

Deepening EQAVET work

Strategic plan 2016-2017

This paper has been finalised following discussions which took place in 2015 at the EQAVET Annual Forum, Steering Committee and ad hoc expert meetings and the survey of national reference points on priorities for further deepening and consolidating work on the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation.

Successive EQAVET programmes since 2010 (and before as ENQA-VET) have defined the EQAVET **mission** as one which seeks:

To develop, disseminate and promote best European practice in the field of quality assurance in VET at system and provider levels by supporting the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation and fostering sustainable and inclusive activities-oriented cooperation among relevant stakeholders at different levels

Similarly, the **vision** of EQAVET has been defined as one which:

To support the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation by working collectively to build a shared understanding of quality assurance and development among member countries and social partners through exchanging experiences and generating new insights that can influence policy and practice at national and local levels

In keeping with the vision and mission of EQAVET and in response to current EU policy, this strategic plan sets out strategic directions for work of the EQAVET Network 2016-2017.

Introduction

EQAVET environment

Reflection on the future direction of EQAVET takes place in a context where the challenges of youth unemployment and the need to find sustainable ways of supporting the development of high quality VET careers remain a challenge for Europe. Young people and those seeking to develop their career pathways need to be sure that their vocational education and training (VET) is of high quality, provides them with an entry to the labour market, enables them to build their careers and pursue further education as well as offering flexible and inclusive learning (particularly for vulnerable groups); and enables them to move freely within their own country and the European labour market. Effective quality assurance (QA) is at the heart of this process.

The Copenhagen process and its latest follow-up, the Bruges Communiqué (2010) and the Riga Conclusions (2015), contained the necessary political commitment to give an impetus to the EU cooperation process of improving the quality and relevance of VET; and QA has been at the heart of these processes.

Policy context

The European Union has identified VET as an essential tool for preparing people to work, enter and remain in (to suit new LLL needs) today's economy. VET is also key to ensuring that Europe remains competitive and innovative in the face of an increase in global competition and demographic change.

Recent economic developments have shown that we need a highly skilled workforce and that education and training are key to economic recovery and growth. This trend is confirmed by a strong correlation between efficient VET systems and high youth employment.

These social and economic challenges, together with new impetus provided by transferring VET policy from DG EAC to DG EMPL of the European Commission provide a new opportunity to address issues directly linked to the labour market and employability.

Some work has been already undertaken and developed in this direction in previous years under the EQAVET work programme 2013-2015: e.g. the reflection on the QA aspect of work-based learning (WBL), sectoral approaches to QA of VET and the role of the social partners; and working with EQAVET indicators related directly to labour market relevance of VET, qualification utilisation and occupational outcomes (e.g. indicator 6 and 9).

Achievements and challenges – the work in EQAVET continues

Qualitative and quantitative information on the introduction and use of the EQAVET Recommendation in EU Member States is now available from several sources. These are:

1. The [Report of the Commission to the EU Parliament and Council](#) in 2014.
2. The [external evaluation of EQAVET](#) undertaken by ICF-GHK in 2013.
3. The results of the [Secretariat survey 2013-2014](#).

The work of EQAVET in 2016-2017 should be to build on the information drawn from these reports.

Challenges to overcome

The first report, which is based on the findings of the EQAVET Secretariat Survey and the external evaluation, points to a need to ***increase the relevance of EQAVET for transparency purposes – supporting mutual trust, mobility across countries and lifelong learning.***

EQAVET has contributed to advancing a quality culture in VET in European countries, as well as to its practical implementation, through the development notably of quality operational measures within the EQAVET Network. However, such measures have focused on institutional, school-based provision (most of initial VET and part of continuing VET), with less visible impact on work-based learning and non-formal provision (which makes up most of continuing VET but could also play a key part in Initial VET in dual systems);

The flexible approach of EQAVET, making available tools for selection and adjustment, has facilitated its use, but at the same time has reduced its potential as a common language and conceptual framework across countries.

The [Report of the Commission to the EU Parliament and Council](#), Brussels 28/1/2014, page 9

The report underlines the need to 'extend EQAVET'¹ by focusing on the following issues:

- Develop descriptors, indicators and related guidelines to better address the quality and the appropriate proficiency level of outcomes acquired by learners in VET.
- Develop and test guidelines for policymakers and providers, along with supporting checklists, descriptors and indicators geared to the diverse reality of continuing VET and to the specific features of work-based learning.
- Test the opportunity for European arrangements to make national QA measures more transparent across countries. This could include developing an information supplement to facilitate common understanding of national accreditation processes of VET providers, promoting common guidelines on how to describe QA procedures compatible with EQAVET.

