Raising the quality and attractiveness of vocational education and training

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www.oecd.org/education/VET
II. Growing interest in VET

Growing interest in improving quality and attractiveness of VET


Two OECD publication cycles on VET

Learning for Jobs (2007-2010)
• Upper secondary VET

Skills beyond School (2010-ongoing)
• Postsecondary VET
OECD reviews of vocational education and training

More than 30 country studies published since 2007

Simple but effective methodology: More than 5000 stakeholders in VET interviewed

OECD reviews have become a global benchmarking standard for vocational education and training systems.
IV. One major challenge for VET

One major challenge for VET

- Up-to-date teachers
- Relevant qualifications
- Engage employers and trade unions
- Mix of provision
- Match labour market needs
- Work-based learning
Mix of provision

Enrolment rates in upper-secondary education by general and vocational orientation (2011)

Source: OECD (2013a), *Education at a Glance 2013*, Table C 1.3.
Ensure strong numeracy and literacy skills of VET students

Necessary for lifelong learning

Particularly important for weak students

Necessary for further qualifications
OECD recommendations for the mix of provision:

• Identify student needs
• Teach basic skills in conjunction with practical skills
Challenges with making VET fit the needs of the workplace:

- Disconnected curricula
- VET trainers not up-to-date
- Insufficient work-based learning
- Disengaged employers and trade unions

→ Little value of VET qualifications
→ VET graduates are not job-ready.
Work-based learning:

- Workplace
- Supervisor
- Practical assessment
Work-based learning delivers benefits:

- A strong learning environment for students
- A signal of labour market value for both students and employers
- Facilitates recruitment
- Productive benefit for employers
- Value for money for public authorities
V. Policy measures

VET as a share of upper secondary sector (2011)

Source: OECD (2013a), *Education at a Glance 2013*, Table C 1.3.
OECD recommendations : Make work-based learning

• Systematic
• Credit-bearing
• Quality-assured
Improving the quality of VET means to bridge the gulf between vocational systems and the world of work.
Thank you for your attention!

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Discussion: Improving the quality and attractiveness of VET

(1) Please take some time to reflect on how
(a) work-based learning in VET programmes
(b) and basic skill teaching in VET programmes
resonate with your individual experience and daily work.

(2) Based on your experience, please think of concrete examples of:
(a) where the vocational education and training (VET) system is working well
(b) and where you think improvement is needed.

(3) As a group:
(a) Please discuss (1) and (2) and provide concrete examples that illustrate your points.
(b) Please write down the results of your group discussion on each poster!
Annex 1: Definitions

General education programmes are not explicitly designed to prepare participants for specific occupations or trades, or for entry into further vocational or technical education programmes (less than 25% of programme content is vocational or technical) (Education at a Glance 2013 (2013), p. 266).

Vocational or technical education programmes prepare participants for direct entry into specific occupations without further training. Successful completion of such programmes leads to a vocational or technical qualification that is relevant to the labour market. Vocational and pre-vocational programmes are further divided into two categories (school-based and combined school- and work-based programmes) based on the amount of training provided in school as opposed to the workplace (Education at a Glance 2013 (2013), p. 267).

In school-based programmes, instruction takes place (either partially or exclusively) in educational institutions. These include special training centres run by public or private authorities or enterprise-based special training centres if these qualify as educational institutions. These programmes can have an on-the job training component involving some practical experience at the workplace. Programmes are classified as school-based if at least 75% of the programme curriculum is presented in the school environment. This may include distance education (Education at a Glance 2013 (2013), p. 267).

In combined school- and work-based programmes less than 75% of the curriculum is presented in the school environment or through distance education. These programmes can be organised in conjunction with education authorities or institutions and include apprenticeship programmes that involve concurrent school-based and work-based training, and programmes that involve alternating periods of attendance at educational institutions and participation in work-based training (sometimes referred to as “sandwich” programmes) (Education at a Glance 2013 (2013), p. 266).

Annex 2: 17 characteristics of high quality VET systems (1/2)

1) The mix of vocational provision corresponds with the needs of the labour market.
2) Core academic skills are built into vocational programmes.
3) Programmes provide inclusive opportunities for all.
4) Provision is suitable to adults.
5) Higher level vocational qualifications and avenues of progression are provided.
6) High quality apprenticeship systems exist.
7) Work-based learning is systematically integrated into all VET.
8) A vocational teaching workforce is up-to-date with the modern workplace.
9) Qualifications are developed with labour market actors.

Annex: 17 characteristics of high quality VET systems 2/2

10) Qualifications are nationally consistent while allowing for local flexibility.
11) Qualifications systems and frameworks keep qualification numbers manageable.
12) Effective assessments of vocational skills.
13) Effective use of competence-based approaches.
14) Vocational provision is developed in a partnership between government, employers and trade unions.
15) Effective, independent, proactive career guidance backed by solid career information.
16) Strong data on vocational programmes.
17) Consistent funding arrangements.

For further information:


References