

Het Europese EQAVET-netwerk benutten om van elkaar te leren

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Zweden organiseerde een traject met studiebezoeken aan vier landen in Europa en een peer learning activity (PLA) in eigen land. Aan het traject nam een gemixte groep van Zweedse vertegenwoordigers van het Ministerie van Onderwijs, scholen en werkveld, deel. Nederland was een van de landen waar ze een bezoek aan hebben gebracht. Ook was Nederland vertegenwoordigd in de PLA.

Ander perspectief, reflectie en inspiratie

De deelnemers hebben veel geleerd in het traject. Hoewel het lastig bleek om voorbeelden van andere landen te vertalen naar de Zweedse context, gaven de studiebezoeken veel mogelijkheid tot reflecteren, vanuit een ander perspectief naar het eigen onderwijs te kijken en begrip te krijgen voor waarom sommige dingen in eigen land zijn zoals ze zijn. Daarnaast heeft het traject ook geleid tot meer begrip onder de deelnemers voor elkaars werk en bijdrage aan het onderwijs. Tot slot is er veel inspiratie opgedaan voor wat anders zou kunnen in het Zweedse mbo-onderwijs en de kwaliteitsborging ervan. Een verschuiving is merkbaar van het evalueren van 'doing the things in the right way' naar 'doing the right things'.

Inspiratie uit Nederland

Tijdens het bezoek aan Nederland hebben de Zweedse deelnemers een presentatie gekregen van SBB, de MBO Raad, Ministerie van OCW, ROC Mondriaan en ROC van Amsterdam. Ze hebben kunnen leren van hoe in Nederland de samenwerking tussen onderwijs en bedrijfsleven in het algemeen is georganiseerd, maar ook in bijzondere projecten zoals het Techniepact. Bij ROC Mondriaan hebben de deelnemers bij een van de colleges kunnen bekijken hoe zij het

bedrijfsleven de school binnen hebben gehaald en hoe op die manier de samenwerking een win-win voor alle partijen is geworden. Bij ROC van Amsterdam hebben ze het voorbeeld van de Jean-school leren kennen. Hier leren studenten in de praktijk en op school het vak van spijkerbroeken maken. Studenten leren de hele industrie, die schuil gaat achter het maken van spijkerbroeken kennen. Deze studenten hebben na hun opleiding kans op een baan overal ter wereld.

EQAVET als gedeeld referentiekader

Om van en met elkaar te kunnen leren heb je een gedeeld referentiekader nodig. Het EQAVET-referentiekader bleek daarvoor een handig kader. Wil je een zo groot mogelijke leeropbrengst van een dergelijk traject, zijn twee factoren van cruciaal belang: tijd en een systematisch aanpak om te leren en te reflecteren.

Meer lezen

- Het rapport met de bevindingen is samengevat in het Engels, deze samenvatting is opgenomen in dit artikel.
- Klik [hier](#) voor het verslag dat is gemaakt door de deelnemers van Nederland aan de PLA.
- Ook Aventus leert van andere lidstaten, klik [hier](#) voor meer informatie over hun Erasmus+ project.

Summary in English

Introduction

EQAVET, European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training, is a network and tool that aims to strengthen the culture of quality in vocational training, measuring quality through indicators and indicative descriptors. Though quality assurance for VET is enshrined in Swedish law, Skolverket (the Swedish National Agency for Education) wished to look beyond Swedish practice to see what could be gained from EQAVET. In particular, the concept of quality is very difficult to implement without a context, Skolverket has long been looking for an appropriate context where the concept already has a definition or at least a clear framework. That is why Skolverket found EQAVET's quality criteria of interest.

A Steering group was formed in order to apply for a project in which Skolverket as Sweden's national reference point (NRP) would work together with the national programme councils to develop quality in vocational training. Rather than try to learn about and implement the system of EQAVET, the aim was more to explore in the spirit of learning and sharing. In addition to this, knowledge was also limited as to how to actually go about learning about EQAVET. So, the methods were also embarked upon in a spirit of learning and sharing.

The agency began to look at EQAVET and other countries' work on quality issues. It was decided to initiate a series of study visits to various European countries that actively apply EQAVET. Very soon it became clear that knowledge of EQAVET and other countries' quality work was limited within Skolverket itself and internal training in the area was identified as a requirement. It also turned out that within the branch there was limited knowledge of and interest in EQAVET. The idea of carrying out a pilot project, a pilot study trip, meant that the project would become more well-known and accepted and that interest in participation would increase significantly. It was decided to implement internal training, prepare a pilot and subsequent study trips to a number of European countries, and to hold an international Peer Learning Activity, as well as, finally, to prepare this report to pave the way for further development of EQAVET in Sweden.