These require coordination and cooperation with key actors at national and EU levels, such as government authorities and their agencies responsible for VET, VET providers, social partners, and all other key stakeholders (e.g. companies). It is essential to improve coordination and cooperation between VET and sub-sectors of education and training (adult education, general education and higher education) as well as between EQAVET and EQF, ECVET and Europass and between the different actors responsible for these sectors, tools and instruments at EU and national levels.

The second source of information about the implementation of the EQAVET Recommendation was the external evaluation of EQAVET carried out by ICF GHK. This report included the following key findings:

- *Directly or indirectly, EQAVET supported changes in QA systems and measures in two thirds of countries analysed;*
- *A majority of EU countries have in place approaches to improve QA, even though the Recommendation is vague on what constitutes such an approach.*

[Evaluation of implementation of EQAVET](#), London June 2013, page 89

It comments that:

- There is currently very little evidence that EQAVET is contributing to the objective of making VET systems more transparent.
- In principle, EQAVET complements other European instruments in the area of qualifications, but in practice, the complementarities need to be articulated more clearly.
- While the school-based aspects of QA in VET are well covered by EQAVET, the Framework does not provide specific guidance for QA of work-based learning.

¹ Term used by the mentioned report, page 9.

- The EU-level cooperation between EQAVET and European initiatives in QA in other sectors of education is not systematic.
- Not all national reference points (NRPs) have a clear mandate and most NRPs do not have resources of their own. The engagement of stakeholders in national activities of NRPs is very uneven.
- EQAVET governance would benefit from greater involvement of representatives of stakeholders and representatives of organisations that have an interest in strengthening the transparency of national QA measures.

The third source of information, the EQAVET Secretariat survey, provides a 'snapshot' of the progress countries have made in developing their national approaches to the implementation of the Recommendation. It provides a definition of what is understood by a QA approach² (among EQAVET members and other national relevant stakeholders involved in the completion of the survey). This is important in increasing common understanding and transparency across the EU in relation to QA of VET.

In 2013, according to this survey:

- *84% of VET systems in the EU had devised an approach to QA in VET at a national level in line with the EQAVET Framework. In 31% of countries, the national approach is a reflection of the EQAVET Framework and in 53%, the approach is compatible with EQAVET.*
- *91% of Member States have established a common QA approach for VET providers¹. In half of these countries, the approach has been formally agreed and fully implemented. In the remaining countries it is in development stage or partially implemented¹. 19% per cent of countries have used the EQAVET Framework and in 72% of countries, the common approach for VET institutions in the national context is compatible with EQAVET.*

[EQAVET Secretariat survey 2013-2014](#), December 2014, pages 25 and 49

While these results are very positive, there are some apparent inconsistencies: when countries are asked if the EQAVET indicative descriptor (Implementation phase) at system level '*A national level and/or regional QA framework to promote continuous improvements and self-regulation has been devised and includes quality standards at VET-providers level*' was used only 53% in IVET and 38% in CVET of countries answered 'yes'. This apparent dichotomy calls for a better understanding of what is happening in Member States in relation to this issue; and what constitutes 'a common approach to QA in VET' in line with the EQAVET Framework.

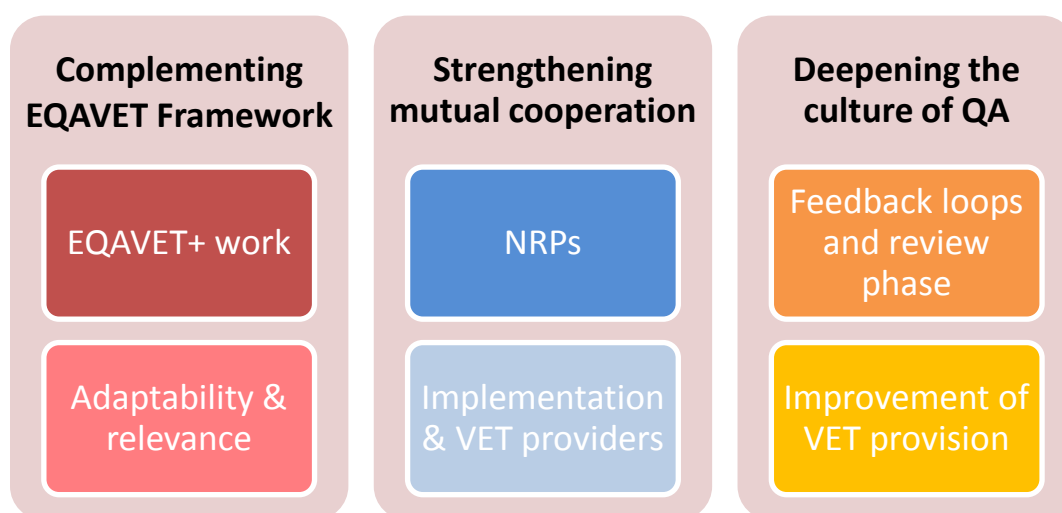
² By a 'quality assurance approach' we mean a strategy or plan which defines what systematic measures need to be taken to further develop quality assurance in VET. This is contained in an explicit strategic document which describes the steps necessary for the improvement of national quality assurance systems or, at a minimum, clearly states the intention to strengthen quality assurance in VET. This strategic document can cover other aspects of VET policies besides quality assurance.

