

Working Group on Indicators

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Agenda point 2: policy issues at EU level

EU Policy context and the role of quality indicators in the Education and Training 2020 and in the implementation of the Recommendation: key issues arising from work at EU level which need to be considered in the use of indicators for policymaking in VET

EQAVET implementation at EU level: maximising the results of Europe-wide cooperation

“Acting together at EU level pays off”

*In Background Information for the Informal European Council, 11 February
2010*

“...the crisis is teaching us a very important lesson: those attempting to guide the economy and our societies are like pilots trying to steering a course without a reliable compass. The decisions they (and we as individual citizens) make depend on **what we measure, how good our measurements are and how well our measures are understood.**” (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009)

Introductory note

1. Definition and setting of education and training policy: Member States' jurisdiction of their own education and training systems and supporting role of the EU [Lisbon Treaty -Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, Title XII, articles 165 (Education) and 166 (Training)]
2. The Open Method of Coordination (OMC)- a mechanism to lead an improved policy debate based on indicators and sharing of good practice (Lisbon Council, 2000)

EU Policy Context

A. Phase I (2000-2010): coexistence of processes, instruments and tools

Overarching programme on **growth and jobs-**
“The Lisbon Strategy”

1. Coexistence of processes/ work-programmes :
“Education and Training 2010”(February 2002)
and the ” Copenhagen process”(November
2002)

EU Policy Context

2. Coexistence of monitoring instruments

- A coherent framework of indicators and benchmarks for monitoring progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training”[COM(2007)61 final-not published in Official Journal]
- Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment of a European Quality Assurance reference framework for Vocational Education and Training [Official Journal C155 of 8.07.2009]

3. Coexistence of Working Groups

- Standing Group on Benchmarks and Indicators (“ET2010”): expert group set up in 2002 by the European Commission to give advice on the use of indicators
- Thematic Group on Indicators (“Copenhagen process”): expert group set up in 2008 by ENQAVET to reflect on the feasibility of the indicators proposed in the Commission proposal for a recommendation on the establishment of a common quality assurance reference framework

EU Policy context

B. Phase II (2010-2020): revising the EU policy agenda and the OMC

“Europe 2020- a strategy for **smart, sustainable and inclusive growth**” (March 2010)

1. A strategic framework for European cooperation in Education and Training “ET2020”(May2009): 5 new benchmarks have been defined for 2020
2. The Copenhagen process (to be reviewed in Bruges, December 2010)

Use of indicators for policy making in VET

- 1. Indicators are to be used as a key tool in VET policy making**
 - Indicators **to support systemic credibility** by assessing progress and performance
 - Indicators **to hold politicians and decision makers accountable** for how well they are doing in achieving the objectives they have set
 - Indicators **to provide better and targetted** information that is meaningful to relevant stakeholders, society at large and individual citizens

- **Indicators to motivate stakeholders and citizens** to identify areas where performance improvement is needed
- **Indicators to celebrate success**, by giving a sense of individual and collective relevance and to prepare for future efforts

2. Key issues in the use of indicators for policy making in VET at EU level

- **Need** to reinforce and streamline coordination between ET2020 and the Copenhagen process, including the coordination of Working Groups, so as to ensure **synchronicity and coordination** of the actions carried out at national and regional level
- **Need** to implement an approach aiming at a) merging policies across Education and VET in line with the LLL principle and b) promoting the crosspollination of the holistic indicators frameworks, i.e. ET indicators and EQAVET indicators

- **Need** to increase the **political visibility** for EQAVET by spelling out the key role of quality indicators in the implementation of EQF and ECVET and by ensuring a parity of esteem between all these instruments
- **Sustainable** awareness campaigns to raise the visibility of the OMC both at European, national and regional levels (particularly of such a complex issue as indicators) to larger, non-expert audiences

- **Need to increase the leverage effect** of EU VET policy on national policies, programmes and systems, so as to raise the effectiveness, efficiency and attractiveness of VET

Agenda point 4: EQAVET implementation at national level

Building on the results from ENQAVET thematic group on *Indicators* and ENQAVET study– the role of the Indicators in supporting the development of national approaches to the use of the Framework and implementation of the Recommendation

EQAVET implementation at national level: a catalyst for change

1. Key issues in the use of indicators for policy making in VET at national level

- **Raising awareness** and **generating interest** among citizens about how VET quality may impact on their lives over time
- **Using indicators** to inform national debate on the role of VET in strengthening competences required to fulfill individual learners' needs, to promote employability, to respond to the fast-changing labour market and to contribute to the economic and social well-being of society at large

- **Linking macro policy** (EU VET policy) and **macro indicators** (EQARF) to national, regional and local contexts in order to make them more **tangible and relevant**
- **Further fining tune and adapting** indicators to the national context, notably by
 - a) linking them to the economic, social and employment context at regional and local level
 - b) encouraging bottom- up participation by VET providers

- **Debating what kind of indicators** will be adopted at national level and **what role** they will play in helping stakeholders reach their goals (both at system and providers' level)
- **Adopting a sustainable communication plan** for delivery (what is the dissemination strategy, what are the actors involved, who is the best key audience, how to follow it up) by using a 'common language' that may link the worlds of education, training and work

- **Facilitating** citizens' access to data and meaningful information on VET in order to enhance citizens' competences and thus better equip them for the future
- **Encompassing all levels** in the quality process, i.e. engage the relevant stakeholders at national, regional and local level
 - a) in using quality indicators as tools for measuring performance and progress
 - b) in producing and disseminating data on VET

