mainly on RCP: in a national perspective. There will also be some information and discussion about one of the RCPs' successful outcomes : **the education and training forecast**. For more detailed information about these forecasts the reader is referred to earlier reports on this subject.

Type of VET and policy

To provide the right VET it is important to observe and make forecasts over the present and future supply and demand. Therefore it should be included in the area of VET and labour market policy. The RCPs have an interest in VET and it is also one of the areas they are monitoring and trying to influence. It was the regional authorities responsible for economic growth who were commissioned to establish the competence platforms. The assignment had four general tasks:

- Establish regional platforms in both the short and long-term sight.
- Produce information and analyses over the economic and social needs.
- Relate to functional analysis regions.
- Cooperate with both regional actors, neighbouring counties and government authorities working with skills.

This commission was given in order to strengthen the cooperation in the regions and to coordinate the knowledge about supply and demand for labour in their regions. It is crucial for economic growth, to monitor and gather information about the economy and the labour market. Thus RCPs started to develop in all the counties in Sweden but the initiative requires a lot of resources from the national authorities to do an extensive work like this. That is why it is better done at the regional level. Even if these platforms are on a regional level they should also be seen as a national concern. The purpose with the platforms can be described as way to get more knowledge about the supply and demand for education and training. Thus the regional administrations are capable of coordinate analyses and education planning in their own regions. With greater knowledge and coordination the RCPs are capable to produce and disseminate evidence to influence the supply of education and training in their own region. The forecast on education and training is an outcome from the work within the RCPs. These reports includes future supply and demand for different VET programs at the secondary level. They include forecasts for about 50 different education groups (not only VET) which can be seen as a broad range. Thus these forecasts are good examples to highlight within this project.

Target groups

The regional competence platforms and the forecasts on education and training are to some extent directed to the similar groups. The platforms are cooperating with a broad range of other regional actors and authorities. Many of them with the same area of interest and responsibility in relation to the supply and demand for labour and education. The platforms are also trying to influence other target groups. in order to get an education system that will consider both the supply and demand from the economy. The regional forecasts are also addressed to various actors working with regional labour market issues. These actors can be decision makers, analysts within other organisations and study counsellors. The forecasts serve as a basis for discussion when trying to map the supply and demand and also all the challenges the regions will face in the future. Hence a clear target group is decision makers connected to VET institutions in Sweden, both on a regional and national level.

Organisations involved and stakeholders

A closer look at the regional competence platforms shows that there are different organisations participating. As already mentioned, the county authorities, who are responsible for regional growth, were commissioned by the government to establish these platforms. But there are other stakeholders involved. For example it can be education providers and representatives from different

industries. Also other public authorities may be involved like The Public Employment Service. The platforms involves a broad range of participants who can have a dialogue towards a common goal. It is also very important to have many different participators in order to get input from the whole labour market. This will probably create more legitimacy to the project as well.

The regional forecasts on education and training involves the regional authorities who are responsible for regional growth, Statistics Sweden and also procured actors. Statistics Sweden does the main work with the forecasts but with help from the procured actor.

How is the work organised?

The competence platforms and the work with the forecast are organised in different ways. They are two different things so the organisation will be described briefly.

Since there are 21 different counties in Sweden, the organisation within the platforms may vary between the counties. The main task is the same, but how the work is organised is up to each county. The description is just an example how it can be done in some of the counties. The county authorities have the mission to cooperate and have a dialogue with both regional and national actors, neighbouring counties and also with businesses from trade and industry. Before the government commission with RCPs was assigned to the regions they had already been working with these questions, but in other forms. In some counties the County government (Länsstyrelsen) got the task do establish a competence platform and in other counties it was the county council, like Region Örebro (today Örebro County Council/Region Örebro län). The county government got the task if the county did not have a political driven region or a county council. The mandate to act as a coordination function is informal. Therefore the coordinators need to show the importance and value of the cooperation between all the actors. Thus it is important to have a good and fruitful dialogue, or else this informal function will have a hard time to pursue its work. For example, the RCPs can arrange seminars, regional competence days or other information/dialogue meetings. It can be seminars or meetings focusing on only one branch or one challenge. The good thing with this happening on a regional level is the ability to focus on regional challenges and issues.

How much resources all the competence platforms are given varies widely. The political driven regions have in general more resources, in manpower, than the county governments. The size of the manpower is in general around 0.5 to 1 full-time employees, but in some counties it can reach up to 4 full-time employees. Most of the counties also have financial means to buy statistics and other tools or help with analysis. The government commission itself does not automatically give any financial help to the counties. Thus it is up to each county to decide the size of the financial resources intended for this task.

