



COR-VET
Career orientation
in vocational education and training in Europe
Reflections of the German partners
Workshop 2 in Kirşehir, Turkey

**German Reflections on the second CORVET workshop
in Paderborn Turkey
CORVET Project 12th to 15th March 2012**

The second workshop in Paderborn in Kirşehir, Turkey took place from March 12th to March 15th 2012.

When we arrived the airport in Kayseri we felt very excited to see our partners and learn more about Turkey, the Turkish educational system, the Turkish career orientation system, and the work in the other partner countries.

The arrival day was very interesting because our Turkish partners organized a trip to Urgup, Goreme, Uchisar and Avanos. These miraculous places of interest belong to the world cultural heritage and gave us an incredible insight into ancient times and regional traditions in Turkey with its pottery, architecture productivity and heroic efforts in the historical region Cappadocia. Therefore we also got the chance to learn more about Turkish culture and history which is necessary to gain a better understanding of the ways of Turkish life, history, and education. During this trip we already had several discussions about vocations, craft and vocational education in Turkey and the methods with which Turkey deals with challenges in this field in an open and more informal way.

The second day started by presenting the results of the evaluation of the German start-up-workshop in Paderborn. Prof. Dr. Marc Beutner pointed out that the participants evaluate the first meeting as a very valuable and informative event and that the workshop lived up to the expectations of the participants. They felt well informed about the objectives of the workshop and characterised it as a good opportunity to learn several interesting things about career orientation and education in the countries involved.

After that the German team provided information about new career orientation approaches in Germany. In addition to that it was necessary to underline the importance of these approaches with examples of the

German didactical material in the field of Career Orientation. Marc Beutner stated that there are different ways to do an apprenticeship in Germany. In this context it is noticeable that nearly 60% of a cohort try to do an apprenticeship in the so-called dual system. This means that the apprenticeship takes place in both schools (VET school) and enterprises. Every apprentice in initial vocational education in this German Dual System has a contract with the enterprise he works in and has to cope with a final exam at the end of his vocational training. If he passes this exam he gets a certificate from the appropriate chamber (e.g. chamber of commerce and industry, chamber of crafts etc.).

Another option is a) to do a fulltime apprenticeship as a student in VET-schools and get a grade as an assistant or b) to gain a further education degree.

Beside these opportunities you can find a great number of students who don't get an apprenticeship or work on a further education degree. They often find themselves in the so-called transition system ("Übergangssystem"), a full-time schooling system which provides learners with basic vocational information in a special working field. In 2008 there were nearly 400.000 students who made use of this system. These are the learners and the target group within the COR-VET project who really need a support because this group is often characterized through a lack of general / basic skills and motivation. In addition to that they in most cases leave secondary schools without a degree. Due to this fact they are in danger to be excluded from society and have difficulties finding a job. In this context the transition system can be described as an opportunity to help the students and provide them with new perspectives and possibilities in the field of career orientation or to catch up by getting a general degree.

Career orientation in Germany therefore is seen as focused on the individual development. In the new career orientation approach it will be emphasized via a strength-oriented approach which is organized within the curricular modules. These modules refer to an information phase (self-discovery and profession), a decision phase (matching of opportunities,



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skills and possibilities) and a realization phase. In these modules the process of career orientation is represented. This process is a revolving one in which the students have the chance to improve their basic skills and prove their occupational choice in the context of practical experiences in enterprises. To achieve this goal the three modules make use of the principles cooperation, individualization, personalization, and strength orientation. Furthermore the students have to create their own strength profile and a development and empowerment plan and are confronted with portfolio work. Particularly the portfolio work offers a great range of opportunities because it has different components (e.g. collection, reflection and communication, assessment, activity, product) and the learners can use it for example as a working portfolio, a showcase portfolio, a presentation portfolio or an assessment portfolio. One of the biggest advantages of such a portfolio approach is that it documents the individual development as well as it can be used as an initial point to analyse and reflect on the individual development process.

Marc Beutner emphasized that there is a change in the federal system in North-Rhine-Westfalia: The transition system will be restructured soon and there are already planning activities to implement special modules for career orientation there. But a big problem arises: Due to the political elections in North-Rhine-Westfalia in May 2012 nobody knows in which way it will be structured in the new schooling year beginning in August 2012. The result of the elections will have a considerable impact on the development of the school system because the educational policy depends highly on the party who is in charge.