Strategic directions

Based on the abovementioned elements and on the information now available on degrees of implementation of the Recommendation, it is possible to suggest a number of directions or priorities for consideration as work continues on EQAVET. These are:

1. Complementing the current EQAVET Framework in order to ensure continued relevance to the needs of the policy context by developing an *EQAVET+* Framework
2. Strengthening mutual cooperation among NRPs in order to address implementation – NRPs and the work with VET providers
3. Deepening the culture of quality assurance of VET – the importance of feedback loops and the review phase of the quality cycle

Figure 1: Overview – strategic directions for deepening EQAVET work 2016-2017



Transversal issue: quality assurance and serving end-users

The work to be developed in these three strategic terrains will aim at ensuring the conceptualisation of QA as a mechanism serving the needs of end-users (learners, workers, employers). The involvement and active role of social partners in the work will contribute to added valued steps in these directions.

A significant amount of work has already been undertaken within EQAVET, which needs to be disseminated within the Member States both at system and provider levels. The challenge now is to deepen implementation and to support countries in using the EQAVET Framework so that learners and young people in VET can reach their full potential.

Also the work of the Network should reflect the successive policy priorities identified within the context of the Copenhagen process and the additional short-term deliverables proposed in the Riga Conclusions for the period 2015-2020 which build on those identified in the [Bruges Communiqué](#) in 2012³.

³ The new medium term deliverables proposed in the [Riga Conclusions](#) directly related to QA in VET are:

1. Promote WBL in all its forms, with special attention to apprenticeships, by involving social partners, companies, chambers and VET providers, as well as by stimulating innovation and entrepreneurship.
2. Further develop quality assurance mechanisms in VET in line with the EQAVET Recommendation and, as part of QA systems, establish continuous information and feedback loops in IVET and CVET systems based on learning outcomes.

1. Complementing the EQAVET framework as a key to ensuring relevance to the needs of the policy context by developing an *EQAVET+ Framework*

The focus of this thematic area is to consolidate the work developed over the last five years and to complement the current Framework further by adding and completing areas that address important policy priorities with a view to develop an EQAVET+ Framework.

The objective is to reinforce the EQAVET Recommendation, in order to respond to different perspectives and needs such as apprenticeship/work-based learning (WBL), learning outcomes (LO) and the pedagogical elements connected to LO, adult learning and CVET. It is not proposed to revise the legal text.

This work will develop further the adaptability of the Framework so that it can respond adequately to different contextual needs at micro, meso, or macro levels of the range of interlocutors in Member States. This work should build on the significant work already undertaken in the Network. The objective is to complement and develop the Framework further so that it reflects the specific needs of, and is understandable by, these different levels and perspectives.

The **lines of action** suggested by this objective are related to the need to reflect on criteria and descriptors that would complement EQAVET, as the current Framework does not provide specific guidance:

- to better address the QA aspect of the processes of defining, describing and assessing learning outcomes (LOs);
- on the pedagogical elements related to LOs;
- on QA for qualification design, assessment and certification;
- on the QA aspects of apprenticeship/WBL, adult learning and/or the LLL perspective;
- to support QA procedures in the validation of non-formal and informal learning in line with EQF/NQFs;
- Teachers and Trainers;
- to better plan for the review phases at the planning stage.

Proposed activities and outcomes under thematic area 1:

- Production/formulation of new descriptors ensuring the inclusion of the above dimensions in the Recommendation and creating an EQAVET+ Framework.
- Increase the relevance and usability of the EQAVET Framework.