When it comes to the forecast on education and training, it has been the involved counties that has been driving the project. It was at their request the project started from the beginning. Statistics Sweden are responsible for the statistics and the forecasting model. They use the same method as they use in the national version of this forecast (Trender och Prognoser/Trends and Forecasts). The forecasts are divided into four steps. At first they have an interregional dialogue that consists of general planning with the other regions involved. Thereafter an internal dialogue takes place to determine the project plan. They have to discuss financial issues and other parts important for the project. The next step is to establish a project group involving the regions, Statistics Sweden and also a consultant that has been procured. Statistics Sweden and this external consultant are together

responsible for the estimations and the analysis. The last step is the communication and dissemination of the results. The report is published on the web and may also be followed by a press conference and other information occasions.

Did this government commission work?

The RCPs have been successful in general, but they are also facing many limitations. One thing that involved partners have been saying is that the government commission has given the regional coordination more legitimacy. Now there is a designated organisation responsible for this task, which is an important part for this to work. The RCPs have been important for the cooperation between national authorities on a regional level. The authorities do not cooperate as much as they should and the RCPs have been a driving actor in this issue. In a report from Growth Analysis (Tillväxtanalys) the regions got the question if they thought they have been capable to contribute to the regional work with demand for labour. All of the regions thought they had been contributing in this issue in their respective regions. It seems that the connection between the RCP:s and the overall growth efforts is relatively clear. Some studies have shown that all the regions have also been producing some kind of knowledge base. That is of importance when monitoring the demand for labour. And it seems that every region works both in the short-term and long-term perspective, which is good. When working with labour market issues the long-term perspective is of great importance, and almost every region emphasises the long-term perspective.

One of the most important objective for the RCPs is dissemination of knowledge to other actors and stakeholders. That seems to have worked out quite well. To disseminate LMI and establish cooperation is very important when dealing with these issues. One success is the long-term forecast on education and training that has been produced and published in three counties. It is a good and broad LMI on a regional level. Other counties are joining this work and perhaps we will see even more counties participating in the future. The product has been well received by stakeholders on the labour market. It is a detailed LMI that has been filling an information gap in these regions. If it is to be extended to even more counties it has to be on their own request though. Here, the cooperation between neighbouring counties can serve as a dissemination of the forecasts, as a good example to counties that has not been involved yet.

Even if it has been a successful commission the RCPs are facing some limitations and challenges. They do not have the power to explicitly influence the supply of education and training. It is not enough to only monitor the labour market or establish a platform for coordination and cooperation. The RCPs would be more useful if it had some power over the supply and demand for education. The supply and demand for education should be influenced by the present and future situation in the labour market and hence the RCPs could be more involved. Now they have to focus more on influencing young people to choose unattractive educations (not meaning poor educations) or where it is hard to find labour. Many of the regions are producing their own statistics and analysis reports; some hold an opinion that this should be coordinated on a national level. That would help to get a more uniform analysis of work. Statistics and analyses can be expensive and regions are not getting financial means explicitly to cover the RCPs activities. Thus some of the responsibility for this should lay on a national level. That could generate better basis for the RCP's to work with and it should also generate lower costs. The RCP:s can apply for financial help with projects within their work though. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth are providing 60 million Swedish kronor (over 6.5 million Euro) during the period 2013-2016 to help the RCPs with their

projects. But the money must not be used for already existing projects. That is one step in the right direction but perhaps more could be done. One way could be to have an easier accessibility to regional and local statistics from Statistics Sweden, for example by creating a channel where commonly accessed statistical data could be gathered and could be used by the regions without high costs. One of the risks with costly statistics can be that it is tempting to use old statistics. It can also lead to fewer analyses and a lack of good LMI. It is important to have as fresh data as possible when making analyses. Especially when it comes to the demand for labour. Or else the analyses can lead to even more imbalances between supply and demand. Another limitation is to measure the results of the work within the RCPs. It is hard to measure results and effects but still, the majority of experts think it has been a successful mission much because of the networks created. The RCPs work will continue to develop over the years and maybe we will see solutions for some of the challenges in the future.

Impact and Replicability

The RCPs have been contributing to creation and dissemination of LMI across the regions. They are also trying to influence the VET institutions, even if they do not have a mandate to do it explicitly. They serve as an important part of the VET-EDS system and as a coordinating actor. It should not be hard to replicate this practice in other countries. It requires a lot of resources but it creates added value to the regional growth and thus to the national growth as well. Most of the countries have some form of regional division and could benefit from using this example. If, and when, they have established a similar system they could extend it to regional forecasts as the one this good practice report have emphasised. Cooperation within and between regions are important for economic growth. This system has given better cooperation and consensus at a regional level and thus at the national level as well. All forms of cooperation within this area of interest should be seen as a good example. Even extended cooperation between countries is desirable as they face similar challenges when it comes to the supply and demand for labour.

