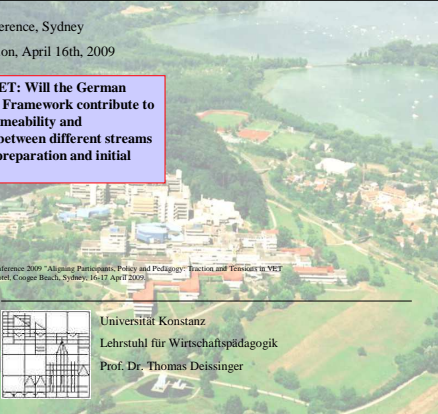


AVETRA Conference, Sydney
Paper Presentation, April 16th, 2009

Diversity in VET: Will the German Qualifications Framework contribute to increasing permeability and accreditation between different streams of vocational preparation and initial training?

AVETRA 12th Annual Conference 2009 "Attracting Participants, Policy and Pedagogy: Transition and Transition in VET Research", Crown Plaza Hotel, George Street, Sydney, 16-17 April 2009



Universität Konstanz
Lehrstuhl für Wirtschaftspädagogik
Prof. Dr. Thomas Deissinger

Thomas Deissinger, AVETRA Conference 2009

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Structure of presentation

- Segmentation in the German VET system
- Formal requirements for the NVQs in the EU and challenges for the German VET system
- Conclusions – What needs to be done?

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Germany's VET system

Germany: strong "apprenticeship culture":

- = apprenticeship system is a dual system
- = employers consider apprenticeships as their core business
- = occupational orientation is quite manifest and strong
- = apprenticeship system absorbs a considerable portion of the school leaving population

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**The German system at a glance:
Segmentation between sub-systems and institutions quite strong**

- Differentiation in General Secondary Education (post-10) is very strong although several federal states have "two-tier systems"
(Hauptschule) – Realschule (Sekundarschule) – Gymnasium
- The lower secondary schools (Hauptschulen) offer the "natural" pathway preceding apprenticeship training although they are increasingly considered to be "pathways for losers"
- Differentiation in Vocational Education (post-15/16), which starts after full-time compulsion, is also very clearly visible:

Dual System vs. Full-time VET vs. VET preparation programmes

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Dual System vs. Full-time VET - Germany

DS is an apprenticeship system and therefore has an exclusive function to create intermediate level skills needed on the labour market (occupational qualifications)

VET courses in schools are much more heterogeneous and mostly provide for qualifications leading into higher education (educational qualifications)

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**Typology of the so-called „measure system“
- including a diversity of VET preparatory courses**

- **A: „preparatory system“**
e.g. Vocational Preparation Year / Introductory Qualifications
- **B: „parallel or substitution system“**
e.g. Vocational Colleges / supra-plant training measures
- **C: „complementary system“**
e.g. Full-time school courses for specific occupations / extra-plant training measures / higher technical schools

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Some figures

- + 40 % all full-time VET courses (1992-2005)
- + 98 % vocational preparation courses (BVJ) (1992-2005)
- average age of apprentices now 19.2 years
- federal state of Hessen: 43 % of young school leavers enter the „transition system“
- 10 % of training contracts are financed by the state (even 28 % in the new federal states)

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Formal requirements for the NVQs in the EU

Competences linked to qualification levels

Competences have to be depicted in a multi-dimensional manner (knowledge, skills, general competences)

Recognition of competences outside formal pathways should be made visible and possible

Describing pathways between GE, VET and HE as well as between different streams of VET

Occupational qualifications can have different values, depending on the competences included

Outcomes dominate inputs and processes

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Challenges for the German VET system

- **Open Issue (I): Non-formal and informal learning**
- **Open issue (II): Links between VET and HE**
- **Open issue (III): How to deal with the „measure system“ as an „irregular pathway“?**
- **Open issue (IV): Dual System vs. Full-time VET**

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What needs to be done?

- Reliable mechanisms of accreditation between full-time VET, vocational preparation and the other programmes of the 'transition system'
- Employers have to become aware of the competences of young people when undergoing these measures
- GQF needs to take into account that different forms of VET exist and has to describe pathways for progression and accreditation
- Rethinking 2-year training courses in the dual system

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Thank you for your attention!