VET and Employment
European indicators, comparisons and transnational policy

"Indikatoren zur beruflichen Bildung. Stand, Diskussionen und Entwicklungsperspektiven der indikatorengestützten Berufsbildungsberichterstattung "
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VET and Employment. European indicators, comparisons and transnational policy.

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Policy context

- **Shared** competence in employment policy, but only in areas specified in the Treaty

- **Supporting** competence in E&T, including VET

- Thus primary working methods are analysis, mutual learning and **joint** agenda setting

- **Skills** as the link between VET and employment
Policy content

- **Legislative instruments:**
  - Europe 2020 strategy & The European Semester;
  - Education and Training 2020 strategy;
  - Copenhagen process and Agenda for adult learning;
  - EU Skills agenda (forthcoming)

- **Other activities:**
  - Cooperation and mutual learning;
  - Identification and promotion of good practices;
  - Monitoring;

- **Main financing tools:** ESF, Erasmus+ and EaSI
Core indicator areas

- **Policy aim** – to assess the extent of skills match and how it could be improved. Measured via:
  - *Skills supply* (mostly education attainment)
  - *Skills demand* (mostly employment by occupation)
  - *Skills (mis-)match* (no consensus method)
  - *Skills development* (education/training systems)
    - VET is only one of sub-sectors, further difference between initial and continuing VET
Development, role and use of indicators

- Set by Council or national experts

- **Hierarchy of indicators:**
  - Headline targets
  - Benchmarks
  - Indicators
  - Other statistical measures

- **Indicators - primary evidence:**
  - Monitoring – ET Monitor, ESDE report;
  - EU Semester Analysis – Country reports;
  - Country Specific Recommendations
Key challenge: indicator validity

- Existing indicators often are:
  - Availability, rather that needs based;
  - At system, rather than policy/intervention level;
  - Input/output, rather than outcome oriented;
  - Scarcity of causal research evidence to underpin them;
  - In need of explicit intervention logic/theory of change;
  - Thus often play signaling, rather than analytical role.

- As a result, indicator based analysis:
  - Can easily tell where the situation is better/worse;
  - Can't easily tell why and what needs to be changed;
Possible response: evidence integration

- Evidence answering "what" and "how-much"
  - Statistics (surveys, administrative data);

- Evidence answering "why" and "how-to" questions – ideally experimental, but primarily qualitative analysis
  - Academic research (in particular meta-reviews)
  - Policy analysis (including by Commission and OECD)
  - Policy maker's know-how

- Into an integrated framework and linking system, policy and/or intervention levels
Other major challenges

• *Improving the understanding of the links between skills, training and labor market*

• *Clarifying the roles of initial v/s continuing education and training systems*

• *Closing the feedback loop between skills demand and the development of skills supply*

• *Developing indicator/monitoring frameworks based on intervention logic with stronger validity*

• *Building qualitative indicators*
Broader issues

- **Scarcity of evidence proving causal attribution of policy impact on systems**

- **State of play of social science synthesising existing evidence (scarcity/coverage of meta-reviews)**

- **Low statistical power of many transnational evaluations (few country-level observations)**

- **Comparing the effects of different interventions types**

- **Multiple causation of simultaneous interventions**
Conclusion: evidence ecosystem “iceberg”

- Statistics
- Indicators
- Research synthesis
- Indicator / analytical frameworks
- New data development
- Decision support systems
- New (distributed?) data collection systems
Thank you!

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i-VET/VET students skills statistics

• Administrative data (UOE)

• Employment of (young) graduates (LFS)

• PIAAC-based assessment of VET students' basic skills – but can it be used to assess VET systems?

• No "i-VET" indicator/benchmark

• From 2015 – new Eurostat data on employability and higher VET– new possibilities
c-VET/AL/Adult skills statistics

- Adult employment, education attainment, participation in learning (LFS)
- Adult education and training (AES)
- Company-provided training (CVTS)
- Skills of adult population (PIAAC)
- Labour Market Policies (LMP database)
- European Social Fund investment (ESF data)
Analytical framework for adult skills policy

**Building Blocks for Success**

1. **Heighten awareness of benefits of adult learning**
   - 1.1 Provide targeted guidance to learners about learning options
   - 1.2 Engage social partners in the planning of, promotion of and recruitment of learners to adult learning
   - 1.3 Provide appropriate introductory learning experiences for learners

2. **Promote the use of externally accredited qualifications by employers**
   - 2.1 Provide funding to assist employers to upskill and retrain their workforce
   - 2.2 Promote the provision of work-based learning

3. **Fund learning for disadvantaged and difficult-to-engage groups, including the inactive and the unemployed**
   - 3.1 Provide targeted guidance and support services to learners in under-represented groups
   - 3.2 Provide scheme to recognise prior learning (informal and non-formal)
   - 3.3 Use intermediary organisations in outreach to difficult-to-engage groups
   - 3.4 Embed basic skills development in adult learning programmes

4. **Understand and identify needs and motivations of learners**
   - 4.1 Identify current and future skills needs of employers (through skills forecasting) and align provision with these
   - 4.2 Promote innovation and flexibility in the delivery of learning

5. **Establish a quality control framework for monitoring and evaluation of adult learning programmes**
   - 5.1 Establish a quality control framework for monitoring and evaluation of adult learning programmes
   - 5.2 Develop a skilled adult education workforce through initial teacher training and continuous professional development

6. **Co-ordinate an effective lifelong learning policy**
   - 6.1 Co-ordinate adult learning (or lifelong learning) policy with other national policies for improving knowledge, skills and competences of adults
   - 6.2 Establish mechanisms for policy alignment at local and regional levels
   - 6.3 Build a knowledge base concerning what works in adult learning

**System-level indicators**

1. **Increased participation in adult learning**
2. **Improved skills & competences**
3. **Higher quality of learning**