

## **Vocational education and social cohesion**

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Does education increase social cohesion ? The usual answer is yes (Green et al 2006, Duru-Bellat 2009). However, most of these analyses are built on the relationship between compulsory education (i.e primary and lower secondary) and various indicators of social cohesion. They do not take into account that, in most of the OECD and EU countries, upper secondary general and/or vocational education is a new standart. In some countries, this increase deepens the gap between generations and/or social groups. In others, a kind of « comprehensive » upper secondary system, including vocational education seems to provide better results. A lot of typologies of the VET/general education systems are available, among which the most famous is the VOC (Esteves-Abe and al, 2001) contrast between « liberal market » and « continental coordinated » economies, discussed also by Iversen and Stephens (2008). The aim of this paper is twofold. On the one hand, based on various national indicators (Eurostat and OECD) we will discuss the characteristics of the education systems, focusing not only on the opposition between weak and strong VET systems but including the question of equality of access to upper secondary and tertiary education and the relationship with labour markets. Following Green and al, we will then test the relationships between these characteritsics and indicators of social cohesion coming from the world value survey.