- **Mobilising** the EU instruments (EQARF, EQF, ECVET, Europass) to map quality at system and providers' level, i.e. in planning, implementing, assessing/ evaluating and reviewing changes in VET system and provision

2. Participation in the Working Group: what added value for the implementation at national level?

- ✓ **Analyzing** indicators with a European perspective, i.e. establishing synergies and complementarities between national and EU policies and instruments
- ✓ **Acknowledging** the complex nature of some issues and their possible impact on the implementation process, e.g. the framework conditions in each country (including the “fit/misfit” principle), the national policy decisions and roadmaps for reform

- ✓ **Developing** a “common language” for the collective deepening of issues in the light of agreed methodological and procedural rules
- ✓ **Favouring** mutual learning and deepening of the issues in substantive, policy and practical terms
- ✓ **Articulating** the EU level assessment of progress of quality improvement in VET and the purely national assessment process

- ✓ **Contributing** to maximize transnational coherence, synergy and added value to the implementation of VET policies

Agenda points 8, 9 and 10: management issues

Point 8 Setting objectives for the working group

Point 9 Concrete end results to be envisaged

Point 10 Getting there- first reflection on preparing the WG work programme

EQAVET Working Groups : organizational structures as strategy implementation levers

Background: organization of the Working Group on Indicators (WGI)

- 1. WGI** established within the EQAVET work programme for 2010-2011
- 2. Membership:** WGI comprises 17 members designated by Members States and 1 representative of the social partners. CEDEFOP and ETF will be invited to participate and provide technical and scientific advice as necessary
- 3. Frequency of meetings:** three times/year
- 4. Draft timeline:** June, September, November 2010 and January, March, May 2011

4. Follow-up work: Members' collaborative work between meetings (EQAVET website and mail based discussion group) to be coordinated and supported by the Chair and the expert, and facilitated by the Secretariat.

Once contributors complete their tasks, each of these will be then made available for review from the EQAVET website. Any comments will be then fed back directly to the author(s), to the expert, the Secretariat and the whole group. Authors will be encouraged to feedback comments on all the sections.

Point 8 Setting objectives for the Working Group on Indicators (WGI)

1. Assumptions

- The WGI will build on the results from ENQA VET Thematic Group on Indicators and ENQA VET study (2009)
- Solutions reached in the WGI will respond to the different needs of Member States and stakeholders
- Results achieved by the WGI will be owned by the relevant stakeholders so that a culture of quality assurance may be developed at national and EU level

- Synergies and complementarity will be developed with other EU instruments (EQF, ECVET) and working groups (i.e. the Standing Group on Benchmarks and Indicators)
- The WGI, with the support of the Chair and of the expert, and facilitated by the Secretariat, will contribute with the necessary and appropriate input for each meeting and the ongoing reflection between meetings

2. Main Task: WGI to consider the use of indicators for measuring quality in order to support the preparation of the national reviews of the implementation of the EQARF(2013)

3. Recommendations from the EQAVET Annual Forum for the WGI

- Begin by targetting and focusing on a few chosen indicators
- Foster opportunities for enabling synergies and cooperation with other groups and utilize their experiences and expertise, notably the SGIB
- Look at indicators as useful means for improving and fostering a culture of continuous improvement rather than as means for comparisons between MS VET systems
- Identify and decide on concrete results from the work to be undertaken

Point 9 Concrete end- results to be envisaged

Option 1

- Follow the recommendation of the Annual Forum and begin by targetting and focusing on a few chosen indicators. If so, it is suggested decisions are taken on the basis of**
 - the broad goals of VET, in particular focusing on those outcomes which have both current relevance and enduring significance for MS and EU VET policies
 - the best current evidence of the factors which influence learning outcomes

- best practice in education indicators reporting
- Identified criteria for choosing robust and enduring indicators (based on the available education indicator literature)

Option 2

- ❑ Consider the production of a ***Toolkit***.
- *Toolkit* would provide guidance on the main steps in the development of useful, valid, reliable, timely, and cost-effective VET data to be used at system level/training provider level. Such a Toolkit would be based on the ten definitions and examples from Member States on how these have been used to create their quality assurance systems

- consistent definitions should be used across the EU, given that these recommendations will not be a EU mandate for comparability purposes

Option 3

- ❑ **An optimized option (a combination of Options 1 and 2)**
- A few indicators would be selected, explored and integrated in a *Toolkit* (modular in design, so that individual sections can easily be updated and selected according to the user's specific needs)

Point 10 Getting there: first reflection on preparing the WG work programme

Assumptions

1.1 The participants of the Working Group on Indicators (WGI) will

- build on existing ENQA-VET materials and MS practices
- focus on supporting EQAVET implementation
- contribute to the different activities (i.e. before, during and after meetings) both individually and/ or as members of sub-groups which may be seen as useful to structure the ongoing work.

1.2 The Chair and the expert will, respectively, coordinate and support the WGI's work in the meetings and the follow -up work between meetings.

1.3 The Secretariat will supervise and facilitate the WGI's work by liaising with the Commission to ensure that the outcomes of the WGI meet the developing policy agenda.

2. Planning the WGI work-programme

- Timeline: June 2010-June 2011
- Number of meetings: 6
- Deliverables: to be adopted after discussions in 1st meeting and subsequently incorporated in the WGI's mandate