Background information and related literature. The work on this area of activity should consider and build on the following resources and information:

- **EQAVET material:** materials developed as a result of the activities undertaken by the various work programmes since 2012 (in particular the building blocks at system and provider levels and for WBL; and the work on EQAVET indicators). Also, the work developed within ENQA-VET (in particular on the topics of QA procedures for student assessment, prior learning, evaluation, accreditation, on WBL, the role of social partners, the impact of EQAVET, on peer review and making VET more attractive).
- **Other material:**
 - Cedefop

- (2015) - [*Stronger VET for better lives; monitoring report on vocational education and training policies 2010-14*](#)
- (2012) - [*Curriculum reform in Europe: the impact of learning outcomes*](#)
- (2011) - [*Assuring quality in vocational education and training. The role of accrediting VET providers*](#)
- (forthcoming) - *Application of learning outcomes across Europe; A comparative perspective; Quality assurance of the certification process in IVET and; Analysis and overview of NQF developments in European countries*
- European Commission
 - (2014) - [*European Inventory on Validation*](#)
 - (2014) - [*Report on Progress in Quality Assurance in Higher Education*](#)
 - (2013) – [*Work based learning in Europe; Practices and Policy pointers*](#)
 - (2013) – [*Apprenticeship and Traineeship in Europe; key success factors*](#)
 - (2013) – [*Report of the peer learning activity 'increasing synergies between the implementation of the learning outcomes approach and quality assurance arrangements'*](#)
 - (2013) - [*Work-based learning in Europe. Practices and Policy Pointers*](#)
 - (2013) - [*Thematic Working Group on Quality in Adult Learning: Final Report*](#)
 - Initiative [*European Alliance for Apprenticeships*](#)
- [*EQAVET projects*](#) (2011-2013) in particular ENIQAB Germany and VET-CERT Austria
- ETUC (2013) - [*Best practices and trade union contributions. Towards a European quality framework for apprenticeships and work-based learning*](#)
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland
 - (2013) Irish Presidency Conference - [*Quality Assurance in Qualifications Frameworks*](#)
 - Jim Murray (2013) Irish Presidency Conference - [*Quality Assurance in Qualifications Frameworks*](#)
- Simon Broek and Bert-Jan Buiskool (2013) - [*Developing the adult learning sector. Quality in the Adult Learning Sector, Final Report*](#)

2. Strengthening mutual cooperation of NRPs in order to address implementation – NRPs and the work with VET providers

The focus is on the implementation of EQAVET in the national context in order to promote and monitor continuous improvement of VET. NRPs are the nodal point of this process as the diversity of VET provision and providers throughout Europe calls for different actions depending on national context. NRPs have the necessary knowledge to customise and contextualise the tools and resources developed at EU level.

The objective is to support NRPs. This support should contribute to advancing strategic objective 2b of the [Bruges Communiqué](#) which invites participating countries to ‘establish at national level a common quality assurance approach for VET providers, which also applies to associated workplace learning and which is compatible with the EQAVET Framework’ by 2015.

The **lines of action** that this direction proposes are as follows:

- Contribute to strengthening NRPs and ensuring they are supported to fulfil their role while being fully aware of the difficulties of obtaining adequate and consistent funding within national contexts and at EU level.
- Enhance cooperative work between NRPs and stakeholders, including social partners and the those providing VET (i.e. the so called ‘VET providers’, which include public and private schools, companies, training institutes of trade unions, chambers, public employment services etc.).
- Provide NRPs with an appropriate environment where they can cooperate and learn from each other’s experiences and expertise.
- Supporting systems (in particular NRPs) to engage appropriately with VET providers whether within initial VET (IVET), continuing VET (CVET) and/or work based learning (WBL) in order to advance the implementation of the QA common approach for VET providers. This requires:
 1. information about how a ‘common QA approach’ for VET providers could be improved.
 2. greater communication with VET providers and other relevant stakeholders, utilising the resources developed by the Network, which should facilitate dissemination, dialogue and communication of the benefits of using the EQAVET Framework in the national context.

There is a need to focus particularly on teachers and trainers, school-based and in-company VET training, VET school management teams or those with a multiplier role at national level (e.g. national skill councils).