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Erasmus+

VET-EDS NATIONAL Good Practice

Wales Learning and Skills Observatory

Dr Andrew Dean

Introduction

This good practice example looks at the work of the Wales Learning and Skills Observatory (LSO) and in doing so it also explores the environment and structures in which the LSO sits.

The LSO is the national labour market intelligence (LMI) observatory for Wales, but it sits with 3 other regional observatories. These are owned and operated by the respective Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs). The role of RSPs is discussed later.

The Learning and Skills Observatory encourages the development and exchange of evidence-based policy and improved decision-making by providing information, data and intelligence on Wales' labour market including education, learning and skills sectors.

It is predominantly virtual and can be accessed at:
<http://www.learningobservatory.com/>

In this report we describe the context and setting of the Observatory and then look at the various services and types of material it produces.

The relationship with the national and regional levels are discussed.

Summary

Wales has devolved powers for both Skills (including VET) and economic development.

Though not a 'national model per se the approach taken is an interesting one and is felt to be of sufficient scale, particularly in a European context, to be worth of exploration within the work of the VET-EDS national good practice capture exercise.

We are grateful to the cooperation of the Wales Learning and Skills Observatory and the Welsh Government in the creation of this report.

The LSO bridges a gap between the LMI provided at regional level with that from the UK resources such as the Working Futures forecasts. In terms of VET-EDS the important element is that the LSO recognizes its dual role in terms of economic development policy and education (VET) policy support.

The service is mainly virtual and a useful example of what can be provided in a smaller country or a region and its mix of materials is readily reproducible.

National Policy Setting

Wales is a country that is part of the United Kingdom and the island of Great Britain, bordered by England to its east, the Irish Sea to its north and west, and the Bristol Channel to its south. It had a population of 3,063,456 in 2011 and has a total area of 20,779 km². With responsibility for education, skills (VET) and economic development the Welsh Government recognised a need for an evidence-based resource to serve government and other key stakeholders.

Total headline Gross Value Added (GVA) in Wales in 2010 was £45.5 billion, or £15,145 per head of population; 74.0 per cent of the average for the UK total, the lowest GVA per head in the UK. In the three months to July 2010, the employment rate for working-age adults in Wales was 67 per cent, compared to 70.7 per cent across the UK as a whole.

The 2011 census showed Wales' population to be 3,063,456, the highest in its history. The 2001 census reported the population as 2,903,085. The main population and industrial areas are in South Wales, including the cities of Cardiff, Swansea and Newport and the nearby Valleys, with another significant population in the north-east around Wrexham and Flintshire.

Context and setting

Working Futures projections suggest that employment in Wales is expected to grow by 0.4 per cent per annum between 2012 and 2022, which is the slowest rate out of the all UK nations, where projected growth in Scotland and Northern Ireland is 0.5 per cent per annum and 0.6 per cent per annum in England (Table 1). Across the UK as a whole, employment growth is projected to occur at 0.6 per cent per annum. Employment growth in Wales occurred at a faster rate in 2002-2012 than in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

An increase in employment from 1.36m to 1.42m is projected in Wales, resulting in around 57,000 more people being in employment in 2022 compared to 2012. In addition to the increase in the number of people in employment, there is also a need to replace workers who have left the labour market due to a variety of reasons. This is known as replacement demand. This replacement demand is far greater than the net change in employment (expansion demand) at 531,000, resulting in a net requirement of 588,000 between 2012 and 2022.

The sector with the largest projected increase in employment between 2012 and 2022 is health and social work, which has an increase projected of 23,300. On a proportion basis, the largest increases are projected to occur in the real estate (25.2 per cent), finance and insurance (24.9 per cent), information technology (22.1 per cent) and electricity and gas (18 per cent) sectors. However, as these sectors are relatively small, their combined projected employment growth is still less than that projected for health and social work.

Declines in employment are projected across a number of sectors including rest of manufacturing (-8,200), public administration and defence (-7,800), and education (-4,700). Due to the need to replace workers who have left the labour market, there will still be considerable demand from these sectors between 2012 and 2022.

Employment change between 2012 and 2022 is projected to see large expansion-based increases for higher skilled occupations in the managerial, professional, and associate professional and technical groups. Only protective service occupations are projected to decline between 2012 and 2022 out of those groups. These occupational groups are likely to require individuals to hold higher level qualifications. The increase in these three occupational groups is a continuation of longer-term trends, with this group projected to account for 42.3 per cent of employment in Wales in 2022 compared to 29.4 per cent in 1992.

