Apprenticeship education in Sweden: background and future scenarios

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Apprenticeship Education in Sweden – Background and Future Scenarios
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Work process & collaborative environment for the Swedish case study -

• Department of Business, Techn. & Society project owner
• Swedish coordinator in contact with major research environments (Univ. Luleå, Linköping, Gothenburg etc)
• Coordinator followed Swedish policy agenda & conf.
• First WS Sept. 2014 VET-centre/University of Gothenburg
• Second WS May 2015 in Stockholm – Global Challenge
• Informal reference group of 7-8 experts
• Project also presented at international VET-conference
• Mid-term meeting & collaborative work not included
• More inter-case learning should be supported
Swedish IVET-Bridging the gap between Education, Social and Employment Policies

- Education/VET policies long-term and reform oriented
- Employment policies more of just-time-solution (NEETS)
- Youth guarantee and jobs in 90 days – ideas and reality
- Vocational Introduction Employment Agreements
- Subsidized trainee jobs for unemployed youth
- Increasing regional & local cooperation/regional platforms
- Empowering courses a folkhigh school level
- European Social Fund Projects – Nat/regional projects
- Decreasing VET interests – postponing educational choice
Education in upper secondary school

Vocational programmes/Apprenticeship education
• Child and Recreation
• Building and Construction
• Electricity and Energy
• Vehicle and Transport
• Business and Administration
• Handicraft
• Hotel and Tourism
• Industrial technology
• Natural Resource Use
• Restaurant Management and Food
• HVAC and Property Management
• Health and Social Care

Higher education preparatory programmes
• Business Management and Economics
• Arts
• Humanities
• Natural Science
• Social Science
• Technology

Introductory programmes
  – Preparatory education
  – Programme oriented individual options
  – Vocational introduction
  – Individual alternative
  – Language introduction
Swedish Upper Secondary school – 3 year programs (post 16). After 2011 a more diversified system was introduced.

Enhancing employability
Raising the quality
Improving the throughput
Swedish Apprenticeship Education
- a school based VET-system

- Part of a comprehensive education system
- Apprentices are not employed – they are students
- Apprenticeship programmes has a dual mission – to catch (potential) school leavers and to prepare for occupational skills/employment
- The political pressure focus social inclusion while industry are looking for skilled and motivated youth
Swedish Apprenticeship Education - regulations

- At least 50% of the curriculum content has to be carried out at workplaces
- A contract for every apprentice shall be signed prescribing the curriculum content that is intended to be realized at the workplace
- Trilateral talks between teacher, apprentice and workplace supervisor are proposed.
- The teacher has got the responsibility to:
  - follow-up and mark students
  - continuously inform students about their progress
The Swedish VET-paradox 1— Increasing policy interests but falling students’ demand

• Around 26% in VET-programmes – almost 4% drop in four years - girls less interests than boys
• Around 2.9 % in apprenticeship programmes but..
• strong increase access to appr. (+1000=8300)
• High level of drop out and/or programme alternation
• Social, gender and geographical bias of VET preferences
VET-paradox 2 – New institutional roles - state, municipalities, social partners and training market

- National development strategy for apprenticeship education – high political consensus
- High level of private/independent schools – subsidized by public money – towards a new training market
- Corporate schools (Volvo, Scania, SKF) as models
- Role of municipalities – own provision/VET- outsourcing
- Quality problems – access to workplaces/supervision
- Economic incentives has “awareness role”
- Vocational colleges - a collaborative model
- Regional competence platforms for coordination & growth
Impressions from of first workshop A – University if Gothenburg, September 2014

• Employers, unions, researchers, VET-teachers, students
• Problems in translating/using the scheme (De-Eng-Sw)
• To make workshop attractive – was made part of a broader conference – including the VET-community
• Active discussions in order to find consensus of the seven dimensions
• Education Act&National curriculum for legal framework
• Some flexibility in transforming national curriculum to local plans
• SNAE coordinates the system&promotes local adaption
Impressions from of first workshop B – University if Gothenburg, September 2014

• National Apprenticeship Edu-Centre to promote quality & change
• Evaluation through National School Inspectorate
• Support for local evaluation + research
• Outcome orientation: diploma and nat/local evaluations
• Input orientation: national curricula/local adaption
• Financing: mainly through government expeditures: pupils/supervisors/schools
• Economic incentives important to start up new program
Second Stakeholder Workshop – Future scenarios
Think tank Global Challenge; May 2015

• Participants: gov.com, experts/researchers, VET-teachers, ed.officers
• Introducing gov. actions on youth unemployment
• Policy study on sub-urban social segregation and exclusion
• The role of the education system and VET for employability
• Discussions on scenarios in three small mixed groups
• General comments and final conclusion
• Coordinator’s participant observer in/inter-national conferences, VETYL, National Agency Conferences/ Swedish Trade Union Seminar/ ongoing governmental task forces/independent research institutes/RATIO etc
• Scenarios a combination of these sources
Scenario A: Strengthening capacity and attractiveness of Swedish IVET

- Making IVET more attractive for youth
- Open up higher ed. eligibility/lifelong learning
- More flexible pathways for students
- Increasing access to IVET across the country
- Renewing programme structure
- Better cooperation school and work
- Reducing IVET drop out/school retention
- Counteracting social, gender, geography.bias
- More investment in IVET-research
Scenario B: Rather strong expansion of apprenticeship education over the next years

- Making apprenticeship.edu. more attractive
- Increasing access over the country
- Support from Nat.App.Edu.Centre
- Strengthening school and work cooperation
- Using new digital equipment for learning
- Reduce drop out/increase school retention
- Problem of access to workplaces+supervision
- Reduce "scale-problem" by regional cooperation
- More focus on workplace learning quality……
Combination of the scenarios and focus on learning context and student progression

- The apprenticeship edu. is part of VET-programmes
- The two functions could support each other but...
- Needs to create integrate app.classes to achieve a functional learning context
- Local integration or “branch schools”
- Access to higher and further education critical
- Training of VET-teachers, supervisors critical
- Initial and cont. VET needs to be integrated