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UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND 18 56 SCHOOL of PUBLIC POLICY

W.E. UPJOHN INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH

Austrian Embassy Washington

More Effective Public Workforce Programs through Comparative Performance Monitoring

Lessons from Austrian Benchmarking and Next Steps in the U.S.

AGENDA

November 13, 2018

11:30 a.m. **Lunch**

12:00 p.m. **Welcomes and Keynote Address**

Welcomes: *The Hon. Wolfgang Waldner*, Ambassador of Austria to the U.S; and *Douglas J. Besharov*, University of Maryland

Keynote "The Skills Needed by a 21st Century Labor Force": *Roland Sauer*, chief of labor market section, Austrian Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health, and Consumer Protection

12:30 p.m. **Current Public Workforce Systems**

Austrian programs: *Christoph Badelt, director, Austrian Institute of Economic Research and professor of economic and social policy, WU Vienna*
Active labor market policy in Austria and the role of the Austrian public employment service, including eligibility for services; the types of services provided; funding; the role of social partnership; and the division of responsibilities between the federal government, landers, and localities.

U.S. programs: *Randall Eberts, president, W. E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research*
The U.S. public employment system, focusing on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), but also including programs under the Wagner-Peyser Act and other legislation. Also, eligibility for WIOA services; the types of services provided; funding; the division of responsibilities between the federal, state, and local governments; and the evaluation and monitoring of programs.

Discussant: *James Redstone, Domestic Policy Council, Executive Office of the President*

1:30 p.m. **Using Program Evaluations to Determine Program Effectiveness: Strengths and Weaknesses**

European experiences: *Georg Fischer, former director, Analysis, Evaluation, and External Relations, European Commission [ret.]*
How programs funded by the European Social Fund are monitored and evaluated. How individual European countries evaluate their own workforce development programs. A change in evaluation culture in Europe from qualitative assessment to counterfactual impact evaluation and the drivers behind it. The constraints on using randomized experiments in Europe such as concerns about the denial of services. How the availability of administrative data affects the methodology chosen.

U.S. experiences: *Jacob Klerman, senior fellow, Abt Associates; editor, Evaluation Review*
The different methodologies used to evaluate the effectiveness of U.S. workforce development programs and the contexts in which those methodologies can be successfully used in the U.S. Also, the limitations of U.S. administrative data and the difficulty in evaluating programs where local control generates substantial heterogeneity in the amount and quality of services provided.

Discussants: *Laura Berntsen, senior human services advisor, Senate Finance Committee*; and *Wayne Gordon, director, Division of Research and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Labor*

2:45 p.m. **Break**

3:00 p.m. **Benchmarking and Performance Monitoring: Strengths and Weaknesses**

The Austrian Experience**:** *Johannes Kopf*, *director general, Austrian Public Employment Service*

How the Austrian Public Employment Service monitors the performance of local programs, including which inputs, outputs, and outcomes are monitored, how often they are monitored, and how performance targets are set. Also, how jurisdictions are compared to one another on various performance measures and the steps taken as a result of high or low relative performance.

The U.S. Experience: *Burt Barnow, professor, George Washington University*
How the U.S. Department of Labor monitors the performance of local programs, including which inputs, outputs, and outcomes are monitored, how often they are monitored, and how performance targets are set. Also, how jurisdictions are compared to one another on various performance measures and the steps taken as a result of high or low relative performance.

Discussant: *Ryan Martin, senior human services advisor, Senate Finance Committee*

4:00 p.m. Comparative Effectiveness Evaluation and Monitoring

American perspectives: *Jeffrey Smith, professor, University of Wisconsin*
Measuring program effectiveness in the absence of a no-treatment control or comparison group and the utility of using cross-program comparisons instead. Also, possible methodologies for making these comparisons (such as difference-in-differences, fixed effects, interrupted time series, pre-post, and random assignment) and the relative strengths and weaknesses of each.

Austrian perspectives: *Helmut Mahringer, research analyst, Austrian Institute of Economic Research*
Current and proposed approaches for measuring of the effectiveness of public workforce programs in Austria.

Discussant: *Anne DeCesaro, majority staff director, U.S. House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Resources*

5:00 p.m. Applying Lessons from Successful and Unsuccessful Programs

LaDonna Pavetti, vice president for income support policy, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Margaret Simms, non-resident fellow, Urban Institute
How policymakers can examine program components, client characteristics, and context to identify which contribute to a program's success or failure.

Jason Turner, executive director, Secretaries' Innovation Group, former Commissioner, New York City Human Resources Administration

Kelly Schulz, Maryland Secretary for Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
After identifying more and/or less successful programs, how to encourage the adoption of successful practices and the abandonment of less successful practices (including operational and political considerations).

6:15 p.m. **Closing reception**