In addition to higher skilled occupations, a large increase in employment is projected for those in caring personal service occupations. This can be seen as a reflection of the demographic issues facing Wales and the UK and follows strong growth between 2002 and 2012 for the occupation (rising from 91,700 in 2002 to 113,400 in 2012 and projected to rise further to 137,300 by 2022).

Sharp declines are projected for secretarial and related occupations, and textiles, printing and other skilled trades (resulting in a decline of around 30 per cent in each). Both the wider administrative and secretarial, and skilled trades occupations are projected to see net job losses up to 2022.

Description

The Welsh Government plays a major role in compiling and conveying Labour Market Intelligence and Labour Market Information for its own use and for use by a wider audience. In light of the developing LMI on-line infrastructure in Wales (as denoted in 1 above), the Skills Policy branch, within Welsh Government, has been tasked with improving the interpretation, accessibility and usage of LMI to help inform the decisions of potential users ensuring LMI websites complement but do not duplicate or conflict with each other in terms of the data dissemination.

For the purposes of this management group, LMI can include labour market data on employment, unemployment, economic inactivity, earnings, commuting and hours worked; information on industrial sectors, occupational groups, business structure, start-ups and closures and relevant demographic statistics. The main sources of LMI and other economic and business statistics are considered to be government departments and other public bodies. The LMI information utilised within the LMI online infrastructure (defined in 1 above) focuses on these quality assured and robust sources of information.

For the purposes of the management group, four broad roles for LMI have been identified:

- Informing evidence-based policy development;
- Improving the efficient functioning of the learning market; matching supply and demand;
- Informing the (employment, training and planning) choices and decisions made by individuals and organisations; and
- Strengthening information flows between websites

Central to the function of the group are the priorities detailed within the Skills Implementation Plan, published in July 2014 and, in particular, the requirement to build capacity to interpret, analyse and use LMI to inform:

- Skills for jobs and growth;
- Skills that respond to local needs;

- Skills that employers value; and
- Skills for employment.

The Skills Implementation Plan³⁰

This skills implementation plan has been developed to inform future action in relation to post-19 skills and employment policy. The plan follows from the policy statement on skills published by the Welsh Government in January 2014. The aim of the plan is to provide details of the actions to be undertaken by the Welsh Government working with employers, individuals, trade unions and delivery partners. The purpose of this implementation plan is to translate the high-level priorities within the policy statement on skills¹ into delivery. The plan sets out key policy actions which will take place between now and 2016–17. These will provide the basis for future employment and skills policy interventions over the next decade.

The scope of this plan is aligned to the policy statement on skills and focuses on post-19 employment and skills policy in Wales. As part of this definition, close links are made with the compulsory and post-compulsory education system to ensure that the future workforce reflects the ambition for a highly skilled society, with Level 3 in skill areas that employers value and which are regionally important being a key benchmark. This attainment target is set alongside the need to improve the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills of working adults to at least Level 2 wherever possible. There is a need to consider the need for Welsh-medium delivery of post-19 skills in line with employer need.

The content of this plan is focused on the policy interventions in the short term to support the post-19 skills system in Wales. It will require further and continued dialogue with employers and stakeholders across Wales in shaping employment and skills policies and programmes as they emerge.

The LSO LMI Management Group

In terms of co-ordinating observatories, the LSO run the LMI Management Group. This brings together a number of owners of websites providing LMI across Wales, including the RSPs, Careers Wales, Skills Gateway, DWP, and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action.

The purpose of the LMI Management Group is to provide advice and support to the Welsh Government and other key stakeholders on the use of skills and employment LMI. The group consists of representatives from the following organisations: The Regional Skills Partnerships; Careers Wales; JobCentre Plus; Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) and the Welsh Government.

The Regional Skills Partnerships

The Skills Implementation Plan set out a key role for regional skills partnerships (RSPs) to provide a mechanism to advise Welsh Government on future regional prioritisation of skills funding in line with employment and skills needs. They are the regional skills and employment workforce stream of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board; South East Wales Learning, Skills & Innovation Partnership

³⁰ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/policy-statement-on-skills/skills-implementation-plan/?lang=en>

and South West & Central Wales Regional Learning Partnership. Each partnership will analyse its local economic challenges and identify what skills are needed within the local workforce. This demand-led approach will support the effective prioritisation of funding whilst bringing maximum benefits to the workforce.

The three RSPs have been in place for just over a year. In this pilot year each RSP has developed an annual regional employment and skill plan which identifies investment priorities as well as local demands and opportunities to support major infrastructure projects in their region. All three plans build on priorities identified by Enterprise Zones and City Regions. The plans will be refreshed annually from March 2016.

Each RSP has also developed Demand/Supply Assessments (Setemeber2015). The Demand/Supply Assessment, based on a strong evidence base informed by employers for each region, is the mechanism for partnerships to provide the evidence base to Welsh Government. In this pilot year the Demand/Supply Assessment offers the opportunity to influence the prioritisation and deployment of funds for Work Based Learning and Further Education in 2016-17.

