Evidence-informed appraoch to policy in the EU

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A.4 Analysis and studies

Presentation outline

- **The benefit and importance of an evidence-informed approach to policy**;

- **What can contribute to research serving as a policy lever?**;

- **How to further develop the infrastructure to underpin evidence-informed policy making?**.

The benefit and importance of an evidence-informed approach to policy

Benefit of an evidence-informed approach to policy

Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth	ET 2020
Emphasis on evidence-informed approach	Analyses of national progress and reforms => Country Specific Recommendations

Particular need for contextualisation, country-specific knowledge

Why is it important with thorough knowledge of Member States' educational systems? Key to:

- assess the relevance of national policy measures and progress towards the Europe 2020 objectives, notably headline and national targets;

- legitimate CSRs, guidance for investment and reform in education and training systems in the framework of Europe 2020 / European Semester;

- monitor benchmarks, indicators, recommendations agreed in the framework of the Open Method of Coordination in the field of education and training (ET 2020);

Why is it important with thorough knowledge of Member States' educational systems? Key to:

- monitor the Bologna process for higher education, the Copenhagen process for VET, the European agenda for adult learning;

- prepare policy Council Recommendations and Commission Communications falling under DG EAC's responsibility.

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What can contribute to research serving as a policy lever?

Research must be relevant to the political agenda (1)

- Need for <u>regular arenas/channels</u> for communication between policy makers and the world of research
  - Researchers to be informed about policy/agenda priorities
  - Increased awareness amongst policy makers of existing research/opportunities for analysis
  - Example: DG EAC contracts with research networks, EIPPEE conferences, upcoming Commission conference

- Appropriately <u>contextualise</u> quantitative indicators to provide analyses relevant also for country specific recommendations
  - Example: Methodology used by DG EAC for indicators and benchmarks

Research must be relevant to the political agenda (2)

- Timeliness is key for policy uptake
  - Example: Work with Eurostat on timeliness of the publication of results from data collections through the European Statistical System
  - Example: Discussions with providers of research and analysis to align their planned analyses with policy priorities and the policy calendar (e.g. in time for the start of the European Semester, Communications etc.)

- Importance of forward-looking research (forecasts etc.)
  - Demographic and technological changes: important to be "ahead of the game"

Research must be accessible in appropriate form (1)

- Evidence needs to be translated into <u>policy relevant recommendations</u>
  - ➢ Balance challenge of causality with as far as possible informing policy maker on «what works in education»

- Use of <u>language and form</u> that can be <u>widely understood</u>
  - ➢ Example of good practice: Policy briefs accompanying research reports

- Assuring <u>parsimony</u> without being simplistic

Research must be accessible in appropriate form (2)

- <u>Knowledge brokers</u> can play key role in translating results and in linking "the demand a supply side"
  - ➤ Well-developed structures in many countries => Learning potential both for other MS and for the European level

Capacity building within Ministries and other policy bodies

- Joint analyses of research, awareness-raising
  - ➤ Example in DG EAC: Internal TFs to analyse results from international surveys, sessions to share recent research.

- Inspirational examples on the impact of research on policy reforms =>peer learning on the use of evidence in policy

How to further develop the infrastructure to underpin evidence-informed policy making?

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How to further develop the infrastructure to underpin evidence-informed policy making?

- Example, three strands of DG EAC's work for a better knowledge of education and training systems

Strand 1 – MONITORING

- Annual Education and Training Monitor

- Development of main-indicators and sub-indicators according to the JAF-methodology in priority areas of education and training

- Visualisation tool of benchmarks and indicators

- Support to CDOs and thematic units in the use and interpretation of international comparative research, statistics, indicators and benchmarks

- Preparing input to discussions on new benchmarks and follow-up of Council conclusions on benchmarks

Strand 2 – ANALYSIS

- Commission analysis of key findings from international surveys, elaborated through internal DG EAC TFs

- Representation of DG EAC in relevant OECD fora on indicators and international surveys. Joint launches (EaG, PIAAC, PISA, TALIS)

- Cooperation with OECD on country reviews

- Coordination of work programmes of Eurydice, JRC-CRELL, JRC-IPTS, EENEE, NESET and CEDEFOP to align with policy priorities, facilitate cooperation and reduce overlaps

- Assure that policy priorities are reflected in European Statistics, through coordination of relations with Eurostat

- Possible new tool to support a forward-looking policy agenda: Platform for prospective reflection on education and training systems involving think-tanks, JRC, research institutes, academic networks etc.

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Strand 3 - STUDIES

- Coordinating the process and material for DB decisions on new studies in a strategic approach linked to the new political agenda

- Regular overview of the state-of play of studies

- Ensuring the use of results by ET2020 WGs, CDOs and thematic units

- Assuring that studies are made publicly available

- Management of the framework contract for studies

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How to further develop the infrastructure to underpin evidence-informed policy making?

- Doing more with less
- Building a structure that can be flexible to respond to new demands

Doing more with less

In view of limited resources, «survey fatigue» and the need for parsimony, DG EAC is committed to doing more with less through:

- Close coordination with and across key partners for knowledge within the European institutions

- Close cooperation between DG EAC and international organisations such as OECD and IEA on international surveys and analyses
  - ➢ E.g. to prioritise, assure broad Member State coverage
  - ➢ Joint launches of results from international surveys

Doing more with less

In view of limited resources, «survey fatigue» and the need for parsimony, DG EAC is committed to doing more with less through:

- Strategic approach to studies
  - ➤ Fewer studies, but strongly linked with policy priorities
  - ➤ Emphasis on dissemination and uptake of results

- To combat "survey fatigue" it is crucial that surveys are seen as relevant also by practitioners themselves
  - ➤ How can results from analyses based on surveys be fed back to the schools in a form useful to teachers and school administrators?

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Flexibility and responsiveness

Policy agendas and corresponding needs for evidence can change rapidly. It is therefore important to:

- explore ways of making the research community even more capable of responding to new demands;

- find right balance between the need for evidence with the time required to develop quality data and research;

- clearly define and signal priorities from policy makers to the research community.

Concluding remarks

Thank you for your attention