



COR-VET
Career orientation
in vocational education and training in
Europe

Reflections of the German partners
Workshop 1 in Paderborn, Germany

**German Reflections on the first CORVET workshop
in Paderborn Germany
CORVET Project 1st to 3rd November 2011**

The workshop in Paderborn, Germany from 1st to 3rd November 2011 was the Kick-off-Meeting of the CORVET- project.

The project involves partners of five institutions from four different countries, Italy, UK, Turkey and Germany.

But the real work on the aims and topics of the project were still in progress before this meeting. In the month before the CORVET-Webpage was established and discussed. Also the BSCW-Server, a tool to share project documents, information and dates as well as communicate during the project in a much easier way was installed and provided with first information. In addition, in advance of the meeting were also in coordinative talks with the partners on the topics, the content and the respective contributions of the countries to the meeting as well as many organisational activities concerning:

- travel, flights etc.
- accommodation
- hosting of the workshop: rooms, evening program
- presentation design
- discussion groups
- technical arrangements for the video conference to Los Angeles
- involvement of the president and the dean
- Information of the partners
- etc.

Nevertheless the first meeting of all partners in Paderborn, Germany was a main step into the project work.

The CORVET partnership had a good start. All partners were very friendly, motivated and willing to work. They knew already that they had to present the educational system of their countries and should provide an indication of current career orientation in their countries.



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The informal evening dinner at 'Le Petit Galerie' was quite helpful to get to know each other. All participants were present and during the walk to the restaurant it was already clear that the selection of the participants couldn't been better. All partners were very open with information about their person, their work and career orientation.

They seemed to be eager to exchange information and work on new approaches. It was also an cultural opening in which cultural differences became clearer. This is also helpful for the project work and creates an atmosphere of trust.

On Wednesday, 2nd November, all partner gathered in the meeting room and had a very long day discussing the project cycle, aims, topics and phases of CORVET as well as the dissemination strategy. This day also contained presentations of each partner country about the different educational systems with special focus on the VET-systems.

The discussions also showed that all countries have a compulsory education either for 10 or 12 years. There are several surprising similarities between the British and the German way of dealing with VET problems.

And it seems that UK tries to orientate their future activities on German approaches in the field of VET and the Dual System and that Germany wants to create change with focus on former UK activities like the output-orientation. In UK and Turkey, learners seem to face their options after the primary stage. This is also reality in the German educational system but there is the opportunity of the orientation phase of two more year, where the students can change the school and their educational careers very easily. This opportunity offers permeability in a student's educational life.

The Turkish educational system also contains elements of the German one and is characterized by a great variety of local / regional provinces with influence on local educational work.

The Italian system offers two main routes. Italian learners have to decide at age 14 after having completed their Lower Secondary Education.

They can enter a Lycee, a grammar school or a technical or vocational institution.

In the German VET system the possibility of the learner transfer is important. They can select between the vocational and academic systems depending upon ability, interests and grades after certain examinations.



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These interesting points can be found more concrete in the future national reports of the partners on the educational systems.

The Vice President of Paderborn University, Prof. Dr. Bernd Frick, visited the meeting and welcomed the group formally. He introduced the city of Paderborn and the university. The main two points in his speech were that he emphasized that Business and Human Resources Education is a highly interesting and important research topic and that VET and especially a European focus on VET is more important than ever. Therefore he encouraged more international co-operation between the University Paderborn and external stakeholders. In Germany the University of Paderborn is leading in the field of Vocational Education and Training (VET) of teachers and students. Developing VET concepts therefore is a core topic for the department.

As a project coordinator of CORVET, it was due to us to talk also about the financing and important part of administering the project.

That day also the BCSW server and the Webpage was introduced to the partners and discussed in a fruitful way.

But the dissemination of project results will not only be assured by the Server and the webpage. All results will also be shared and disseminated via the European Shared Treasure (EST) network.

In the evening we had a cultural city tour of Paderborn. We visited the interesting historical cathedral and got information about the historical development. A dinner in the 'Ratskeller' gave us another possibility to talk about cultural differences and similarities as well as about educational topics that evening.

On Thursday, 3rd November meeting continued with discussions on Career orientation approach in the different partner countries. There also seem to be similarities between the UK and the German approach but also the Italian and the Turkish approaches provide good hints and structures.

Therefore it is a very good basis for further discussions on a common European approach.

Overall, it was completely successful project start in which the topic became much clearer and quite a number of substantive and structural issues could be resolved.



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We are looking forward to the work and the other project meetings.