Each RSP has its own observatory – they can be found below:

- <http://sewso.infobasecymru.net/IAS/launch>
- <http://rlp.infobasecymru.net/IAS/>
- <http://nweo.infobasecymru.net/IAS/>

As an example the South West and Central Wales Regional Learning and Skills Observatory³¹ is a central interactive online information system providing local data and intelligence, for learning, skills and the labour market. It aims to improve the collection, sharing and analysis of key data and intelligence across sectors and stakeholders in the region and support evidence based policy and improved decision making in the areas of regeneration and education, focusing on learning and skills, employment and economic development. The Observatory provides a range of labour market intelligence to support and inform decision makers within the region. At the heart of the RLSO is an interactive online mapping system which makes data accessible and informative for users. This allows individual users to manipulate a range of different datasets across a range of different geographic boundaries to compare and contrast intelligence. It also contains a range of economic projection data available to both the public, and in more detail, to members of the partnership. This information is being used to support economic development activities, including informing the region's Economic Regeneration Strategies as well as supporting the development of curriculum planning to ensure a continuous supply of appropriately skilled individuals.

The Observatory is also supported by a team of researchers who can support specific queries and assist individuals to identify appropriate datasets for ongoing analysis and provide training and support regarding its use. In addition to sector based reports a series of quarterly 'seasonal' reports are produced providing an overview of changes to the economy within the region.

³¹ <http://rlp.infobasecymru.net/IAS/aboutus>

Resources Provided by the LSO

Resources are concentrated into three types:

1. The Latest LMI

This section of the LSO provides access to LMI related documents including: Research Synopsis, Challenge Papers and Articles. This includes newsletters and news; direct access to parts of the StatsWales website which has particular LMI focus; **papers aimed at** providers, employers and those shaping Wales provision and the **LMI Monthly Statistics and Research News**. These are set out as:

- [Skills Performance Measures](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Synopsis documents of key LMI reports](#)
- [LMI - Stats Wales LMI](#)
- [Challenge and special interest papers](#)
- [LMI Monthly Statistics and Research News](#)

2. Reports

A series of monthly reports were produced by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (known as *Inclusion*), commissioned by Welsh Government to blend Wales's available labour market information (LMI) (from the various sources) and produce a monthly analysis. Whilst the report is owned by Welsh Government it is not validated in terms of its specific content or interpretation.

Other reports are produced as and when required and have included:

- [28.10.2015 – Employer Skills Survey 2013 - What skills do employers want?](#)
- [28.10.2015 - Patterns of Inequality in the Labour Market - Older People -The Over 50s ...](#)
- [28.10.2015 - Working Futures 2012-2022 - Wales Summary](#)

3. Case Studies and Presentations

The case studies have been provided by colleges and work based learning providers throughout Wales. They aim to provide an overview of how providers make use of available labour market intelligence, (LMI) to support the process of designing and planning provision to meet the needs of employers, individuals and the labour market. Video presentations provide an overview of the LMI Project and draws on labour market information and intelligence from the UKCES Employer Skills Survey 2011, Employer Perspectives Survey 2012, and Working Futures 2010 – 2020.

Impact and Replicability

The LSO bridges a gap between the LMI provided at regional level with that from the UK resources such as the Working Futures forecasts. In terms of VET-EDS the important element is that the LSO recognizes its dual role in terms of economic development policy and education (VET) policy support. The Welsh Government has devolved responsibility for these and the existence therefore of some form of nuanced LMI service is essential.

The service is mainly virtual and the provision is not extensive – though it is regularly updated. It therefore is a useful example of what can be provided in a smaller country or a region and its mix of static and regularly updated materials is readily reproducible.

Screen Grab of the LSO website

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THE LEARNING AND SKILLS OBSERVATORY FOR WALES

The Learning and Skills Observatory (LSO) encourages the development and exchange of evidence-based policy and improved decision-making by providing information, data and intelligence on Wales' labour market including education, learning and skills sectors.



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VET-EDS NATIONAL Good Practice

UKCES approach to LMI

Dr Andrew Dean

Introduction

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is a publicly funded, industry led organisation providing strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK. Its strategic objectives are to:

- Provide outstanding labour market intelligence which helps businesses and people make the best choices for them;
- Work with businesses to develop the best market solutions which leverage greater investment in skills;
- Maximise the impact of employment and skills policies and employer behaviour to support jobs and growth and secure an internationally competitive skills base.