The next point was the description of Turkish partners who focused on the existing concept of career orientation as “counseling and guidance within a context of uncertainty”. With this title they wanted to point out, that career orientation and guidance takes place and comes together in a social context with different “actors”: family, personal, career and self-identity. This makes it sometimes hard to counsel the students adequate to their

interests, needs and strengths. In the process of counseling it is really challenging to consider the different interests and career aspirations from different points of view of the family on the one hand and of the student on the other hand because parents in Turkey have a great influence on the occupational choice of their children. Another point is that the collaboration between the schools and guidance centers is not very good.

In Turkey there is a change from the eight-year compulsory education system (4+4) to a 12-year compulsory education system (4+4+4). After each state the students have to take a test, which should give them an overview of their strengths and interests. Within this new educational system the career and guidance process should become more continuous so that students and counsellors are in a better situation to intervene and give individual advice. One of the biggest advantages of a 12-year compulsory education is that the students have more opportunities to reflect on their own interests, needs and job opportunities. The sources from which career orientation can be obtained are videotapes, films and books which contain information and definitions of careers and their tasks, required qualifications, work environments and working conditions, income, fields of work, and promotion opportunities during and after the training. Beside this there are group and class discussions within both general and technical/ vocational secondary educational schools, sessions which should help to develop job-search skills and discussions with parents so that they are able to support their children in an appropriate way in their career-choices.

The Italian and British partners gave a short insight of their concepts because within the next workshop in UK they have the opportunity for a long illustration.

But there are already some interesting points to mention about the work in Italy:

Silvia Ghiretti pointed out, that there is a very low job mobility in Italy due to the "narrow" school system. In the age of 13-14 the students have to decide what kind of school they want to choose and this has a great impact

on the further career. This special system makes it difficult for the employees to change the company they work for or their type of work in an early stage. In the process of school respectively occupational choice it is therefore necessary that the studies must be in line with the designated profession. This situation seems more complicated because there is no specific person to help the students in the process of their career orientation. The family plays the dominant and biggest role in this process. The first contact with the labour market is usually in the last two years of high school in form of a two week internship in a company. According to Silvia another problem is that the students have a very high entrance age at universities and in the world of work.

Rajesh Pathak accentuated that career orientation in the United Kingdom can be divided into information, advice, guidance (helping clients to make progress in career planning, facilitating self awareness, decision making, transition skills) and counselling (helping clients to resolve problems that interfere with their ability to cope with life). It takes place in schools, career planning services in FE and HE and the public sector (for all ages at any stage available). Furthermore students have to occupy a subject which is called "careers education". This must be studied but may not lead to examinations unlike the compulsory subjects English, mathematics and science.

After these insights about concepts of career orientation approaches the COR-VET group visited the Technical High School in Kirşehir, the Public Education Center and the KIRŞEHİR MİLLİ EĞİTİM MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ and had a fragmentary insight how the Turkish education system works.

In the evening the Turkish partners organised a cultural night where the different groups of learners gave impressions of their country and what is typical and traditional in the particular national context. This event was very entertaining and offered the opportunity to become more familiar with the partners and the culture.



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On Wednesday morning the partners were working in two time slots: While the core COR-VET partners discussed the questionnaire and survey about career orientation in the participating countries the learners discussed what could be learned about vocational education and career orientation from the countries within the COR-VET project. They came to the conclusion that every system has to answer the same questions but try to handle it in a similar way with a particular and different focus. They value the COR-VET project as a great opportunity to combine the different ways, develop a common approach and face the challenges of common European questions in the common field of VET.

On that day the Turkish partners also arranged a visit to the KIRŞEHİR AHI EVRAN UNIVERSITY, the Adult Educational Center, a primary and secondary school, and the Turkish labour institution of Kirsehir. It was very interesting to see how the region copes with the multiple challenges in the educational and labour sector.

On Thursday we debated the COR-VET webpage under supervision of Rasmus Pechuel and afterwards Marc Beutner pointed out what to do next in the project. This concerned the aspects of project organisation, publications and a proposal for resp. discussions about the workshop in UK. After visiting the governor and the mayor the COR-VET team evaluated the second workshop in Turkey.

All in all we got a great impression both from the progress in the COR-VET project and especially about the hearty hospitality of our Turkish friends and partners. Everything was well organized and everybody made us feel like home and received us very cordially. We will treasure the second workshop and the great atmosphere in Turkey as a pretty well organized workshop and will say greetings to our family, friends and to the one we love from our Turkish friends - to use the words of the mayor on our last day.