Proposed activities and outcomes - in order to meet the objectives identified in this area of activity, it is proposed to strengthen work through the organisation of peer learning activities (PLAs). These have proven a valuable means of enabling exchanges and development of new knowledge around the topics discussed. The activities will follow a similar approach to the PLAs organised in 2013-2015 (see Annex 1 for more information on the opinions of NRPs on PLAs as the preferred working methodology). It is proposed that:

- PLAs will be organised between 2016 and 2017, focusing on the thematic areas identified by NRPs through the questionnaire issued by the Secretariat in March 2015 (see Annex 1 for information on the result of the questionnaire). The proposed topics as suggested by the results of the questionnaire are:
 1. PLA on *procedures for supporting training providers to identify areas for improvements to QA and to implement QA systems in line with the EQAVET Recommendation*
 2. PLA on *QA criteria for defining and describing learning outcomes according to the approach set up in the EQAVET and EQF (annex 3) Recommendations*

3. PLA on *Indicator 5 - Placement rate in VET programmes*

As these topics have been identified by NRPs, we can ensure that PLAs are responding to the needs of NRPs, and supporting the provision of tailored support. The PLAs will present good practice at system and provider levels. The participation of VET providers and multiplier actors at national level will be a priority together with NRPs.

- In addition, the Secretariat has learned from the evaluation of feedback from participants in PLAs organised between 2013 and 2015⁴ that it is important to ensure follow up for each PLA, building on results and new insights on the topics discussed. This is important in order to stimulate developments in the national context. The idea of following up PLAs was corroborated by the responses gathered through the questionnaire to NRPs, which included a question on how a *second-round PLA* should be organised and on what topics (See Annex 1 for more information). Based on the feedback, the following second-round PLAs could be organised:
 1. Second-round PLA on *The impact of QA systems in IVET*
 2. Second-round PLA on *Self-assessment of VET providers*
 3. Second-round PLA on *Indicator 6 - Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace*
- Additionally, the questionnaire identified other topics and activities that need to be considered in order to meet the objectives identified in this strategic direction (see Annex 1 for more information).

As in previous years, an EQAVET Annual network meeting (previously called Annual Forum) is planned for spring each year; and in order to reach a wider audience and disseminate EQAVET activities more extensively, an EQAVET open meeting (to be called Annual Forum) will be organised in autumn and will replace the annual National Reference points meeting.

Background information and related literature. The work on this area of activity should consider and build on the following resources and information:

- **EQAVET material:**
 - Quality Cycle on-line tool for [systems](#) and [providers](#)
 - [Training material for NRPs](#)
 - [Policy briefings](#) on PLAs 2012-2015; and those as results of ENQA-VET PLAs
 - On-line guidance on [Aligning a QA approach with EQAVET](#)
 - On-line guidance for [WBL in line with EQAVET](#)
- **Other material:**
 - [EQAVET projects](#) (2011-2013) – in particular QALVET@RO Romania and QA-VET Malta
 - Cedefop (2015) - [Handbook for VET providers. Supporting internal quality management and quality culture](#)

In this strategic direction, resources and good practice developed at national level by NRPs will be considered, as they might be useful to other NRPs.

⁴ Five PLAs were organised in 2013-2015: Self-assessment of VET providers; Indicator 6 Utilisation of acquired skills at the workplace; The impact of QA in IVET; Indicator 9 Mechanisms to identify training needs in the labour market; Indicator 2 Investment in training of teachers and trainers; Early warning system, averting drops-out.

3. Deepening the culture of quality assurance of VET – the importance of feedback loops and the review phase of the quality cycle

The focus is on strengthening the culture of QA⁵ by emphasising the importance of the review phase of the quality cycle and feedback loops with a view to monitoring and continuously improving VET provision.

The objective is to contribute to the development of VET excellence by providing guidance and exchanging good practice on the use of EQAVET indicators and descriptors related to the evaluation and review phases of the quality cycle.

The lines of action suggested by this objective:

- Completing the quality cycle, with a focus on the review phase. The results of the [EQAVET Secretariat survey 2013-2014](#) highlight that while Member States have implemented QA criteria in the planning and the implementation phases, consistently and systematically, they have not done so in the evaluation and review phases. Figures are particularly low in the review phase, especially in the CVET sector. This limits the function of the quality cycle to improve continuously. The focus is on the implementation of evaluation and review at all relevant levels.
- Working with EQAVET Indicators: in particular those indicators with a labour market relevance (notably indicator 6 and 9), building up on the work developed so far by the Network in this area.
- There is a need for a systematic, structured and permanent dialogue with the world of work and the social partners to support the Network to meet the QA demands of CVET, work-place learning, the recognition of prior learning, the quality and availability of training placements in SMEs and the quality of teachers and trainers in VET (i.e. responding to market requirements and the role of mentors). These are important ways of improving VET systems.
- Increasing coordination with the other sub-sectors of education and training, in particular with general and higher education, focusing on facilitating flexible learning pathways.