Pilot project

On October 22, 2017 a pilot study visit took representatives from the programme councils and Skolverket to Ljubljana. The period in Slovenia was organised by the EQAVET NRP in the country. It was noted, for example, how the training was more focussed on production than in Sweden, but the real positive outcome was the realisation that more time needed to be set aside for discussion and reflection and that there was a need for systematisation of the preparation, reflection and discussion and collection of feedback/thoughts after the trips. The result was a schematic setting out the things to be done before, during and after each study trip.

Reflections on the pilot trip were presented at a session on "European tools and how they can improve vocational education" at the meeting of the National Programme Committees in December 2017. These reflections and the sharing of impressions from those who participated in the pilot trip made it much easier to recruit participants for subsequent study trips.

Main project

Four study trips were then prepared between April and October 2018 to Prague, Zagreb, Créteil/Paris and the Hague. They comprised a total of 44 study trips for programme committee members and 41 for Skolverket staff. Usually the trips consisted of a presentation of VET in Sweden plus some kind of presentation plus school visit. usually focusing on areas that the host felt were most useful or where they had shown most success.

Generally, the opportunity to reflect and discuss together, in particular among representatives of different area of the VET framework, was found to be productive and more time would have been appreciated.

During the Prague visit there was a focus on how the country's culture and values have shaped education policy, gender equality in different sectors, qualifications and adult education, as well as how to work further on these issues in Sweden. Other reflections concerned vocational tests and how they had helped to strengthen the quality of vocational training in the Czech Republic and whether vocational tests could be part of validation.

The reflections that were made in Zagreb showed that Sweden and Croatia shared similar current challenges around vocational training including status and the expectations of working life that do not fully match with the content of the training. The visitors also noted the role of the Chamber of Commerce as a bridge between school and working life. The Chamber of Commerce seems to be advising the government on vocational training issues by being active in curriculum work in a more formalised way than as a referral body. It was also observed that Croatian vocational students seem to have good opportunities in terms of qualifications for higher education. They studied more mathematics in vocational subjects than Swedish vocational students. One reflection was that there are no dead ends in the system, but that students can rather finish with a fourth year and get an academic degree. The group thought that an academic fourth year was something Sweden could be inspired by.

During the very successful trips to France and Holland it became apparent that EQAVET offered a useful tool box, some of which would be appropriate for Sweden and some of which would not.

Peer Learning Activity

In September 2018, the Swedish NRP held a successful Peer Learning Activity (PLA) in Stockholm and Västerås, attended by guests from seventeen different countries plus concerned parties in Sweden. The international colleagues attended a national programme council conference and a study visit to the Agency for Higher Vocational Education and an HVET provider. Again, the opportunity for reflection and discussion was seen as a strength. Participants were asked to play the role of "critical friends". Quality assurance was one of the main areas looked at during these days and a perspective throughout the activity. Among improvement measures it was mentioned that employers are ultimately the ones who hire and that they might have a stronger position than merely advising on the development of vocational training.

Other feedback from participants may be found in Appendix 6.

Learnings

Prior to this project the concept of EQAVET was largely unknown among branch representatives and Skolverket. While simply knowing about the concept may only comprise a knowledge of the tools used rather than a change in quality assurance itself, knowledge of the concept does indicate that the awareness of quality in vocational education has increased and that the concept of quality assurance has been subject to discussion and reflection, which in itself should be a stepping stone to development. And this is what has happened as a result of this project. Discussions have shifted from *measuring and doing things in the right way* to *doing the right things*. Thence ultimately to improving the quality of the education. The challenge that emerges, however, is whether we will be able to actually use the indicators and descriptors going forward.

It was generally felt that the project, in particular the study trips, had acted as much as a mirror inwards as a window out. The opportunity created for Swedish stakeholders across the board to explain and understand each other's work and approaches has helped generate mutual understanding and respect.

The extent to which the practice in the various host countries might be transferable to Sweden turned out to be fairly limited due to varying local context, but again the big win has been that reflection on the Swedish education system when contrasted with the host country has given us new insights into why vocational education in Sweden is like it is and provided inspiration to work on developing and improving it within the current Swedish framework.

A further learning relates to the limitations of such a project. Creating a common view of something as abstract as 'quality' requires time. Working on a common basis to improve quality requires even more time. It is felt that work on creating this common view and the desire to improve quality merits onward movement towards seeking funding for a further project, this time looking at concrete ways of applying these learnings regarding EQAVET, using the indicators and descriptors to enable us to assess qualitative and quantitative improvements in vocational education and training in Sweden.

Note on the summary in English

The language editor/translator was given the task to summarise the report in English. Thus, it is an interpretation and not a translation. Yet it has been checked by the EQAVET NRP and we agree that the interpretation is a fair representation of the report.