Varieties of Cooperation between Schools and Employers in Vocational Training

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The two take home messages of the talk

• (1) Types of school-employers cooperation in IVT are country-specific and affected by the general patterns of firm-state cooperation in IVT.

• (2) Cooperation between schools and firms in vocational training does not develop by default but depends on public policies as well coordination among firms.
Outline

• Varieties of Skill Formation

• Varieties of Cooperation between Schools and Firms (CbSF)

• Varieties of CbSF in Collective Skill Formation Systems

• Conclusions

• CbSF in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Denmark, and the Netherlands at a glance (workshop in the afternoon)

• Cooperation between schools and firms at the boundary between VET and HE (workshop in the afternoon)

• Conclusions (workshop in the afternoon)
Varieties of Skill Formation

- Vocational education and training (VET) systems differ with regard to the division of labour between training firms and vocational schools.

- Four features of collective systems:
  - Firms are strongly involved in financing and administering workplace-based training;
  - Intermediary associations play an important role in the administration and reform of these systems;
  - Portable, certified occupational skills;
  - Training in schools but also in companies, usually in the form of dual apprenticeship training.
## Varieties of Skill Formation

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<tr>
<th>Public Commitment</th>
<th>Firm Involvement Low in IVT</th>
<th>Firm Involvement High in IVT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High in IVT</td>
<td>Statist Skill Formation FL, NOR, SWE, FR</td>
<td>Collective Skill Formation GER, AUT, SWI, NL, DK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low in IVT</td>
<td>Liberal Skill Formation US, UK</td>
<td>Segmentalist Skill Formation JAP</td>
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**Public investment**: Public spending as a percentage of GDP on upper secondary education multiplied with the share of upper secondary students in vocational programs (both school and dual training schemes)

**Firm involvement**: Share of upper secondary students in vocational education programs combining school- and workplace-based training

*Figure 8.1 Firm involvement and public investment in VET in OECD countries*

*Note: For exact definitions and data sources of the two indicators, see Table 8.A1 in the Appendix.*
Varieties of Cooperation between Schools and Firms (CbSF)

• Why is cooperation important?
  – Matching supply and demand of training places
  – Better training quality
  – Increases incentives for SMEs to participate in IVT
  – Proper ordinances and curricula integration of work-based and school-based training
  – Extending local and regional networks in IVT
  – Building bridges to other subsystems in education and training
  – Preventing drop outs
  – Inclusion of disadvantaged labor market participants

• Why does cooperation not always happen? Difficulties?
  – No tradition of firm involvement AND public commitment in IVT (non-collective training systems)
  – Cooperation dilemmas precondition public policies as well as coordination among firms
  – Different needs and preferences of large firms and SMEs
  – Different rationalities and logic of actions in schools and firms:
    *Firms, are profit seekers and maximizers, steered by the market logic, public schools are governed by the state and heavily affected by party political or within state cleavages.*
Varieties of Cooperation between Schools and Firms (CbSF)

• How to conceptualize and measure cooperation?
  – *Cooperation*:
    - “Action or process of working together to the same end” (Oxford dictionary)
    - Areas of cooperation? Levels of cooperation?
  – *Areas of Cooperation*:
    - *Learning process*: Cooperation in curricular settings, how are learning experiences in the class room and in firms combined?
    - *Governance*: How do firms (or employers’ associations & networks) and schools cooperate in regulation, financing, administration and monitoring of schools as well as training in firms
  – *Levels of Cooperation*:
    - *Micro-level*: Learning and teaching arrangements in schools and firms: e.g. do school teachers have contact with firms and trainers in firms?
    - *Meso-level*: Cooperation between collective actors: e.g. are employers’ associations represented in school boards? Are school representatives represented at examination committees of firms?
    - *Macro-level*: How do employers’ associations and schools cooperate in policy-making on rules steering vocational training: e.g. involvement in policy making?
Varieties of Cooperation between Schools and Firms (CbSF)

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<td>High in IVT</td>
<td>Statist Skill Formation Weak CbSF</td>
<td>Collective Skill Formation Strong CbSF but strong variation</td>
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Collective Skill Formation Regimes: GER, SWI, AUT, DK, NL

- Firms and schools play different roles in VET in these countries
- Cooperation between firms and schools vary very much
- Denmark seems to be a good performer in governance cooperation
- More cooperation in Austria and Switzerland than in Germany
- In the Netherlands cooperation difficult but evaluations & projects
Conclusions

• Employer coordination in IVT is a sufficient condition for CbSF

• Collective systems differ with regard to the precise labor division between firms and schools in IVT

• Varieties of CbSF in collective systems depend on the role of the state in IVT

• Cooperation is important but does not happen by default
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