Proposed activities and outcomes will be the organisation of workshops on this topic in the framework of EQAVET events as well as the organisation of seminars and conferences on this issue at national level.

In addition, it is envisaged that the EQAVET Secretariat will collect data via the EQAVET Secretariat survey on the use of feedback loops and the review phase, and gather research and studies that can provide an overview of the issues of concern. It is important that existing studies and research are utilised.

Background information and related literature. Work on this area should consider and build on the following resources and information:

- **EQAVET material:**
 - Quality Cycle on-line tool for [systems](#) and [providers](#), with a focus on the **monitoring section** and the operational definitions of EQAVET indicators

⁵ The concept of culture of QA is a multifactorial issue that it is in many respects related to contextual elements, values and causes. This complexity needs to be acknowledged.

- [Information Gathering Exercise](#) on QA procedures in certification, curricula setting, accreditation and training of trainers in European VET systems
 - Report of the [Joint Expert Seminar on QA in VET and Higher Education for improving their permeability](#)
 - Report on the [first](#) and [second](#) Joint seminars for ECVET, EQAVET and EQF
 - Material developed by the [Joint working group on EQAVET and ECVET](#)
 - Material developed by the working group on [Adult learning in the context of CVET](#)
 - Material developed as a result of the sectoral approach to QA in VET: [sectoral seminars](#) and symposium on learning from [sectoral approach to QA in VET](#)
 - [Policy briefs on PLAs 2013-2014](#)
- **Other material:**
 - Cedefop
 - (2015) - [Handbook for VET providers. Supporting internal quality management and quality culture](#)
 - (2014) - [Policy handbook: access to and participation in continuous vocational education and training \(CVET\) in Europe](#)
 - (2014) - [Expert workshop: Quality requirements for the new forms and contexts of teaching and learning in the EU](#)
 - (2013) - [Renewing VET provision](#)
 - (forthcoming) *Quality approaches in learning and training patterns in European small firm*
 - [EQAVET projects](#) (2011-2013) – in particular NLOAVET The Netherlands and QALVET@RO Romania
 - ECVET team (2012) - [Using ECVET for Geographical Mobility](#)

Annex 1 – summary of result of the NRPs 2015 questionnaire on priorities

QUESTIONNAIRE - Identification of thematic priorities for EQAVET peer learning activities and other events to be organised in 2016-2017

CONTEXT

The [EQAVET work programme 2013-2015](#) made provision for **peer learning activities (PLAs)** to support the deepening of work on quality assurance of VET issues between Member States. These have proven a valuable means of enabling the exchange of experiences and expertise and the development of new knowledge around the topics discussed by offering national reference points (NRPs) opportunities to interact and share views and opinions on issues of shared concern, providing conditions for cross fertilisation and mutual learning.

These positive results arise from the fact that the topics of these PLAs were decided by NRPs themselves when in October 2012 the EQAVET Secretariat prepared a questionnaire for NRPs asking them to identify their priorities (for more information on the questionnaire visit the NRPs virtual forum [here](#)). The results of successive EQAVET Secretariat surveys have also been useful in identifying topics and for identifying potential hosts and presenters of interesting practices for consideration at PLAs.

Based on this experience, the Secretariat launched a second questionnaire in March 2015 in order to identify topics of shared interest and priorities for NRPs, which will be explored in the work programme 2016-2017.

RESULTS of the QUESTIONNAIRE to NRPs

The questionnaire on priorities was prepared in order to obtain the views NRPs on which topics could be addressed in PLAs and other activities to be organised by the Network between 2016 and 2017.

