

DISCUSSION PAPERS

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Philipp Grollmann,  
Melanie Hoppe  
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**Methods and instruments  
for the evaluation and monitoring  
of VET- systems**

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## Content

<i>Dr. Philipp Grollmann, Melanie Hoppe</i> Preface “Research meets Advisory Service” .....	5
<i>Dr. Gisela Dybowski</i> Eröffnung des Expert Workshop „Methods and Instruments for the Evaluation and Monitoring of VET Systems“ .....	7
<i>Dr. Gudrun Steeger</i> VET Research and Measurement of Competencies by the BMBF .....	10
<i>Kathrin Hoeckel</i> Learning for Jobs The OECD Policy Review of Vocational Education and Training .....	18
<i>Ute Hippach-Schneider</i> Challenges and Chances of a European monitoring instrument in VET .....	28
<i>Dr. Torsten Dunkel</i> Reviewing European VET Policy - challenges for comparative analyses .....	39
Stefan Thomas Results Measurement and Programme-based Approaches (PBA) .....	55
<i>Noela Eddington and Ian Eddington</i> Integrating VET into other policy domains: some thoughts about monitoring and evaluation .....	62
<i>Dr. Xiaorong Nie, Mr. Ziyuan Wang, Mrs. Zhibao Pan</i> The Study on the Evaluation of Secondary Vocational School in China .....	71
<i>Dr. Uwe Lauterbach</i> Monitoring of VET systems – The perspective of comparative education .....	87
<i>Prof. Dr. Ute Clement, Dr. Philipp Grollmann and Dr. Matthias Pilz</i> International Handbook on VET Presentation of a draft modified monitoring grid .....	105
<i>Prof. Dr. Marc Schütte and Prof. Dr. Georg Spöttl</i> Entry-Level-Competence Tests: A Means for Evaluation the Fulfilment of Occupational Standards .....	112
<i>Dr. Lorenz Lassnigg, Dr. Stefan Vogtenhuber</i> Monitoring of Qualification and Employment in Austria – an empirical approach based on the labour force survey (LFS) .....	122

<i>Prof. Jim Stewart and Victoria Harte</i>	
Using Survey Instruments in Longitudinal Evaluations of Vocationally Orientated Higher Education: Problems and Pitfalls .....	137
<i>Dr. Geoff Hayward</i>	
The use of large-scale administrative data sets to monitor progression from VET into Higher Education in the UK: possibilities and methodological challenges .....	147
<i>Dana Stroie</i>	
Methods and instruments for quality assurance of the initial and vocational education and training system in Romania .....	161
<i>Theodorah. U.Ogali</i>	
Gender Sensitivity in Instrument Designs and Evaluation of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Systems .....	171
<i>Prof. Pilar Pineda, Carla Quesada &amp; Victoria Moreno</i>	
The “Learning Transfer System Inventory” (LTSI) as a diagnostic tool of training effectiveness in Spain .....	178
<i>Sandra Speer</i>	
Peer Evaluation: Facilitating Changes on the System-Level.....	193
<i>Dr. Benjamin A. Ogwo</i>	
Qualitative Techniques for Evaluating Vocational Education and Training (VET) Systems .....	202
<i>Simonas Gaušas and Rimantas Dumčius</i>	
Combining quantitative and qualitative research methods in comparative study on VET cost-sharing mechanisms and regulatory instruments .....	211
<i>Dr. Ludger Deitmer, Dr. Lars Heinemann, Prof. Dr. Felix Rauner and Dr. Wolfgang Wittig</i>	
Qualitative Evaluation of Governance Structures in VET .....	224

## **Preface “Research meets Advisory Service”**

*Dr. Philipp Grollmann, Melanie Hoppe*

“We advise international partners on the development and modernisation of vocational education and training ...” says the mission statement of BIBB. At the same time it expresses BIBB’s interest “... to foster the efficiency and competitiveness of the German system of vocational education and training and contribute to the creation of the European Education Area.” These two sides of one coin are the foundation for BIBB’s international activities and the existence of the two sections “International Benchmarking and Monitoring/European VET policies” and “International Cooperation and Advisory Services”.

With regard to the latter, BIBB has developed a concept for cooperating with countries that request advisory services in their on-going reforms (BIBB 2009). Reform processes with the objective of shaping vocational education and training in a sustainable manner and geared towards employability have been and are being supported. In doing so, the following guidelines give direction: The delivered advisory services always tie in with existing structures and advice is viewed as providing impetus for systemic development processes.

BIBB also contributes and has contributed to significant European developments such as the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the implementation of national frameworks as well to the development of a European Credit System for Vocational Education (ECVET). Increasingly, BIBB is also engaged into the monitoring of VET systems. E. g. BIBB contributes regularly to the CEDEFOP ReferNet (e. g. Hippach-Schneider, Woll, Hanf 2008) over the last years, and it was asked to take over the managing editorship of the “International Handbook on VET” (IHBB, Lauterbach 1994 ff.) from 2010 together with seven German universities.

For both tasks a solid basis of information is needed on the state of vocational education and training systems as well as concepts of shaping vocational education systems. Due to this BIBB also conducts its own international comparative research projects to generate solid information and sustainable instruments for VET systems’ analysis. These research activities deal with questions such as: How do we know what is needed for the further development of a VET system? Why is one approach chosen instead of the other? Which results are to be expected and how can we monitor this?

This set of questions and the needs for further development as regards to such instruments was the background for the organisation of the workshop “Methods and Instruments for the Evaluation and Monitoring of VET systems”. The workshop was preceded by an international call for papers that was disseminated through the pertinent channels of CEDEFOP, UNESCO-UNEVOC and others. Papers have been selected through a blind review proce-

dure according to their scientific quality and the contribution to the abovementioned questions.

Taking a look at the same issue from different angles, combining the joint interests of the two international sections of BIBB, the workshop provided a platform for international researchers and practitioners to discuss and address their needs. Therefore the following central topics were addressed under the headline "Research meets Advisory Service" during the workshop:

System analysis :A general overview of the available analyses of the genesis and development of VET systems;

Indicators & benchmarks: Supervising the 'status quo' or heading towards certain targets - both instruments are used for international comparison and for advising national policy makers;

Peer review & peer learning: In order to capture opinions of experts and facts and experiences that cannot be depicted through indicators solely, different models for the instruments are in use.

This documentation provides the results of the expert workshop which was held in Bonn/Königswinter in December 2009. We want to thank the participants for sharing their knowledge. A special acknowledgement needs to be made of the contributions by the reviewers who have helped in the selection of papers, namely Prof. Dr. Ute Clement, University of Kassel and Sören Nielsen, European Training Foundation, as well as the local organization team, Ms. Barbara Schulte and Ms. Heidemarie Ranfft.

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