These strategic objectives are supported by a research programme that provides a robust evidence base for their insights and actions and which draws on good practice and the most innovative thinking. This Case Study highlights two elements of the Commission's research and dissemination programme:

- *Working Futures* - the most detailed and comprehensive set of UK labour market projections available; and

Summary

The United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) are a publicly funded, industry-led organisation that offers guidance on skills and employment issues in the UK. UKCES is an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Created in 2008 it makes very effective national-level use of labour market intelligence in varying formats – particularly business surveys - and has a number of interesting outputs and approaches.

'Working futures' and 'LMI for All' are critical initiatives directed by the UK Government to bridge the gap between the demand for skills and the supply of suitably skilled and qualified labour. They are different but form part of the same offer.

- *LMI for All* – a new initiative designed to widen access and utilisation of government funded labour market statistics.

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/>

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/working-futures>

National Policy Setting

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) is one of very few bodies involved in VET to operate UK-wide. The UKCES is a social partnership of employers, trade unions and representatives from the Devolved Administrations that works towards greater investment in skills to assist enterprises and the UK economy. The Education and Training Foundation works in partnership with the learning and skills sector in England and is tasked with developing resources to assist education providers to implement initiatives and improve quality. National Skills Academies (NSAs) are employer-led organisations developing the infrastructure and learning resources needed to deliver specialist skills to industry sectors. NSAs also strive for training programmes resources to be up-to-date and relevant in the current job market.

The practices described here apply to the whole UK economy and are typically described by sector. The VET impacted by the data is a combination of iVET and cVET and as the UK has an extremely flexible labour market system, how it is utilized varied greatly between different providers of training. The LMI is intended to help bring together the demand from employers for certain skills and the supply via training providers of VET and other types of education. Importantly it also has a key role in supporting the work of policymakers at national and local levels (there are no regions in UK).

Further Context

The UK labour market is demand-led, but skill shortages exist in sectors such as medicine, health, social work, science, secondary education teaching, IT/computing, engineering and certain other specialist, technical and arts occupations³². The UK (and England's) economy is now returning to sustained recovery but there is some distance to make up after such a sharp recession and delayed return to growth. Recovery has taken longer than before, not helped by severe problems in the Eurozone, one of the UK's largest export markets³³. The most troubling aspect of the period since the onset of the recession is the fall in labour productivity.

VET and skills are mainly the remit of the United Kingdom Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education (DFE). In terms of VET DFE focus on teaching and learning for young people under the age of 19 years in secondary schools and in further education colleges. This includes VET provision. By contrast, BIS invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS are responsible for working with further and higher education providers to give students the skills they need.

³² UK Visas and Immigration, Home Office (2014). Tier 2 Shortage Occupation List – Government-approved version

³³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343448/The_Labour_Market_Story_-_An_Overview.pdf The Labour Market Story: An Overview UKCES Report. 2014.

In the UK, the term 'vocational education' is used to refer to the acquisition of: technical skills training for specific jobs/occupations; aptitudes required by an industry; and the soft skills required for work in general. There are a few of occupations where specific qualifications are required to practice. However, this requirement rarer than it is in many other EU member states. Vocational qualifications in the UK do not directly 'qualify' people to work in a particular occupation. They are better considered as providing an indication of the sorts of skills that an individual may bring to an employer in a largely unregulated labour market^{12, 34}.

The UK has a largely voluntarist approach to employer training. There are very few legal requirements (Page, R. and Hillage, J., 2006³⁵) on employers that relate to staff development. VET provision in the UK is profuse and delivered through further education, higher education, private sector training companies, trades unions and voluntary organisations. Government funding for VET is primarily channelled through two arms-length government agencies: the Education Funding Agency (EFA), which is responsible for VET funding for people aged under-19; and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), which is responsible for funding VET for people aged 19 and over. These agencies contract providers to VET services, paying them on the basis of either the number of qualifications and units of qualifications that they delivery or, more recently, on the basis of the numbers of learners that they are supporting.

In 2011, employers in England were estimated to have invested a total £42 billion³⁶³⁷ on developing the skills of their workforce. Of this, less than 2% was spent on fees to external training providers. Although this is a small proportion, it equates to roughly one quarter of the SFA's annual £4 billion budget. For the current government, this signals two things:

- The central role that employers must play in developing the skills the UK needs to remain competitive.
- The scope that exists for growing employer-responsive training, compensating for the fact that Government spending on skills is due to fall by 25% between 2011/12 to 2014/15.

Management is primarily through the Department for Education and Department for Business Innovation and Skills. Formal VET is organised within several national qualifications frameworks. The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) contains mainly vocational qualifications in England. Most programmes included in the QCF are vocationally related qualifications organised within eight levels in addition to an entry level.