29 NRPs completed the questionnaire out of 32 NRPs in the EU-28⁶. Norway and Kosovo also completed the questionnaire.

Peer learning activities for NRPs – priorities

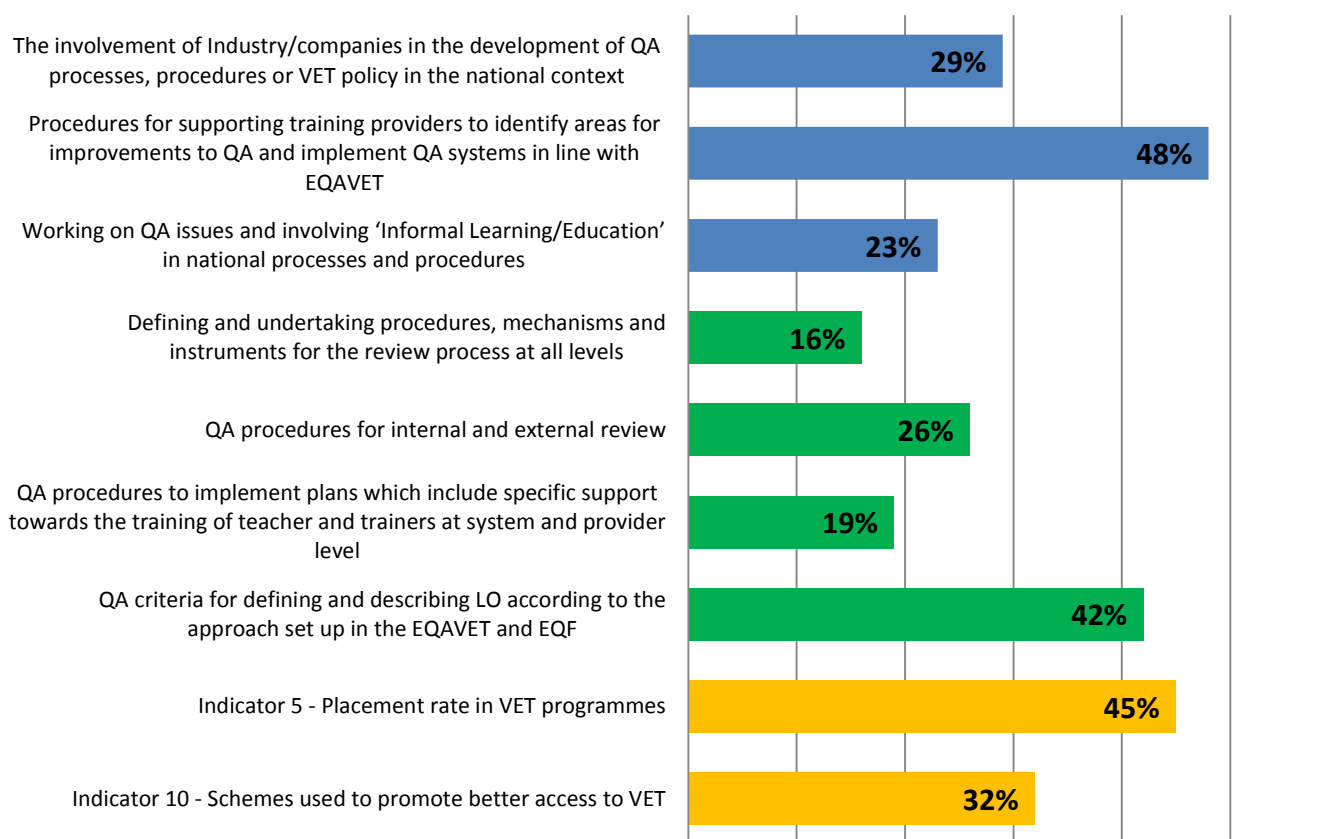
Based on information provided by the previous questionnaire and the Secretariat survey, nine topics were identified in three policy areas:

- **Area 1: National VET policy and the national approach to EQAVET**
- **Area 2: Quality Assurance criteria and processes in VET**
- **Area 3: EQAVET indicators**

NRPs were asked to specify the topics that they would like addressed in a PLA in 2016-2017. These are the topics identified and the result of the questionnaire:

⁶ There are 32 NRPs in the EU-28 representing 32 VET national systems (BE(nl, fr), BG, CZ, DK, DE, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, CY, LV, LT, LU, HU, MT, NL, AT, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK, FI, SE, UK(Eng, Wls, Nir, Sct)).

