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European and German Qualifications Framework – a challenge to vocational education and training and VET policy
Europäischer und Deutscher Qualifikationsrahmen – eine Herausforderung für Berufsbildung und Bildungspolitik

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 7

Within the debate surrounding the drafting of a European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the possible development of a German Qualifications Framework (referred to by its German abbreviation of DQR), a broad consensus exists in Germany that education should be structured along the lines of lifelong learning and employability of citizens in pursuit of the macro-objectives of transparency, permeability and competence orientation of qualifications. Within this process, the aim is to achieve a DQR which overarches educational sectors and possesses connectivity in European terms and which is oriented towards competences and occupational employability skills rather than limiting its goals to the mapping of knowledge and educational qualifications. The areas of policymaking, vocational education and training and academic research are faced with a series of challenges, each of which is capable of generating different responses according to the perspective adopted.

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Making occupational competences visible: work process related description of competence developments as a contribution to the set of problems posed by the ECVET

Berufliche Kompetenzen sichtbar machen: Arbeitsprozessbezogene Beschreibung von Kompetenzentwicklungen als Beitrag zur ECVET-Problematik

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 17

One alternative is to use empirical investigations of occupational activities or work processes as a basis for identifying competences and their development. This involves the assumption that occupational requirements across various countries are similar in nature and that it is possible to use an appropriate sector-related competence development model to describe the development of occupational competences regardless of the training system in question. This article initiates debate on conceptions and main features of such a model.

BIBB supports the use of a credit system, based on the proposal of the European Commission but according consideration to the remarks and suggestions formulated in this statement. ECVET can make a major contribution to the promotion of mobility in initial and continuing vocational education and training in Europe. A central factor within this process is improving the comparability of qualifications. ECVET can also aid permeability within vocational education and training, in some cases within very different VET systems. We continue to view ECVET as a complementary element to the remaining European instruments developed within the framework of the Copenhagen Process, particularly in respect of the EQF. The focussing on learning outcomes and skills is in line with the orientation of vocational education and training in Germany. In conjunction with the EQF, ECVET offers an opportunity to increase the level of attractiveness of vocational education and training, both within and beyond the educational system. ECVET and the EQF provide a joint VET language to serve as the basis of cooperation and trust between those involved in vocational education and training in Europe, although the process as a whole should facilitate the piloting and development of the necessary methods and procedures.

GABRIELE FIETZ, ANNETTE JUNGE

Procedures for the identification of competences capable of deployment across Europe – areas of structural conflict

Europaweit einsetzbare Verfahren zur Kompetenzerhebung – Spannungsfelder der Gestaltung

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 22

When the acquisition of competences increasingly takes place outside the formal systems and when this is allied with a stronger cross-border demand for work, there is an attendant decline in significance of procedures used for the surveying and evaluation of competences if these are closely linked to national training and certification systems. Taking the example of the results of work conducted by VET experts from seven European countries as part of the Leonardo da Vinci Project as its basis, this article debates procedures for the identification of competences capable of deployment across Europe in the SME sector and elaborates on areas of structural conflict.

GABRIELE SCHNEIDER

Learning in Europe – EU Education Programme for Lifelong Learning
Lernen in Europa – EU-Bildungsprogramm für lebenslanges Lernen

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 27

The Programme for Lifelong Learning (PLL) was launched on 1 January 2007. This new EU educational programme has a budget of nearly seven billion euro and will promote the European exchange of teachers and learners of all age groups and cooperation between educational establishments between 2007 and 2013. In Germany, the National Agency "Education for Europe" (NA) at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) has been commissioned with the task of implementing the individual LEONARDO DA VINCI and GRUNDTVIG programmes.

UTE HIPFACH-SCHNEIDER

Growing trust via better knowledge – the European ReferNet Network

Wachsendes Vertrauen durch besseres Wissen – das europäische Netzwerk ReferNet

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 30

Extensive and joint endeavours to achieve transparency are required in the light of increasing European convergence in the field of vocational education and training. In order to establish cooperation on a basis of trust, VET systems which differ in terms of their structures, control and societal relevance render it necessary to learn as much as possible from one another. This area provides a reference point for the work conducted by the European Reference Network for Vocational Education and Training – or ReferNet for short – the information it provides contributing towards the establishment of respect for the strengths of the individual systems and towards the elimination of prejudices. This article presents the main focuses of work, objectives and development opportunities for the network, which in Germany is coordinated by the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

TERRY HYLAND

Development of vocational education and training in the United Kingdom: competence based VET

Entwicklung der beruflichen Bildung im Vereinigten Königreich: die kompetenzbasierte Ausbildung

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 36

The pre-occupation with competence based vocational education and training, the keywords of which are the European Qualifications Framework and the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training, has now also arrived in Germany via the conduit of Europe.

The concept of "competence" is playing a major role in Germany, both in the debate centring on instruments for a sustainable strengthening and on the future orientation of vocational education and training and in the development of a national qualifications framework. The United Kingdom is able to look back on many years of experience of vocational education and training which has placed consistent emphasis on outcome orientation. In this article, the author takes a critical look at one element of vocational education and training in the United Kingdom, the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's).

HELMUT ERNST, GISELA WESTHOFF

Transfer and modules spent abroad support international competence development

Transfer und Auslandsmodule unterstützen die interkulturelle Kompetenzentwicklung

Berufsbildung in Wissenschaft und Praxis - BWP 36 (2007) 3, p. 44

The pilot programme "Scope for flexibility in initial and continuing vocational education and training", which is operating right across Germany, is increasingly opening up to other European countries, thus developing a range of transfer activities, the main focus of which is on companies although emphasis is also placed on educational service providers and national and transnational vocational education and training research. Under the motto "Fit for business in Europe", a module to enable German trainees to spend part of their training abroad has also been developed and successfully implemented. This new orientation is presented as an example.