In England economic development is driven nationally through the Treasury and the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. Economic development is not a devolved power to Local Authorities, however most have economic development units that will seek to drive growth locally. Recently, at a local level, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have been given responsibility for delivering

³⁴ Skills for the Future: UK (with a primary focus on England). Dean, A and Neild, B. 2013.

<http://www.swslim.org.uk/Downloads/SL2683.pdf>

³⁵ Page, R. and Hillage, J., 2006. Vocational Education and Training in the UK, Strategies to overcome skill gaps in the workforce.

³⁶ This includes salary costs for time spent training.

³⁷ Employer Skills Survey 2011, UKCES, 2012.

economic growth and have been provided freedoms to control a number of funds (including ERDF and ESF) to achieve this.

There is a long-standing culture of centralism in the UK and particularly so in England (Heseltine, 2012 in Hildreth 2014³⁸). As a consequence, the priorities of the local are driven as much by the demands of the national as by the aspirations of the local to serve its communities.

Description

UKCES is a UK-wide publicly funded, industry led organisation providing strategic leadership on skills and employment issues in the UK. Its strategic objectives are to:

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- Work with businesses to develop the best market solutions which leverage greater investment in skills;
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These strategic objectives are supported by a research programme that provides a robust evidence base for their insights and actions and which draws on good practice and innovative thinking. The research programme is underpinned by a number of core principles including the importance of: ensuring 'relevance' to their most pressing strategic priorities; 'salience' and effectively translating and sharing the key insights they find; international benchmarking and drawing insights from good practice abroad; high quality analysis which is leading edge, robust and action-orientated; being responsive to immediate needs as well as taking a longer term perspective. The Commission also works closely with key partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach to research.

Working Futures 2010-2020³⁹

The latest in a series of labour market projections commissioned by UKCES, the results present a medium to long term view (5-10 years ahead) of employment prospects by industry, occupation, qualification level, gender and employment status for the UK and for nations and English regions. The projections are designed to answer two main questions:

- Where will future jobs emerge from?
- What are the implications for both skills supply and demand?

The projections indicate what is likely to happen to employment – disaggregated by sector, region, gender, occupation, etc. - highlighting the full impact of the recession, and indicating the likely path

³⁸ Hildreth, P. 2014. Place-based economic development strategy in England: Filling the missing space. Local Economy June-August 2014 Vol. 29 No. 4-5, pp. 363-377.

³⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298510/working-futures-2012-2022-main-report.pdf

to recovery. They also provide new evidence on the impact of the recession on a range of other indicators, such as productivity and unemployment. They utilise the latest official employment data, as well as factoring in the consequences of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), and other economic policies introduced by the Government. The projections are based on the Cambridge Econometric (CE) macroeconomic forecasts, produced in the spring of 2011 and incorporate occupational projections developed by the Institute of Employment Research (IER) based at the University of Warwick.

Estimates of replacement – as well as expansion of - demand are a key feature of the occupational projections and are particularly useful in assessing education and training provisions, since they quantify the number of workers needed to enter different occupations in order to offset outflows to retirements and occupational mobility etc. It is essential, for employers, education and training providers, and public agencies to recognise the different characteristics and requirements of these two different components of future skill needs. The estimates of replacement demand are informed by data on the age and gender structure of occupational employment, and rates of outflows due to retirement (and other reasons for leaving the workforce), inter-occupational mobility and mortality.

A technical report describes the structure and composition of the model in some detail. It is based on a Keynesian structure incorporating an input-output matrix and comprising over 5,000 behavioural and technical relationships. The main components are equations explaining consumption, investment, employment, exports, imports, and prices. The projections focus on employment by occupation, cross-classified by sector and a spatial dimension down to individual countries within the UK, and regions within England. Results for employment are reported by:

- gender;
- employment status (full-time/part-time/self-employed);
- occupation (one and two digit occupational groups);
- expansion and replacement demand, as well as net requirements; and
- qualifications (6 broad QCF levels).

The analysis also considers the labour and skills supply. Consistent projections of labour supply have been generated by gender; and age (7 broad age groups: 0-15, 16-24, 25-34, 34-44, 45-54, 60-64, 65+).

Headline projections of the highest qualifications held by the working age population, those economically active, the unemployed and the employed, have been developed.

The results from the model are presented in a series of reports. These include a main report and an executive summary, reports focussing on sectors and Scotland, and a technical report. In addition a body of more detailed sectoral and spatial analysis can be accessed via a dedicated *Working Futures* data portal. For reasons of data confidentiality access is only available to analysts who hold a Chancellor of the Exchequer's Notice.