Figure 1 – Topics identified for peer learning activities for NRPs for 2016-2017

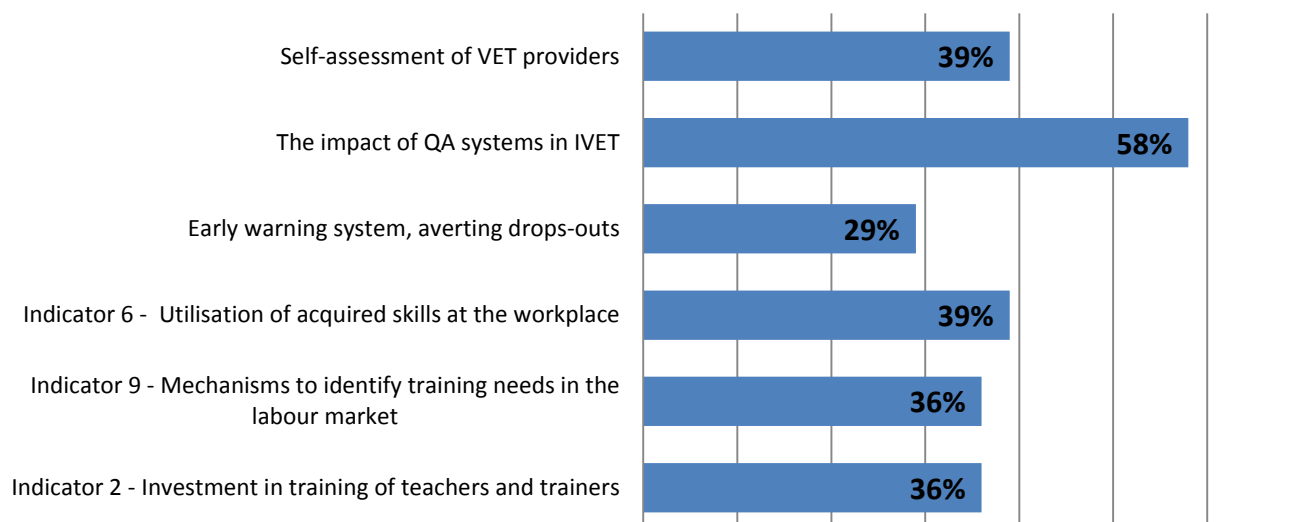


A new concept: *second-round PLAs*

In addition, NRPs were asked if the topics of the 2013-2015 PLAs need to be followed up in *second-round PLAs*, building on the results achieved.

Six PLAs were organised between 2013 and 2015, three on quality criteria and three on indicators. These are the results of the questionnaire in this regard:

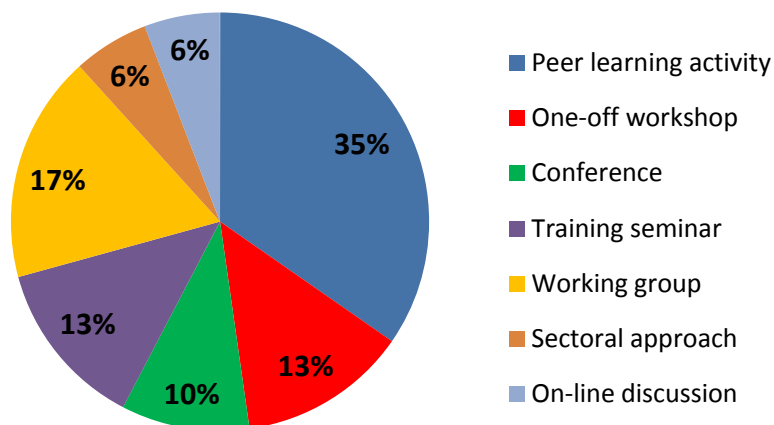
Figure 2 – Topics for second-round peer learning activities for 2016-2017



Working methodologies preferred

NRPs were also asked if there is any working methodology apart from PLAs that they would like to see developed for the work of the Network in 2016-2017. The chart below indicates that PLAs are the preferred methodology, followed by working groups; and one-off workshops and training seminars:

Figure 3 – Working methodologies for the work of the Network for 2016-2017



Other topics

Additionally, the questionnaire, in an open question, asked NRPs to identify other topics of interest other than those described in the charts above; and which working methodology they would like to use for these.

These are the other topics identified by NRPs and the working methodology preferred for each (only those topics which were mentioned more than once are identified⁷; the most frequently mentioned topics appear at the top of the list):

Table 1 – Other topics and working methodologies

Topic	Working methodology
Work-based learning (QA procedures on assessment in school and company settings; contracts for learners; investment etc.)	Conference, PLA, working group
Quality culture as a factor that can increase the impact of QA (considering the general outputs of VET and indicator 8 -Prevalence of vulnerable groups)	Conference, one-off workshop, PLA, training seminar, working group
QA for LO linked to assessment and qualifications/NQF	Conference, one-off workshop, training seminar
The Review phase within the quality cycle (from <i>Check to Act</i>)	Conference, PLA, training seminar, working group
Placement rates and destination data	PLA, one-off workshop
Training and developing competences for VET staff (teachers and trainers; and QA management teams)	Conference, PLA, training seminar, working group
Designing and implementing surveys for learners for improving the teaching and learning process	PLA
VET providers QA approach in-line with the EQAVET Recommendation	Conference, one-off workshop, PLA, training seminar, working group, Structured platform for on-line discussion & support

⁷ There was a general consensus on these topics and on average 85% of NRPs that answered this question mentioned the topics described in table 1 above.