

## **Training in Research for Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

Visit of the academic advisors from the Pedagogical Training Department of the Center for Pedagogical Training and Educational Technology to Osnabrück

Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) research in Costa Rica has become increasingly relevant from a political, economic and social point of view, as it presents itself as a promising opportunity to address the growing demand for well-trained professionals and the high level of youth unemployment the country is facing. However, TVET in Costa Rica currently faces several challenges, as there is a lack of trained academic staff and insufficient institutionalization of academic training for vocational teachers.

Within this context and under the framework of the International Chair of Technical Vocational Education and Training of the Center for Pedagogical Training and Educational Technology in 2021, the project "Costa Rican Vocational Education and Training (CoRi VET 2021-2025)" started. This project was founded thanks to the close bilateral relationship between the National Technical University (UTN) of Costa Rica and Osnabrück University (UOS), and the funding of the BMBF (Federal Ministry of Education and Research). The project aims to develop study structures that guarantee the qualified training of the academic staff of TVET institutions in Costa Rica, as well as the expansion of TVET research. The actions previously undertaken within this project have made possible the identification of specific research needs and interests, such as the training of scientific personnel specialized in addressing the TVET system in Costa Rica.

In view of the need for training of scientific staff in this area and in order to strengthen the cooperation between UTN and UOS, the Department of TVET of the UOS invited three UTN members to be trained in methods, theories and areas of TVET research in Germany. This training addressed several important topics such as the definition and characterization of TVET research, as well as its areas of application, theoretical approaches and methods. The UTN staff also had the opportunity to develop topics and research questions relevant to the reality of TVET in Costa Rica and its methodical application. During the training, key tools were provided to plan didactically and pedagogically the implementation of TVET research training offers. On the other hand, the representatives of the UTN were able to participate in speeches given by researchers from the UOS and the University of Hannover, where different projects that are being carried out within the framework of TVET were presented. Another essential part of the training was the visit to several entities that are part of the TVET system such as schools, universities, training centers, the Osnabrück Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BiBB) and the German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (GOVET). Lastly, the CoRi VET Project was presented in order to socialize it, exchange experiences and good practices with the aim of generating new alliances for the execution of the project and its sustainability.

This training facilitated discussion, reflection and analysis regarding the reality of technical, vocational, technological and scientific education and training. Furthermore, this training provided the opportunity to expand the knowledge and understanding of the TVET system in Germany, as well as the expansion of expertise in various specialized research methods and the identification of possible fields of research in TVET and its application within the Costa Rican system. Overall, the visit to Germany allowed a clearer and deeper understanding of how TVET systems function in social, economic and pedagogical terms, and made visible the challenges that Costa Rica faces at the institutional and national level in terms of resources to position TVET research as a fundamental pillar in the Costa Rican educational system.