Working Futures

While no formal evaluation of *Working Futures* outputs exists, the projections are fairly widely cited within national and local research documents. For example, the Marchmont Observatory at the University of Exeter drew extensively on the projections when forecasting skills needs within its assessment of the evidence base for the Solent LEP Skills Strategy. As such they are a widely known and frequently cited source among the employment and skills research and policy community. *Working Futures* and *LMI for All* data are also used extensively by the careers guidance community. *Working Futures 2012-2022* (Wilson *et al.*, 2014) is the fifth in a series of decade-long projections of the UK's labour market. It arrives in a time of changing economic prospects.

Employers considering the workforce needed to deliver on plans to invest and grow, employees seeking to develop a career or finance retirement, or policymakers looking to promote quality jobs and see rising living standards: all of us have an interest in understanding the variables at work in shaping employment and skills over the decade to come. *Working Futures* doesn't give easy answers on those questions; but instead gives a baseline founded on rigorous assumptions about some of the key economic, technological and social trends, against which we can test our own opinions and expectations.

Working Futures is an exercise in quantitative labour market projection: it sets out, on the basis of clear assumptions, how the composition of the workforce will change over time. In the pages to follow, there are breakdowns by industry sector, by occupation, and by qualification level. What *Working Futures* doesn't explore is how those categories may themselves be constantly evolving. Through changing working practices and new technologies, the same job can evolve a very different set of skill levels and task requirements over a decade. For this reason, as a complement to *Working Futures*, the UKCES is also publishing an analysis of the qualitative shifts that may be on the horizon, in a new report called *The Future of UK Jobs and Skills* (Störmer *et al.*, 2014)⁴⁰.

LMI for All⁴¹

LMI for All is a data portal which brings together existing sources of LMI in one place. At heart this is an open data project, which supports the wider government agenda to encourage use and re-use of government data sets. The portal makes data available and encourages open use by applications and websites that can bring the data to life for a range of audiences. This is an open data project, which is supporting the wider government agenda to encourage use and re-use of government data sets.

LMI for All includes information from two key products from the Office for National Statistics: the Labour Force Survey and the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; plus data from two products from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills: the Employer Skills Survey and *Working Futures*. It also includes vacancy data from Universal JobMatch (data from jobCentres), and data on skills, interests and abilities from the US O*NET database. The data is organised around Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes, and is freely available via an API. The data within LMI for All

⁴⁰ http://www.z-punkt.de/fileadmin/be_user/D_Publikationen/D_Auftragsstudien/the-future-of-work-evidence-report.pdf

⁴¹ <http://www.lmiforall.org.uk/>

is all available under an open government license. This means that individuals and organisations are welcome to use the data for any purpose, including commercial use.

LMI for All data can be used to power apps and websites. We find that the data is most effective and useful when presented alongside qualitative information. Organisations such as iCould, RCU and Active Informatics currently use LMI for All data in their websites, and you can find a range of examples of how LMI for All can be used here. Organisations are currently beginning to use *LMI for All* data in their websites. Examples include:

1. RCU, an education consultancy, has created a dashboard with the data to help inform curriculum strategy.
2. The data are also being used in iCould, a careers site featuring videos and articles of people relating stories of their career journeys. The UK Commission has commissioned an example application demonstrating what can be done with the data.
3. Career Trax has been developed to demonstrate the potential of *LMI for All*, and to encourage use of the data in new and innovative ways. This application draws on only part of the data and functionality available from *LMI for All* and there is scope to tap into the portal in a whole host of additional ways. Career Trax is best accessed using Google Chrome.

LMI For All also provides an easily customisable widgets for use on websites and has run competitions to help develop new Apps and draw attention to the new service. *LMI for All* data has now achieved Pilot level certification from the Open Data Institute, which means extra effort has gone in to supporting and encouraging feedback from people who use the open data⁴².

Impact and Replicability

The *Working Futures* projections form a core part of the base of labour market intelligence that is available to support policy development and strategy around careers, skills and employment. While the main rationale for producing these kinds of projections is no longer that policy makers will engage in any kind of detailed, top down, planning (or anticipation) of the labour market. It is more about providing information to allow individual actors throughout the system (individuals making career choices, educational and training establishments and employers generally) to make better informed decisions.

There is never any shortage of speculation about the future of the workplace. What UKCES set out to do with *Working Futures* is move beyond isolated, anecdotal guesses and offer a rigorous, evidence-based projection covering the entire UK labour market. They do this by drawing on the best available evidence, in the form of hard data on trends in demographics, education, employment and the wider economy, and by using a set of proven models to work through how they are likely to evolve over a ten year timescale.

LMI for All is included as an interesting example of how government can make data available to organisations to use to help them whether they are demand side- or supply side-orientated. In

⁴² <http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/research/lmi/lmi-for-all#sthash.P1BpEjH1.dpu>

theory it could be a cost-effective way to encourage better skills matching within the labour market without seeking to impose restrictions on course delivery and design from the centre.

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